Exploring Teachers' Phenomenological Experiences of a Principal's Change Initiative

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

Educational change has traditionally been viewed as an objective and rational process. From this perspective, school leaders have been dependent on solving the infuriatingly elusive effective change process puzzle by trying to "finetune the plan to ensure it incorporated every essential piece of the jigsaw" (Branson, 2010, p. 18). Despite educators seeking to explain events and control processes for change for many decades, effective educational change remains an elusive outcome. By striving to objectify the process, people can overlook the subjective influence that a change initiative may have on the behaviour and attitudes of those involved in enacting change. For this research, the term 'phenomenology' is used to refer to a person's subjective emotional dimension and this is distinct from its use in a research methodology sense.

In recent times, there is an emerging realisation that leaders of change within schools need to be more relational and to consider how a change initiative influences the subjectivity of those involved. To do this, school leaders need to move beyond conceptualising change as a series of processes and/or practices that are often imposed onto teachers, who are then expected to enact these in a 'one-size-fits-all' manner (Wheatley, 2006). A relational school leader acknowledges that enacting change involves teachers experiencing some sense of loss for the practices and processes that they consider define their identity as a professional. A teacher's sense of professionalism and professional identity are couched in the way they individually 'craft' their practice (Crow, Day & Moller, 2016; Kelchtermans, 2005). Thus, a relational school leader should be reflective and monitor the effect that a change initiative has on teachers' sense of subjectivity as they need to realise that this can influence the extent to which teachers engage in processes for teaching and learning. This is particularly pertinent in light of the teacher quality agenda that underscores the current political context.

Within the current Australian educational context, teacher quality is being viewed as a key factor in shaping the economic fabric of this nation now and into the future. As a consequence of this perspective, the Australian government has introduced a suite of reforms into education that seek to address the perceived paucity in teacher quality (Australian Council for Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2012; Council of Australian Governments, 2008a; Education Services Australia, 2011a, 2012a, 2012b, 2013). The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL], a government-endorsed body, has played an instrumental role in the development and promulgation of educational

reforms in this nation. These reforms have been premised on the view that teaching is an objective and rational process, and they have sought to embed a culture of control, consistency, and accountability with regard to the way that teaching and learning occur in Australian schools. It is unlikely that viewing education from this perspective and embedding a culture of compliance, and its associated control and accountability measures, will result in an elevation in teacher quality (Hursh, 2011, 2013; Hursh & Henderson, 2011).

The research problem emanates from the perspective that subjectivity, arguably, has a critical role to play in shaping the way that teachers embrace opportunities for learning and the way that teachers implement pedagogical practice at the classroom level. However, this continues to be overlooked in the current educational context. In light of this problem, this research will explore the phenomenological responses that teachers in a single-school context have regarding the implementation of a principal's change initiative.

Consistent with a broader body of scholarship concerned with educational change, this research is guided by an interpretivist paradigm through which educators' constructions of the principal's change initiative are elucidated. Within a school, teachers constantly interpret their experiences and construct multiple views of reality. The way that each teacher enacts their professional role is shaped by their individual perception of reality and the meaningful social interactions that they have with the people they interact with. Case-study methodology enables a detailed exploration of an experience, and for this research it is the implementation of the principal's change initiative. Perceptions of this particular change initiative are gathered from the principal, the change facilitator, and the teachers from a Catholic primary school in the State of Queensland, Australia. All teachers at the research school completed an electronic survey to share their perceptions of the change initiative implemented at this school. Individual semi-structured interviews were also conducted with the principal, the change facilitator, and 16 of the teachers at the research school.

It is argued in this thesis that imposing a change initiative on teachers can result in them expressing negative phenomenological responses towards the focus area of change which reinforces their reluctance, if not resistance, towards continuing to enact the change. Furthermore, it supports the understanding that a planned educational change strategy is significantly deficient if it does not incorporate a means for ascertaining, and positively responding to, the ongoing phenomenological responses to the change processes from those involved in bringing about the change. This implies that those who are overseeing the change

need to not only be effective managers of the change process, but they also need to have the dispositional characteristics to be effective leaders of people.

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP AND SOURCES

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics Committees.

Signed: _____   Date: _____

       Anne-Marie Black

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"Nobody said it would be easy.....they just promised it would be worth it".

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"A river cuts through rock, not because of its power, but because of its persistence".

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"All rising to a great place is by a winding staircase".

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"When you feel like quitting, think about why you started".

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"Don't stop when you are tired, stop when you are done".

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ACRONYMS

Acronym	Expanded Form
ACARA	Australian Curriculum & Assessment Reporting Authority
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
AITSL	Australian Institute of Teaching & School Leadership
CCA	Constant Comparative Analysis Method
CERI	Centre for Educational Research Innovation
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council for Education, Employment Training & Youth Affairs
MTL	Masters of Teaching and Learning
NAPLAN	National Assessment Programme for Literacy & Numeracy
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development
PDSER	Professional Development School Environment and Reading Survey
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PLC	Professional Learning Community
RTTT	Race to The Top
SLEQ	School Level Environment Questionnaire
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TEMAG	Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group
TPPLS	Teacher Perceptions of Professional Learning Survey

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Key Term	Definition in relation to its use in this thesis
Andragogy	The process for helping adults learn that assumes adults bring to their learning life experience, internal motivation, a need to acquire specific learning, and a readiness to learn.
Change Facilitator	The person who is afforded the role as facilitator of teachers' learning within a specifically targeted area for change.
School-based Approach to Professional Development	A process of learning that involves a change facilitator supporting teachers within the context of their classroom to improve their pedagogy through implementation of a 'model, observe, feedback' cycle.
Emmanuel College	The pseudonym for the school in which the research was conducted.
Guided Reading	An instructional approach to the teaching of reading that involves a teacher supporting a group of students to read and comprehend a levelled text through the provision of scaffolding and strategic questioning.
In-service Learning Opportunities	A process for disseminating knowledge and practice *to* teachers from an 'expert', and this is typically provided at an external learning venue.
Needs	Teachers' individual internal areas for further learning.
Pedagogy	The process for teaching children that is centred on the assumption that teaching is subject-oriented and occurs through transmission of information from the teacher as 'expert' to the student as novice.
Perception	An individual person's perspective regarding a phenomenon and these are informed by their past and present experiences.
Phenomenology	The study of a person's subjective emotional dimension.
Phenomenological Response	The emotional subjective response that a person has towards a change initiative.
Presses	Contextual factors that are enforced on teachers by principals at the school level, and policies and directives at a systemic level.

Key Term	Definition in relation to its use in this thesis
Principal	The person who has the most senior leadership position within a primary school.
Professional Development	Formal or informal learning experiences undertaken by teachers and school leaders that improve their individual professional practice, and a school's collective effectiveness.
Research School	The school where the research was conducted.
Teacher	The person who has the full-time teaching responsibility of students within a primary classroom.
Traditional Model	A dissemination-style of teachers' learning that is characterised by a presenter providing teachers with new knowledge and practice during their attendance at a de-contextualised venue.
Transactional Leaders	A transactional leader sets predetermined goals for teachers, motivates teachers to engage in learning by integrating rewards to enact desired behaviours, and fosters opportunities for teachers to make comparisons between their practices and their peers.
Transformational Leaders	A transformational leader focuses on building school vision; establishing school-level goals; providing intellectual stimulation; offering support; modelling best practice and important organisational values; demonstrating high performance expectations; creating a productive school culture; and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions.
Transrelational Leaders	A transrelational leader views learning as something that coevolves and is constructed within a relationship with others within a particular context. Power is regarded as being distributed throughout a group so all members can have a voice. Transrelational leaders seek to be authentic, transparent, and attuned to the emotional needs of a staff.

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction

Documented in this thesis is Australian research into the phenomenological influences associated with educational change. It contributes and is a response to international research that identifies ongoing concern for finding an effective approach to educational change. The inherent challenge in this concern continues to defy researchers within both the corporate and educational spheres.

This introductory chapter offers a preamble for this dissertation. The research problem is identified, and its context is acknowledged. The significance of the research is explained, and the research design described. Finally, a chapter-by-chapter outline of the thesis is provided presenting the overall shape and sequence of the research journey and the important outcomes it produced.

1.2 Autobiographical Context

The professional experiences I had in the early stages of my career provided the impetus for conducting this research. Having commenced my teaching career at the start of the 21st Century means that I am well accustomed to the frequency of additional demands that are expected of a teacher of educational change in this era. Like many other countries, Australian governments are continually refining and diversifying their expectations of schooling. Thus, as a teacher within a large educational system strongly influenced by government policies, referred to in this thesis as the Catholic Education Office, my colleagues and I have been regularly led by the school principal to inculcate new expectations into our existing professional practices, sometimes more successfully than at other times. Despite this variability, I am generally open to being challenged to try new theoretical and pedagogical ideas.

Of particular interest to me was the change initiative that was introduced at the research school, which is provided with the pseudonym of Emmanuel College in this research. I had been a teacher of some seven years at this particular school prior to commencing this research. My previous largely positive professional experiences with educational change contrasted markedly with that which I came to experience with the particular change at Emmanuel College. This sparked my sense of curiosity and wonder, and this led me to want

to explore further how other teachers within this particular school were experiencing the change. Indeed, some informal conversations with my colleagues at the research school gave me an insight that strong feelings existed towards the underlying tenets of this change initiative. It appeared that the progress and the effectiveness of the change strategy were being affected by the teachers' subjective phenomenological response to it.

1.3 Research Context

Prior to conducting this research, the principal of Emmanuel College had been a classroom teacher at this school for one year and then Assistant to the Principal (Administration) for three years. Shortly after commencing his principal appointment at Emmanuel College in 2004, the new principal announced at a staff meeting his intention to introduce a new guided reading teaching and learning program into the school. The basis for this initiative was the principal's desire to respond to the lower than expected performances of Emmanuel College students in national tests of reading and literacy. Thus, the perceived need for such a change gained the initial support of all teachers at the research school.

The principal's change initiative involved a re-conceptualisation of professional development. An external consultant (the 'change facilitator') was employed by the principal to work with each teacher at the school to raise the quality of their teaching of guided reading. The personalised and contextualised dimension of this approach to professional development appealed to most of the teachers at first as it was perceived that the change facilitator would support them in implementing pedagogical practice to meet the wide diversity of learners that were in their respective classrooms. However, teachers' initial positive perspective had made a considerable shift within the first two years of the change initiative.

During the first two years of the change initiative, the principal made it explicitly clear to staff during staff meetings that the change facilitator's role at this school was to provide professional development for teachers in accordance with his vision for how teaching and learning would occur at Emmanuel College. The principal's vision was for the change facilitator to model a 'standard-style' of practice in the context of teachers' classrooms, and then return periodically to observe their implementation of this school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading. Feedback by the change facilitator was to be provided to teachers and this would highlight any areas of perceived deficiency in terms of teachers' compliance with the change facilitator's modelled practice.

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Prior to the implementation of the principal's change initiative, teachers at Emmanuel College had been afforded autonomy and the opportunity to experiment with pedagogical practice for the teaching of reading. There were no documented expectations that defined how teachers were to teach guided reading or how frequently this was to occur each week. However, the change initiative at Emmanuel College appeared to be highly restrictive in the way teachers had to teach guided reading. From 2005 onwards, the principal in conjunction with the change facilitator documented clear expectations that defined for teachers how they were to teach guided reading at Emmanuel College, and they outlined their expectations that guided reading would be taught in every classroom at this school from the Preparatory year to Year 7 for a minimum of eight hours per week (Emmanuel College, 2006a). Despite teachers' impression that the change initiative was highly prescriptive, it commenced as described in 2005, and with the apparent initial support of each and every teacher at the school. The scheduled classroom observations of teachers' pedagogy for guided reading occurred periodically along with the subsequent professional feedback sessions between the change facilitator and teachers.

Importantly, the introduction of this change initiative seemed to bring about improved student achievement outcomes in the national reading and literacy tests. However, this form of success was short lived as the student national test results subsequently decreased even though the change strategy continued and became even more prescriptive in its demands upon the teachers. It seemed that the more prescriptive it became, the less effective was its professional impact. Although the teachers were doing everything expected of them, something else was influencing the success of the change process. From a practical perspective, the teachers appeared to be extremely compliant and committed to the guided reading program yet its beneficial effects were no longer being achieved. Arguably, their professional practice for guided reading was being influenced more by how they felt about the program than by how they enacted the program. Hence, this possible thesis provided the context for this research.

1.4 Research Problem and Purpose

For more than 150 years, objectivity and rationality have been the compass markers that have guided how change processes and practices have been enacted within schools, yet it is becoming regarded today as insufficient (Fullan, 2007; Hamel, 2007; Wheatley, 2006). Thus, leaders of educational change are no longer being called to be more rational and

objective. Instead, they are being called to be more relational, and this involves them being more open, communicative, and reflective about what is occurring and how change is affecting the individuals that are involved (Branson, 2010). This call is foregrounding leaders' need to be cognisant of the role that subjectivity plays in shaping the effectiveness of leading educational change. Hamel's (2007) lament is that despite leaders attesting to the value of promoting the initiative and creativity of their staff, "they are, by training and temperament, managers paid to oversee, control, and administer" (p. 60). This perspective is being particularly compounded in the current political climate whereby school leaders are being expected to facilitate ongoing cycles of change to realise improved teacher quality as well as continued improvement in student achievement outcomes, as measured by NAPLAN testing (Ministerial Council for Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 2008b). Wheatley (2006) argues that for educational change to start being successfully enacted, there needs to be a greater awareness of how teachers feel towards their participation in change, instead of only focusing on the policies and processes that are intended to curtail their contribution to change. Senge, Lichtenstein, Kaeufer, Bradbury and Carroll (2007) reiterate the importance of leaders of change being authentic, and this involves them being true to themselves and learning to live in an authentic relationship with others.

Arguably, what has been missing from educational change initiatives in past decades is an appreciation of the role that subjectivity plays in shaping the way that change is enacted and sustained within a school context. Subjectivity is not a separate and discreet phenomenon, but rather, it "pervades the entire environment in which the change is taking place" (Branson, 2010, p. 17). Subjectivity needs to be seen as an integral part of a holistic perspective on leading change (Branson, 2010). People develop an understanding of themselves and their world by incorporating both subjective intuitive knowledge developed from their senses, and the discursive objective knowledge that is constructed from their experiences in their world (Branson, 2010). Thus, the enactment of change is informed by an amalgam of people's objective and subjective responses to experiences and expectations. While people may, on the one hand, have formed a positive view of change from their objective viewpoint, the way they actually engage in change can be influenced by their "idiosyncratic values, motives, beliefs, and feelings" (Branson, 2010, p. 23).

In a rationally dominated world, people have a need to seek to explain events and control processes for change (Evans & Chauvin, 1993). By striving to objectify phenomenon, people

can overlook the subjective influence that a change initiative may have on their behaviour and attitudes (Evans & Chauvin, 1993). In the context of leading change, an over-emphasis on the objective dimension throughout past decades "has led to a dependence on solving the infuriatingly elusive effective change process puzzle by concentrating on the strategy, trying to finetune the plan to ensure it incorporated every essential piece of the jigsaw" (Branson, 2010, p. 18). It has not been for want of trying that leaders have not yet discovered the 'perfect plan' for leading educational change. Having a purely objective mindset towards change has been deficient as it has failed to produce effective educational change (Branson, 2010). No longer can educational change continue to focus only on the objective dimension of change. Instead, there needs to be a greater appreciation of the role that subjectivity plays in shaping the behaviour of people during the introduction and sustainability of a change initiative.

At the research school, teachers were expected to periodically work with the change facilitator and to teach guided reading according to her modelled approach. Marris' (1974) perspective is that when teachers experience a change, such as the one at the research school, the intended objective phenomenon can elicit profound feelings amongst teachers. Branson (2010) agrees as he explains that people "do not live in an entirely objective world devoid of feelings, emotions, values, beliefs, and sensitivities" (p. 14), and so each objective situation that a person experiences elicits a subjective response which, in turn, shapes the attitudes and behaviours that they have towards engaging in future cycles of change. Fullan (1982) argues that neglecting the phenomenology of change has been "at the heart of the spectacular lack of success of most educational reforms" in past decades (p. 4). It is for this reason, that this research is focused on explicating teachers' phenomenological experiences of the principal's change initiative introduced at the research school. While it is acknowledged that the "subjective and objective of an experience arise together as different poles of the same act of cognition" (Branson, 2010, p. 25), for the purposes of this research, these two terms are referred to separately. By prizing apart these two inter-connected dimensions, it is anticipated that a greater understanding can be achieved of what Fullan (1982) and Branson (2010) refer to as an 'overlooked insight' in educational change, that is the role that subjectivity plays in influencing educational change.

Indeed, a review of the Australian educational environment provides credible support towards accepting the likely presence of this 'overlooked insight'. During the past decade, the Australian government, like those in many other nations, has sought to have a world-

class education system, and to achieve this they maintain that teachers must be well-trained and highly knowledgeable (Department of Education & Training, 2015; Gillard, 2008, 2009; Rudd & Gillard, 2008; Rudd & Smith, 2007). This perspective has led to a strong proclivity for introducing educational change processes and practices that have been premised on a purely objective perspective of change. This mindset has led to the introduction of a suite of educational reforms that have been intended to elevate the quality of teachers' knowledge and practice (Australian Curriculum and Assessment Reporting Authority [ACARA], 2010, 2012; Education Queensland, 2010; Education Services Australia, 2011a, 2011b, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; Ministerial Council for Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 2008a, 2008b). The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL], a government-endorsed body, has played an instrumental role in the development and promulgation of educational reforms in this current era. Teachers have been positioned as both the problem and the solution for the perceived paucity in teacher quality in this nation throughout the past decades (Avidov-Ungar, 2016; Day, 2004; Mockler, 2013).

Teacher quality has come to be regarded as a measurable construct and annual National Assessment Programme for Literacy and Numeracy [NAPLAN] testing data have been reported in digital and print media as a proxy measure of teacher quality. This perception harks back to a pre-professional era of education (Hargreaves, 1998, 2000) where a teacher's quality was gauged by their level of replication of expected practice. This current perspective on teacher quality negates the critical influence that teachers' individuality has on shaping the way they 'craft' their practice (Barr & Mellor, 2016; O'Connor, 2008). It is argued that no two teachers teach in the same way, nor are classrooms identical contexts, so it is unreasonable to expect teachers to implement pedagogical practice according to a standard imposed style. In doing this, the richness and diversity that has underpinned teaching for decades is becoming negated in lieu of embedding a culture of compliance into education.

It is unlikely that an emphasis on embedding a culture of compliance, and its associated control and accountability measures, will result in an elevation in teacher quality (Hursh, 2011, 2013; Hursh & Henderson, 2011). This approach to education seeks to de-professionalise teachers, and it negates their opportunity to build a positive professional identity (Carpenter, Weber & Schugurensky, 2012; Hursh, 2011, 2013). Furthermore, this approach fails to acknowledge that teaching is more than an objective cognitive profession. Teachers' professional identities are premised on a high level of social interaction and there is a strong emotional element as well (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop, 2000, 2004; Canrinus,

Helms-Lorenz, Beijaard, Buitink & Hofman, 2011; Crow et al. 2016; Hargreaves, 1998, 2000, 2005). However, in the current era of education, the subjective and social dimensions of teaching are being disregarded as teachers are being forced to become "drones and clones of policy-makers' ambitions" or principals' expectations (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 2).

Teaching is an emotion-laden profession, and a teacher's sense of professionalism and professional identity are couched in the way they 'craft' their practice (Crow et al. 2016; Kelchtermans, 2005). Thus, the introduction of a change initiative in a school context, can lead to teachers having a considerable subjective response to change (O'Connor, 2008). This can guide the level of will and commitment they bring to their role as educators (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Reio, 2005). When teachers feel included, accepted, and valued as professionals, they are more likely to implement high-quality practice than if they feel limited and frustrated by the restrictions imposed on them within their school context (Hargreaves, 1994, 1998; Zembylas, 2003). The subjectivity of teachers has been typically "considered worthless" by governments (Constanti & Gibbs, 2004, p. 247) and consequently, it has been regarded as an overlooked area in educational research throughout the decades (Branson, 2010, 2011). The role of subjectivity is only just beginning to be more fully explored as a potential key contributor to influencing how teachers embrace change to their pedagogical practice.

Subjectivity arguably has a critical role to play in shaping the way that teachers embrace opportunities for learning and the way teachers implement pedagogical practice at the classroom level. Research from schools in America has shown that disregarding teachers' subjectivity and instead embedding control, compliance, and accountability measures, in an attempt to raise teacher quality, has had deleterious effects on teachers' sense of professionalism (Tschannen-Moran, 2009) and has resulted in them expressing generalised feelings of demoralisation (Carpenter et al. 2012). Findings such as these highlight that introducing and sustaining change initiatives within a school context is more than an objective process initiated and facilitated by school leaders. Change invariably involves a phenomenological response, and this requires school leaders to view teachers as more than:

> …. a generic teacher, branded as a corporate entity and defined in terms of generic competencies and skills - interchangeable parts in a global education system with uniform practices including testing, mandated textbooks, scripted teaching, school-based management, marketization and economic management issues (Mayer, Luke & Luke 2008, p. 81).

Being cognisant of the phenomenological influence that change has on a teacher requires a paradigm shift in the way many school leaders conceptualise their professional role as successful leaders of change. Arguably, this necessitates a shift from a managerial and authoritarian objective mindset (Bass, 1985; Bolden, Gosling, Marturano & Dennison, 2003; Tracey & Hinkin, 1998) to a style of leadership premised on relationality and authenticity (Branson, 2011; Branson, Franken & Penney, 2016; Duignan, 2014; Eacott, 2015; Uhl-Bien, 2006). Thus, the purpose of this research is to explore the phenomenological experiences that teachers in a single-school context have regarding the implementation of a principal's change initiative.

1.5 The Design of the Research

The literature review (Chapter Three) generated four research questions, which governed the conduct of the research design. They are:

- In what ways did the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College impact on the professional identity of the teachers?
- How do teachers from different career stages respond to the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College?
- In what ways do teachers feel the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College influences their sense of professionalism?
- How do the dispositional characteristics of the principal and change facilitator influence the way teachers engage with the change initiative at Emmanuel College?

Given the nature of the study and the research questions, the following research design, presented in Table 1.1, offered an appropriate theoretical framework.

Table 1.1

Research Design

Epistemology	Constructionism
Research Paradigm	Interpretivism
Theoretical perspective	Symbolic interactionism
Methodology	Case study
Data Collection Strategies	Document analysis
	Semi-structured interviews
	Survey

1.5.1 Epistemology

This research is based on an epistemological approach of constructionism with symbolic interactionism as the theoretical perspective. Constructionism was chosen because it is important to gain an insight into the relationship between the phenomenon being explored and participants' perception of it. Reality is not an objective phenomenon (Candy, 1989; Neuman, 2006; Stahl, 2003). Each person constructs their own views and understandings about their world based on the meaningful social interactions that they have with the people they interact with. Knowledge regarding an experience is constructed and it is "a negotiated creation of meaning" (De Koster, Devise, Flament & Loots, 2004, p. 75). A constructionist epistemology does not seek to present law-like generalisations with applicability across contexts; but rather to generate idiographic detail that provides deep insight into participants' perceptions of an experience within a specific context (Schnelker, 2006).

1.5.2 Research Paradigm

In exploring how teachers view and construct their understanding of, and professional response to, an educational change process, this study invites an interpretivist design. The underlying premise of interpretivism is that knowledge of reality is a social construction. Interpretivism recognises the subjective component in human action and the role this plays in shaping behaviour (Chowdhury, 2014; Elster, 2007; Merton, 1995; Walsham, 1995). Schopenhauer argued that people's interpretation of experiences and their resultant responses is guided by their subjective feelings, rather than by objective perspectives of an experience (Payne, 1974). Thus, interpretivist research seeks to explore the meanings and motives that guide people's actions (Chowdhury, 2014; Whitley, 1984). From this paradigm, researchers seek to see the world through the eyes of the people being studied, allowing them to have multiple perspectives of reality, rather than having the 'one reality' assumed by a positivist research paradigm (Greener, 2008). Interpretivist researchers go beyond the immediate situation to explore how people's subjectivity guides the way they think and act towards a particular phenomenon (Chowdhury, 2014; Lin, 1998). Interpretivism promotes the use of qualitative data in the pursuit of knowledge (Chowdhury, 2014; Kaplan & Maxwell, 1994).

The paradigm of interpretivism is concerned with the "uniqueness of a particular situation" (Chowdhury, 2014, p. 434), and so it aims to generate an in-depth understanding of the process of individual meaning-making. Thus, the particular focus of this study is to explore how participants feel about their interactions with each other, and also how they create

meaning from contextual expectations. Given the diversity of the teaching staff in the research school, and the network of interaction between the participants and their wider school community, an interpretivist design offers an appropriate research paradigm.

1.5.3 Theoretical Perspective

1.5.3.1 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism provides an interpretivist perspective through which to understand the meaning-making processes of participants within this study (Blumer, 1969). This perspective "focuses on the human being and tries to understand human behaviour" (Charon, 2001, p. 12) and to interpret the social meanings people attach to their world (Charon, 2004). As reality is not a fixed phenomenon, how people view their world is constantly influenced by their ongoing interpretation of their experience and their context (Handberg, Thorne, Midtgaard, Nielsen & Lomborg, 2015). Meaning is "not given in the nature of things themselves, but emerges in an interpretive process" (Carlson, 2012, p. 458). People and their context are inseparable, and because of this "truth is tentative and never absolute" (Benzies & Allen, 2001, p. 544). The meaning of an experience changes depending on the context and also the individual that experiences this within a context. Each individual interprets an experience based on their personal and professional identity and their experiences within a context, and they then act on the basis of their interpretation and the meaning they attach to these experiences (Blumer, 1969; Morrison, 2002). In recognition of the interconnection that a context has with individuals' perceptions of a phenomenon, the characteristics of the school-learning environment where a change initiative was implemented are gathered and presented in this research.

1.5.4 Case Study

Exploration of a contemporary experience within a real-life school context can occur using case study methodology as the complexities, intersecting factors, and varied perspectives can be elucidated (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Noor, 2008; Yin, 2009). This research draws on case study methodology as it involves exploring participant experiences of a change initiative within a single-school context. The specific school community provided a unique bounded setting for the study. The methodology is characterised by the researcher as the 'primary instrument' of data collection and analysis, an inductive investigative strategy, and the product being richly descriptive (Merriam, 1998, p. 179).

A particular single-school case study was chosen for this research as it provided a clearly bounded yet fertile ground to explore the teachers' phenomenological experiences of an imposed change initiative. It is acknowledged that a person's subjective response at any given time can be influenced by a wide variety of stimuli. For a teacher, such stimuli can come from both within and without their particular school context. Moreover, the 'within' stimuli is idiosyncratic to not only the individual teacher but also to the respective school context. No two individuals interpret the same stimuli in the same way and no two contexts provide identical stimuli. Hence, in order to minimise the stimuli variability, the choice of a single school case study appeared more suited to this study.

1.5.5 Participants

The perspectives of the principal, change facilitator, and teachers are elucidated in this research. At the research school, there were 28 teachers who taught classes ranging from the Preparatory year through to Year 7. The professional experience of teachers at Emmanuel College ranged from graduate teachers who were entering the profession right through to those who had taught for more than thirty years.

1.5.6 Data Gathering Strategies

Pertinent data were gleaned from public school documents such as newsletters, principal reports, and digital communications distributed by the principal to all staff. An electronic teacher survey was administered to each teacher at Emmanuel College (n=28) following receipt of their signed participant consent forms. The survey used for this research was developed by drawing on three existing quantitative instruments, namely: The Teacher Perceptions of Professional Learning Survey (Yates & Harris, 2003), The School Level Environment Questionnaire (Rentoul & Fraser, 1983), and the National Survey of Guided Reading Practices (Ford & Opitz, 2008). The survey developed for this research required teachers to respond to questions presented in a Likert-style format.

Semi-structured interviews were also individually conducted with each of the sixteen teachers at Emmanuel College who volunteered to share their subjective experiences relating to the implementation of the principal's change initiative. Two of the early career teachers who were interviewed were graduates and three were in their second career stage. There were six teachers in the third career stage who volunteered to participate in a semi-structured interview, and a further five teachers who were in their fourth career stage. In addition, semi-

structured interviews were conducted with the principal of Emmanuel College as well as with the change facilitator who was employed to work with teachers at this school.

1.6 Significance of the Research

Despite the availability of an abundant amount of guiding literature, only about 30% of planned educational changes are successful (Fullan, 1998; Hargreaves, 2005). As far back as 1998, Fullan wrote that; "despite massive inputs of resources and despite numerous different types of plans and strategies, very little significant change has occurred at the school level corresponding to the intended consequences of these innovations" (p. 217). An understanding far more recently shared by Hargreaves (2005) who argued that despite all of our previous endeavours and our "impressive knowledge base and expertise about the strategic and cultural aspects of educational change, too many change efforts remain disappointing and ineffective. Successful school change on a widespread basis continues to be infuriatingly elusive" (p. 282). It would seem that little progress had been made during the ensuing seven years between the writing of these two documents towards learning how to better lead educational change. This impression of an incapacity by school principals to successfully lead educational change is further supported by Clement (2014) who writes that, "despite decades of educational reform, the way that teachers teach, and students learn has changed little and that government policy mandates have minimal impact on teaching in classrooms" (p. 39). Arguably, many school principals are yet to establish how to successfully lead educational change.

There is no point in looking to the corporate world for the answer because its organisational change success rate is as bad, if not worse than, the education context. Indeed, large-scale international research indicates only a 30% or less success rate for desired organisational change. Moreover, the longitudinal research by De Smet, Schaninger and Smith (2014) on behalf of the large multinational research and professional development corporation of the McKinsey Company shows that this 30% success rate has remained consistent since 1995 regardless of the nature of the organisational context. This view is supported by internationally acclaimed business management and leadership researcher and speaker, Margaret Wheatley, who writes that, "senior corporate leaders report that up to 75% of their change projects do not yield the promised results" (2006, p. 138). Hence, it is not surprising then that Harvard Business College professor, Gary Hamel, suggests that, "perhaps the problem with [change] leadership is that we have reached the end of management. Perhaps we have more or less mastered the sciences of organizing human beings, allocating

resources, defining objectives, laying out plans, and minimizing deviations from best practice" (2007, p. 4). Clearly there is something essential missing from our understanding of how to successfully lead organisational change regardless of its context – educational or corporate.

Not only has successful educational change largely failed due to an inherent deficiency in its implementation, but also because of intrinsic longevity and sustainability issues. For educational change to make a contribution to elevating student achievement outcomes, there needs to be a shift away from the selection and short-term adoption of change initiatives to one of sustained improvement (Crowther, 2011). Pedagogical innovations are constantly being suggested for implementation within schools, and it is at the discretion of principals whether such innovations are adopted. Throughout the years, educational change has been sporadically implemented and it has led to a continual cycle of pedagogical 'fads' in education. These have led to the ongoing adoption and then abandonment of particular pedagogical practice. Adoption of new initiatives in some schools has been based on teachers' preference, the offer of free resources, and/or attached funding. These factors contribute a plausible explanation for how dismal initiatives can become institutionalised within a school while highly successful initiatives can be abandoned (Huberman & Miles, 1984). Within schools, "islands of educational hope may occasionally be built, but they are of limited value if they drop below sea level whenever a new educational wave sweeps through" (Crowther, 2011, p. xvii). Educational change has traditionally been "considered 'done' when a new program or practice was decided upon" and provided *to* teachers (Fullan, 1992, p. 10). However, it is now acknowledged that for educational change to be effective it needs longevity if there will be any significant effects on enhancing the quality of teachers or improving student achievement outcomes (Fullan, 1992).

Specific to this particular study, it is acknowledged that various educational reforms have been introduced throughout the decades with the intent of raising the quality of teachers' pedagogical practice (Fullan, 2005, 2006, 2011; Hargreaves, 1998, 2005; Turney, 1969). However, despite these efforts, embedding and sustaining effective educational reform has been "neither deep nor sustainable" (Fullan, 2005, p. 1) and remains an "indefinable" (Branson, 2010, p. 9) and "infuriatingly elusive" goal (Hargreaves, 2005, p. 282). Clearly, there is more to be known about how to successfully lead educational change especially that which endeavours to raise the quality of teaching within a school context.

To this end, it is noted that since the 1960s, literature on educational change and change theories have been centred predominantly on exploring the objective dimension of change, and this could be due to its ability to be observed and quantified. However, "with every objective situation there is a subjective response" (Branson, 2010, p. 14). This position reflects that of Marris (1974) who argued that change elicits intense feelings and requires a paradigm shift in the values and beliefs of teachers within a particular school context. Thus, when embedding and sustaining educational change within a school environment, a principal requires not only a vision and commitment to change, but also a clear sense of the professional needs of the teachers at that school, and an awareness of the extent that they are emotionally invested in the particular process of change (Crowther, 2011). Without being cognisant of teachers' phenomenological experiences of change, any change initiatives introduced by a principal will be "conceptually, strategically, and practically incomplete" (Crowther, 2011, p. xviii).

This is to argue that change affects teachers' subjectivity and this is displayed in idiosyncratic ways within a school-based context. The regularity of change can affect people's subjectivity as "change involves loss, and people can sustain only so much loss at any one time" (Heifetz & Linksy, 2002, p. 119). Further to this point, Heifetz & Linsky (2002) explain:

> People do not resist change, per se. People resist loss. You appear dangerous to people when you question their values, beliefs, or habits of a lifetime. You place yourself on the line when you tell people what they need to hear rather than what they want to hear. Although you may see with clarity and passion a promising future of progress and gain, people will see with equal passion the losses you are asking them to sustain (p. 12).

Feelings of loss can manifest differently amongst teachers and result in the demonstration of a range of feelings including fear, anxiety, doubt, reservation, anger and alienation" (Kouzes & Posner, 2000, p. 78). Teachers can also experience intense emotions if they feel a sense of disconnection with the purpose and significance of a particular change initiative (Hargreaves, 2005). Wheatley (2006) argues that people will only truly change if they decide that the change is meaningful for them. Thus, resistance to change can be demonstrated if teachers perceive that a particular change initiative has "a trivial, obscure or personally irrelevant purpose" (Branson, 2010, p. 15). Change initiatives that are implemented with little or no regard for teachers' subjectivity are likely to fail (Hargreaves, 2005).

The role that subjectivity plays in educational change is by no means a new phenomenon as it has been acknowledged in literature for decades. It is only in recent times that theorists are beginning to unravel the area of subjectivity, and research is exploring the depths of its influence on educational change. Theorists such as Fullan (1982) and Hargreaves (2005), and more recently Branson (2010, 2011), Duignan (2014), Eacott (2015) and Uhl-Bien (2006) are strongly advocating for further research in the area of phenomenology as they consider that neglecting the phenomenology of change, that is how teachers feel towards change, leads to our understanding being limited and ineffectual. Considering subjectivity as a frill rather than a fundamental influential element of a change process could account for the non-successful and non-sustainable history of change initiatives in education throughout the decades (Hargreaves, 2005). Fullan's (1982) position is that "neglecting the phenomenology of change….is at the heart of the spectacular lack of success of most educational reforms" (p. 4).

This research seeks to integrate and transcend existing literature by exploring the perceptions that teachers within a single-school context had towards a principal's change initiative. This initiative involved the principal setting an expectation that all teachers at Emmanuel College adopt a particular approach to the teaching of guided reading. Teachers from all career stages were expected to become familiar with this style of guided reading by engaging in personalised and contextualised learning that was facilitated by a change facilitator. Thus, the purpose of this research is to explore the teachers' phenomenological experiences of this particular imposed change initiative within a single-school context in the Australian state of Queensland. In doing so, this research will provide an invaluable empirical contribution to the growing body of theoretical support for a far more phenomenologically informed understanding of educational change leadership.

1.7 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is organised into seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the research problem and begins by providing a brief introduction to the performance-oriented culture that is evident in education today. This type of culture is driven by an objective mindset that is premised on the perspective that change is necessary to ensure Australia remains competitive at a global level now and into the future. In this chapter, it is also acknowledged that there is a subjective dimension to change. This, however, can often be overlooked as an irrelevant and non-salient factor when implementing and sustaining educational change.

In Chapter Two, educational change is discussed as the teacher quality agenda has gained prominence at an international and national level. Respective national rankings on international 'league tables' of student achievement has fuelled various governments' desire to raise the quality of teachers within schools to effect improvement in student achievement outcomes. In Australia, the government reform agenda is mirroring that of countries such as England and the United States of America. Teacher quality is being targeted and intended improvement is to be realised by the introduction of processes that involve control, compliance, and accountability. Furthermore, the research school is located in the Australian state of Queensland, and state government agendas have also targeted teacher quality by making amendments to how teachers are expected to engage in teaching and learning. Also, the school where the research is conducted is owned and administered by the Catholic Education Office, and thus it is guided by various systemic-level policies and practices that focus on the quality of teachers' pedagogy and engagement in learning.

Chapter Three presents a review of the literature aligned with four areas of scholarship. These are: change, teacher learning, professional identity, and leadership. Change is described as being enacted through various steps or phases within an individual's environment (Kritsonis, 2005) and key change theories are presented. Teachers have different learning needs and styles to that of students, and this is discussed with reference to Knowles' (1998) theory of adult learning which is premised on the assumptions of andragogy. Thus, discussion is provided in regard to the various approaches to teacher learning that can be implemented within school contexts, and how each of these differ in the way teachers are positioned as learners. Also, in this chapter, Huberman's (1989) career stages are explained as well as Hargreaves' (2005) ages of professionalism, which leads on to an exploration of professional identity. Here it is raised that teachers' professional identities are premised not only on an objective dimension, but also a subjective dimension (Crow et al. 2016; Hargreaves, 2001; Nias, 1996). Thus, the pivotal role that subjectivity plays in shaping teachers' professional identity is discussed. Then, finally, the fourth area of scholarship explored relates to the leadership of a principal within a school. Styles of leadership are discussed, and the influence that these have on shaping teachers' subjectivity are explicated. From this review of literature, an overarching research question and four contributing questions emerged, and these are stated in this chapter.

In Chapter Four, the research design is explained. This research is guided by a constructionist epistemology and conducted within an interpretive paradigm. It is recognised

that each educator at the research school constructs their own meaning about engaging in the principal's change initiative that is intended to target improvement in their teaching of guided reading. These perceptions are shaped by their past and present experiences and the social interactions they have with other educators within this single-school context. The critical role that context plays in providing the social conditions for learning and for shaping the quality of teachers' practice are acknowledged, and this leads to symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969) being selected as the theoretical perspective underpinning this research. As this research explores a change initiative in a bounded single-school context, case study is described as the relevant methodology.

In Chapter Five, the research data are presented and analysed in the five sections of Predispositions, Engagement, Teacher Learning, Leadership, and Experiences. The *Predispositions* section establishes specific support for this study within this particular school. Many teachers at this school acknowledged the benefits of change while simultaneously believing that many of the teachers would not want to be involved in the proposed change initiative. There was not a commonly held position as to why this conflicting perspective existed. The chapter then seeks to explore this conflicting perspective by first discussing the issue of the teachers' attitude towards both their *Engagement* within the school and the nature of *Teacher Learning* so as to illustrate the influence of any pre-existing beliefs or practices amongst the teachers that could affect their attitude and involvement in this particular change initiative. Next, the important place of the *Leadership* of the desired change is examined both from that provided by the principal as well as that provided by the change facilitator. Here the respective influences upon the teachers of these two leaders, as associated with both their actions and their mannerisms, is described and discussed. The final section explores the reflections of the teachers from their *Experiences* of being involved in the change initiative at Emmanuel College.

In Chapter Six, the findings are discussed in relation to the literature, and this is organised according to the four contributing research questions. This chapter begins by exploring the responses that teachers from different career stages had towards the principal's vision for a school-wide approach to teacher learning. Next, the extent to which the teachers' sense of professionalism was influenced by the principal's change initiative is explored. The third section of this chapter highlights the ways that the change initiative at Emmanuel College impacted the professional identities of the teachers. The final section in this chapter explores

the influence that the principal and change facilitator's dispositional characteristics had on shaping the way that change was enacted at Emmanuel College.

In Chapter Seven, the findings of this research are summarised, and conclusions are drawn from a synthesis of educators' perceptions regarding the implementation and sustainability of the change initiative at Emmanuel College. Recommendations emerged from the conclusions that were drawn from this research and these are presented in this chapter. The contribution that this study makes to the field of literature on educational change is also discussed in the final chapter of this thesis.

CHAPTER TWO
THE SEARCH FOR QUALITY TEACHING

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this research is to explore teachers' phenomenological experiences of a change initiative in a single-school context. In the context of this particular research, the term phenomenology is used to refer to teachers' subjective or emotional response to change (Fullan, 2005). Of note, the focus of this particular change initiative was to improve the quality of teaching, and thereby student learning, in the specific area of guided reading. Thus, the purpose of this chapter is to introduce the concept of teacher quality, and how this has impacted the professional life of Australian teachers in general and the Emmanuel College teachers in particular. In doing so, this discussion highlights the level of familiarity that the Emmanuel College teachers already had about the pervasive influence of the ongoing and relatively intensive search for teacher quality on their professional lives and, thus, the likely acceptability of this being the stated aim of the proposed change, which is the focus of this particular research. Arguably, the principal's desire to introduce an educational change that sought to improve teacher quality for guided reading would not, in itself, have been a surprise, or immediately off-putting, for the teachers as life-long learning has long been championed as an expectation of those involved in the teaching profession.

2.2 The Issue of Quality Teaching

For much of the past decade the teaching profession has been the source of ongoing criticism as public commentary, increasingly frequent print and digital media articles, and political campaigns have deplored some key academic standards of Australian students. Australia's lower than expected rankings on international 'league tables' of student achievement have been attributed to general deficiencies in the quality of teaching. While the majority of people in this nation have little awareness of what actually constitutes the role of the teacher in this current era, the fact that they once attended school themselves seems to position people as 'experts' in what constitutes high-quality teachers and teaching.

> Everyone has been to school and so everyone fancies him or herself as somewhat of an expert on education…politicians, parents, and the person in the street all feel fully qualified to venture an opinion (Wheldall, 2005, p. 582).

These self-proclaimed "armchair experts" may view teaching standards poorly because their current perceptions of the profession do not align with their romanticised notions of "how

effective teachers were back in their day" (Wheldall, 2005, p. 582). Some educationalists may often be quick to dismiss the perspectives of 'armchair experts'. However, it is argued that diversity of perspective can enrich the body of knowledge regarding quality teaching. The perception people have of teaching is filtered through the lens of their past experience and this makes education a very emotive and topical point of conversation for people from all demographics, particularly in the current political context.

Education is a key political platform. On the one hand, people want governments to provide good education for their children. However, on the other hand, the cost associated with striving to do this consumes a very large part of a government's budget. Education strikes at the heart of the voting public. Politicians utilise education to their benefit and policies can be used as leverage to garnish the support of voters. Often this is achieved by emotive means to foster a sense of urgency for improving the quality of teachers, so that Australia remains competitive on an international level. They facilitate this process by promoting "education as Australia's future" (Rudd, 2011, p. 1) and then juxtaposing this with the notion that 'education is in crisis' (Dinham, 2007, 2013). Past Australian Prime Minister Rudd's (2011) speech encapsulates the government's view regarding the crucial importance that education has for shaping an individual and also the national economy into the future.

> For an individual, education is an investment that helps them achieve their human potential. It exposes people to new bodies of knowledge. It exposes people to new ways of thinking. It opens new employment opportunities. It gives people the tools to negotiate the rapid changes of this new century – and to prosper. It also instils the capacity to lead. But for nations at large, it is much more than this…It becomes the engine room of ideas, of innovation, of imagining a different national future. It provides structural benefits to nations across the board – in governance, productivity, health and gender-equality… Education is the building block of economies … the foundation stone of nations (Rudd, 2011, p. 1).

During her time as the Australian Prime Minister, Gillard also championed for increased teacher quality by citing its connection with the nation's present and future economic prosperity. She stated that "tolerating underachievement in schooling means accepting a loss of economic growth and productivity that we cannot afford" (p. 2). The government's current position remains centred on the premise that the quality of teaching in this nation is jeopardising Australia's chance at being a highly productive nation with a competitive national economy. Further to this, the government maintains that without intervention to address the perceived paucity in teacher quality, there will be deleterious effects on Australia's productivity and economy into the future.

By discrediting the quality of teaching in Australia, politicians seek to position themselves as 'the saviour' for this 'national disaster' thereby endeavouring to enhance their electoral success. However, such educational 'saviour' claims ultimately mean that when in government the successful party feels compelled to introduce a suite of policies and procedures aimed at rectifying the perceived paucity in teacher quality. Thus, for the past five federal elections in Australia, teacher quality has been a key agenda item. Tomazin (2016) maintains that:

> …regardless of when the federal election takes place… [these] things are certain. First: education will be a key battleground, with the perennial tug-of-war over school funding already reopening old wounds. Second: the debate will be as divisive as ever, with teacher quality and greater accountability among the central themes (p. 1).

Arguably, one of the most significant such educational reforms to be enacted by an Australian government was the introduction of standardised national testing. Following the election of the Labor government in 2007, their 'Education Revolution' policy was launched. This was intended to make schooling transparent, accountable, and open to choice (Gillard, 2008; Rudd & Smith, 2007). It was during 2008 to 2013 that the Labor government implemented this particular "extensive policy reform suite" (Gerrard & Farrell, 2014, p. 4), and it resulted in the implementation of a national standardised testing programme [NAPLAN] (MCEETYA, 2008b), the school comparison website [MySchool] (ACARA, 2010), the documentation of professional standards for teachers (Education Services Australia, 2011a), and the introduction of a standardised national Australian curriculum (ACARA, 2012). This standard national curriculum was developed with the intention of equipping today's students with the knowledge and skills to "compete in a globalised world and to thrive in the information-rich workplaces of the future" (ACARA, 2012, p. 26).

It can be argued that public opinion has been swayed towards perceiving that the current teaching workforce is underperforming, and this critical opinion is facilitated by the scaremongering of politicians, and the readiness of journalists to unquestionably print such opinions in their quest to publish highly topical print and digital media articles (Barr & Mellor, 2016). The ongoing barrage of criticism is presented to the public without evidence to justify the claims that teachers are of poor quality. For example, teacher quality was explored in the *Top of the Class: Report on the inquiry into teacher education* published in 2007. This document noted that the teacher education system was not in crisis (House of

Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training of the Federal Australian Government, 2007). Further to this, in 2008, Louden produced a paper titled, *101 Damnations: The persistence of criticism and the absence of evidence about teacher education in Australia* which highlighted that between 1979 and 2006 there had been 100 reviews of teacher education in Australia. Importantly, this paper maintained that none of these reviews portrayed Australian teachers to be 'under par' or were declining in their standard of quality. Despite such evidence to the contrary, the media has appeared to be willing to add uncertainty to concerns about teacher quality in Australian schools.

This discussion shows that the issue around teacher quality in Australian schools has been a hotly debated point and widely publicised in print and digital media for more than a decade (Honan, 2015; Job, 2012; Wilson, Dalton & Baumann, 2015). Newspaper articles influence public opinion regarding phenomenon, and with regards to the quality of teachers these have sought to erode public trust in the teaching profession in this nation (Baroutsis, 2014). Articles have been prominently published in newspapers deploring the standard of Australian teachers and calling for greater accountability for the quality of education provided to students. These articles have carried emotive titles such as: *Six ways Australia's education system is failing our kids* (Wilson et al. 2015), *Six steps to better teachers for Australia's school system* (Jensen, 2015), and *Lament over standards as aspiring teachers flop literacy* (Hosking, 2015) and they have used descriptors such as 'bad teachers', 'a disgrace', and 'abysmal performances'. Portraying the Australian teaching workforce as having considerable deficiencies in quality has been advantageous for the government as it has enabled them to pave the way for the introduction of various initiatives and policies that are underscored by control and accountability processes. Furthermore, the government has then been positioned to claim credit for addressing this perceived deficit in teacher quality by introducing a suite of educational reforms.

Of particular benefit to the media in being able to influence public opinions about the quality of teaching in Australian schools has been its access to, and publication of, the comparative achievement scores of Australian students in standardised international tests. International standardised tests (e.g. the Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA]) have been conducted periodically since 2000, and Australian students' performance on testing has been used to make comparisons with the performance of students in other OECD nations. In some countries, governments and policy-makers have used student performance data proactively to instigate educational reform (Welch, 2014). However, in Australia, it has

been used to fuel the wave of criticism about the quality of teachers and education in this nation. For example, McGaw (2010) analysed the trend performance of Australian students on PISA testing and his intention was to highlight the comparative achievement of Australian students with those from other OECD nations. He identified that there were high performing students in this nation, although a long tail of students who were achieving below the expected standard for their age counteracted this. McGaw (2010) made recommendations for targeted improvements to education that may have had an influential effect on shaping the national profile of performance. However, in the current national educational climate, McGaw's (2010) findings have been used to illustrate the apparent substandard level of education in Australia. For example, as Minister of Education, Pyne (2015) asserted that it is "simply unacceptable for the Australian standardised test results to be lagging behind other nations" (p. 1). Political commentary and media sensationalism have largely attributed the blame for student achievement on the quality of teachers and teacher education, and seem to have had no regard for the influential effect that variables such as socio-economic status, health needs, and funding have had on student achievement. Thus, PISA data are used for discrediting the quality of teaching in this nation, rather than as being a means of informing meaningful educational change and "breaking the cycle of disadvantage evident in the national performance profile" (Barr & Mellor, 2016, p. 15).

As a specific outcome of these negative perceptions, the National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy [NAPLAN] was implemented in 2008, and this has continued annually for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 throughout this nation. Data from NAPLAN testing provides a point-in-time snapshot of the performance of students and enables access to trend data on the academic performance of students (MCEETYA, 2008b). Data from NAPLAN provides schools with rich insights into student performance and this can be used to shape school-level change initiatives and target areas of focused need and future funding.

In this current digital age, the publication of school NAPLAN data on the MySchool website (ACARA, 2010), has heralded a level of comparability between schools. Governments, education systems, parents/guardians, and the media frequently misuse this data as a proxy measure of the standard of teaching within a school. Thus, principals in some schools have instigated questionable initiatives such as forcing low achieving students to abstain from NAPLAN testing and using NAPLAN data as a criterion for enrolment (Jacks & Cook, 2015). In some schools, NAPLAN performance is seen as high-stakes testing and a culture of 'teaching to the test' occurs in lieu of the typical curriculum. The misunderstanding,

premised on the belief that student performance is directly correlated to teacher quality, fuels these outcomes (Thompson & Lasic, 2011).

Regrettably, many media articles criticising the performance of teachers typically surface following the annual publication of NAPLAN data and, at times, these suggest that teacher pay be commensurate with student achievement (Preiss, 2013). This notion fails to recognise the essence of teacher quality. Specific to this study, newspaper reports in the Australian state of Queensland have reported the 'dire situation' of education in this state and indicated students were coming 'an appalling second last' (Chilcott, 2009a, 2009b; Davies, 2005; O'Loan, 2008) in achievement scores for reading on NAPLAN tests. Further to this, newspapers reported this was indicative of an 'education system in crisis' (Chilcott, 2009a, 2009b). These articles demanded an immediate response from the government to develop strategies and amend policies to rectify the perceived failing education system in the state of Queensland. In response to NAPLAN data and media criticism, the then Queensland government Premier, Anna Bligh, instigated a review of primary education in this state to extrapolate the underlying reasons behind students' poor performance (Masters, 2009). This paved the way for Professor Geoff Masters, from the Australian Council for Educational Research, to conduct a government-endorsed review of primary education. His finding into education in Queensland indicated that teacher quality was a key contributor to students' poor academic achievement in reading (Masters, 2009b).

By 2014, the government continued to perceive that the quality of teaching in this nation was under par. The Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group [TEMAG] was developed and given the mandate to explore the current state of teaching and teacher preparation in this nation. The then Education Minister Pyne established this Advisory Group to be chaired by the Vice-chancellor of the Australian Catholic University, Professor Greg Craven (Australian Catholic University, 2014; Walker, 2014). This Advisory Group were to provide systemic recommendations that could lead to improvements in teacher quality in order to realise an effect on student achievement outcomes. Their report was titled: *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers* (Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group [TEMAG], 2014). This panel was comprised of eight members, one was an educator of teachers, there were two school administrators, and the remaining five members of the panel reported no affiliation with the teaching profession. It is interesting that an Advisory Group formed to provide insight into shaping teacher quality was comprised of predominantly non-

teachers or teacher educators. Also, despite a paucity of research to underpin TEMAG's position, the Executive Summary of this report claimed:

> The evidence is clear: enhancing the capability of teachers is vital to raising the overall quality of Australia's school system and lifting student outcomes… It is clear that there is significant public concern over the quality in Australia (TEMAG, 2015, p. viii).

This assertion supported the government's criticism of the standard of teaching in this nation. Following TEMAG's report, the government instructed AITSL to develop explicit instructions and supporting information making clear exactly what universities need to provide in order to develop 'classroom ready' high-quality teachers.

Interestingly, the way this Advisory Group was developed and facilitated illustrates the government's proclivity towards a process that involves compliance with 'top-down' mandated directives targeting teacher quality rather than positioning teachers as active agents of change. This reflects the approach taken by the government in countries such as England, the United States of America, and recently New Zealand, yet it contrasts the way that the Finnish government has conceptualised educational change initiatives relating to teacher quality.

2.3 Initiatives Targeting Teacher Quality

Governments worldwide have sought to implement various initiatives targeting teacher quality so as to have teachers in schools with "a sophisticated understanding of effective classroom practice, highly skilled professional expertise, and high-quality engagement skills" (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008, p. 3). In particular with respect to this study, the Australian government is committed to implementing educational change initiatives to target teacher quality in a quest to remain competitive on an international level. Thus, most education systems in this nation have embraced national-level teacher quality reform agendas and this has influenced the way that teachers have been positioned as agents of change. Importantly though, the focus and manner of these Australian educational change initiatives has been strongly influenced by those previously implemented in other countries.

Of concern to governments in countries such as England and the United States of America, has been teachers' perceived lack of accountability for the quality of their knowledge and practice. This has underscored a number of policies and initiatives, including the No Child Left Behind Act [NCLB], Masters of Teaching and Learning [MTL], and the Race to the

Top [RTTT] reform agendas (Furlong, 2013; United States Department of Education, 2006). However, of particular interest has been Finland's educational success on international 'league tables' of student achievement, as Finnish students have regularly outperformed most other nations (Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development [OECD], 2009, 2011, 2012; Thomson, de Bortoli & Buckley, 2013). Arguably then, to better appreciate the educational change environment that forms the context of this research it is of interest to examine this, first, in other key countries and then, second, from a national, system, and school perspective.

2.3.1 The Finland Story

The ranking of Finland on International testing (e.g. PISA) is enviable and governments throughout the world have sought to examine the Finnish story in order to extrapolate the 'secret' to their students' academic success. A key contributing element to Finland's achievement is the high regard that is placed on teachers within this nation (Hammerness & Klette, 2015). Teachers in Finnish schools are regarded as being of high-quality, and this is attributed to a number of factors, including: the elevation of admission requirements for pre-service teacher education, improvement in the content and delivery of these courses, and the need for graduate teachers to have attained a Masters level degree prior to their employment in schools. Teacher graduates are required to submit a research thesis exploring an element of pedagogy or curriculum, and this is intended to support teachers' ability to be research-led practitioners (Barr & Mellor, 2016). In Finland,

> …teacher education is responsible for awakening the sense of teacher identity in pre-service teachers, and for developing their critical reflection on their role and their learning and teaching in such a way that they are able to appropriately respond to the diverse contexts they will find themselves in, as teachers (Barr & Mellor, 2016, p. 48).

Finnish teachers are not only highly educated when entering the profession, they are also supported to continue attaining this high standard during their years of employment. A considerably large budget is allocated for teacher engagement in opportunities for teacher learning (Sahlberg, 2007, 2009, 2011). Ten percent of Finnish teachers' working time is dedicated towards engaging in teacher learning (Caldwell & Harris, 2008; Sahlberg, 2011).

A key point of distinction between Finnish teachers and those from other countries is that teachers in Finland are viewed as highly regarded professionals. These teachers are trusted to design, implement, and assess pedagogical practice that is relevant for students' needs

and the contextual demands of each school and class. Thus, teachers in schools in Finland experience low levels of supervision and are afforded a high level of autonomy (Sahlberg, 2007, 2009, 2011). Teachers administer one standardised test and this is used to assess the nation's progress, rather than measuring an individual student or teachers' performance (Ravitch, 2012). In Finland, there is recognition that teacher quality is fostered through autonomy and building a 'climate of trust' rather than enforcing compliance with standard key competencies (Barr & Mellor, 2016; Lanas & Kelchtermans, 2015).

Competitively selecting high-quality entrants to the profession, affording teachers professional autonomy, and also providing a considerable amount of time for access to opportunities for teacher learning has resulted in teachers in Finland being regarded as high-quality educators by an international audience. Not only has Finland's teachers managed to elevate their student performance to the top of international 'league tables' of student achievement, but the quality of teachers and the education system in this nation "impressed the TEMAG members who visited Finland during their national review period" (Barr & Mellor, 2016, p. 47).

Despite educators from all over the world flocking to Finland to explore their educational success, not many governments throughout the world have sought to replicate their processes premised on fostering professional autonomy, respect, and a positive teacher identity. Instead, processes that seek to standardise teaching, make teaching highly visible, and hold teachers accountable for their quality have become embedded in education systems such as England, the United States of America, and more recently Australia.

2.3.2 The England Story

In England, the government sought to improve the quality of teachers within schools and implemented various nation-wide initiatives to address the perceived deficiency in teachers' professional competence. The *Teach First* initiative saw an attempt to recruit 'high flying' graduates into the profession so the quality of teachers would be enhanced (Furlong, 2013). Following this initiative, the Masters in Teaching and Learning [MTL] program was developed in an attempt to mirror the academic standard of teachers in schools in Finland. Introducing the Masters in Teaching and Learning was an ambitious attempt at establishing a degree that involved consistent content and assessment at each university throughout the nation. The MTL involved predominantly school-based learning in conjunction with a facilitator who provided a personalised programme for each teacher. While the MTL was

presented as "a personalised professional learning journey" for each teacher (Furlong, 2013, p. 38), it developed consistency of practice and was underscored by ongoing control measures targeting teachers' compliance with mandated practice. Within months of being elected in 2010, the Coalition government abandoned the MTL degree.

Meanwhile, high-stakes standardised testing has infiltrated the education system in England and this has resulted in positioning teachers in a different frame than their counterparts in the enviably performing nation of Finland. Teachers in Finnish schools are regarded as research-driven professionals, yet for teachers in schools in England they are more centred on maintaining adherence with mandated practices that are modelled for them within a school context.

In England, teacher preparation course time has been reduced in duration. Furthermore, instead of teacher preparation being a predominantly university-based occurrence, there are a number of employment-based pathways into education which approach learning from an 'on the job' perspective. Countries such as Canada and New Zealand regard these English courses as unsuitable and applicants seeking employment in these countries do not have their qualification recognised (Educational Council New Zealand, 2016; Ontario College of Teachers, 2016). Teacher preparation and ongoing opportunities for teacher learning are regarded as 'teacher training'. This reflects the premise that teacher quality is developed from amassing a set of trainable skills (United Kingdom Department of Education, 2016). Having an emphasis on the acquisition and replication of a set of skills, rather than on fostering teachers' sense of autonomy, inquiry and creativity, can have a deleterious effect on teachers' phenomenological experience of school as well as on their sense of professionalism (Sachs & Mockler, 2012). This perspective was reflected in Alexander's (2010) summary of a Cambridge Primary Review. This review indicates that within the United Kingdom, in "many primary schools a professional culture of excitement, inventiveness and healthy scepticism has been supplanted by one of dependency, compliance and even fear" (p. 7). In these schools, teachers' negative phenomenological experiences had led to a decline in the standards of learning as well as the quality of teaching (Alexander, 2010).

In England, there is little regard for the contribution that an individual teacher's professional identity, personality, or ability to address the contextualised factors of a school context has on determining teacher quality. Teacher quality is regarded as a measurable construct based

only on the observable visible objective elements of the profession. This perspective is similarly reflected in the United States of America educational system.

2.3.3 The United States of America Story

Since the 1980s, teacher quality has been an ongoing focus of the government in the United States of America. The Reagan administration blamed schools for the economic recession during the early 1980s by claiming that it was "the mediocre educational performance that exists today that has placed our nation at risk of being overtaken by competitors throughout the world" (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983, p. 5). Since the publication of this document, teachers in the United States of America have consistently borne the brunt of blame for the standard of students' academic achievement. In response to students' level of achievement, many large urban districts and state legislatures responded by increasing bureaucratic controls about curriculum and teaching (Rowan, 1990). These controls reduced the professional autonomy of teachers, and in turn, they had deleterious effects on teachers' morale (Rowan, 1990). Critics maintain that this attribution of blame has been a key strategy of governments who have intended to shift the focus from their own ineffective policies (Hursh, 2013). It is a juxtaposition, however, that the government in the United States of America has continued to blame teachers for the nation's economic problems, yet has also positioned them as the solution.

When Bush was Governor of Texas he argued that teacher quality was crucial since having high performing students was advantageous for the workplace and the prospective contribution they could make as active, informed, and contributing members of their country. When he was elected president in 2001, Bush's administration sought to address the issue of teacher quality by introducing the No Child Left Behind Act [NCLB]. This federal law was the largest federal-funded project for education in the history of the United States (Braden & Schroeder, 2004). The government in the United States of America maintained that the introduction of the NCLB Act would yield improvement in student achievement outcomes and this would "make sure America remained competitive in the twenty-first century…..and give our children the skills so that jobs will stay here" (United States Department of Education, 2006, p. 2). This perspective paved the way for the introduction of standardised testing and accountability processes to underscore the education reform agenda in the United States of America.

The NCLB Act intensified the focus on teacher quality as provision of federal funding to schools was linked to student performance on standardised assessments (United States Department of Education, 2002). Policies were developed by the government and imposed on schools, and these were mandatory for implementation (Winerip, 2012). Standardised testing in reading/language arts and mathematics became compulsory for teachers to implement with students in grades three to eight (Hursh, 2013). Scores on these tests determined whether schools were meeting Adequate Yearly Progress. Criticism surrounded the criteria for making Adequate Yearly Progress as it was not calculated on an increase in aggregated test scores, but rather was dependent on whether rising minimum thresholds were surpassed (Hursh, 2013). This approach disadvantaged many schools, especially those with students of low socio-economic status. Whilst teachers may have actually facilitated improvement of students' test scores, failure to rise above the threshold deemed them to be failing. Consequently, these teachers were then expected to participate in additional opportunities for teacher learning to rectify their perceived poor standard of knowledge and practice. As teachers' continued employment was linked to student performance, participation in opportunities for further learning that was intensive, ongoing, contextualised, and of high-quality became crucial (National Staff Development Council, 2010). Teacher quality was viewed as a measurable construct and determined solely by student achievement outcomes.

The NCLB Act attracted considerable criticism from literacy educators and professional associations. Controversy was centred on the implementation of high-stakes testing that controlled teachers by forcing them to implement a standard curriculum, be subjected to periodic supervisions of their performance, and also be held accountable by their students' scores on standardised testing (Forman-Naval, 2013; Palmisano, 2014). Test scores were being used as a measurement of teacher quality, and no regard was given to underlying variables impacting on student achievement results (e.g. health, socio-economic factors). Merit pay for teachers and school funding were attached to student performance, and this perpetuated a school culture of 'teaching to the test', rather than enabling teachers to have autonomy to design and implement pedagogical practice that was relevant to the educational, social, and emotional needs of their students. Teacher participation in opportunities for further learning became focused on complying with a standard curriculum rather than on enhancing their personal level of professional knowledge.

The government in the United States of America continued was focused on raising teacher quality, and this was still evident by 2008. During Obama's presidential campaign at this time he was advised by educationalist Darling-Hammond. One of his promises during this campaign was to reduce the number of standardised tests that were being administered in schools in the United States of America and to refine the Bush administration's reform agenda. Once elected, Obama selected Duncan as his Secretary of Education and this appointment sparked controversy due to his prior association with the Gates Foundation. A further point of contention was that, within Obama's Education Department, there were a number of key people who were responsible for shaping policy development that had come from the Gates Foundation or from organisations that were heavily funded by this foundation (Layton, 2014).

Department of Education funds were used to create the Race to the Top [RTTT] initiative. This initiative's intent was in direct contrast to what Obama had promised during his election campaign. This initiative was intended to target teacher quality and incorporated accountability processes for teachers, school privatisation, and mayoral control of schools (Hursh, 2011). It was essentially a $4.3 billion contest for education funding grants. The RTTT initiative was premised on competition and required the evaluation of teachers' performance based on students' achievement on standardised tests (Hursh, 2013). States were required to develop standardised tests for each key learning area, and these were administered to every student (Hursh, 2013). Scores from these tests were used as the *primary* criterion on which teachers' performance was based, and this caused concern amongst educationalists.

Critics expressed concern with the implementation of high-stakes testing, and they argued that the way New York has structured the grading curve, most teachers will likely be rated as 'ineffective', and this would have had a considerable determination on their salaries and impact on their future employment (Hursh, 2013). Low ranking teachers are required to attend additional opportunities for teacher learning in an attempt to address their perceived lack of competence, and an 'ineffective' rating for two consecutive years could lead to schools enacting termination of employment procedures with teachers (New York State Department of Education, 2011, 2012; Ravitch, 2012). Assessments of teachers' performance were a further requirement of the Race to the Top initiative and are intended to occur through the conduct of observations from a school's administrators (Hursh, 2013). In the past, Ravitch (2010) advocated strongly for the role of high-stakes testing in education

as a means of encouraging high-quality teaching and removing complacency and mediocrity. However, in recent times she has revoked her view based on a realisation that high-stakes test scores are being used for a fundamentally political purpose which she argues is seeking to erode the foundations on which education is built.

The various reform agendas in the United States of America have shifted the focus of teacher quality from being a state-level responsibility, to being a school-based and teacher-level issue (Ambrosio, 2013). The perspective pervading education in the United States of America is that failure to perform is a teacher's own fault, and that the individual teacher should be held accountable for their standard of performance (Wilson, 2007). This has heralded a culture in education that is premised on mandating curriculum, using standardised testing, and conducting periodic observations of teacher adherence to set pedagogical practice (Hursh, 2008). Direct instruction was defined as the pedagogical approach of quality teachers, and collaboration and inquiry-based learning were no longer regarded as valid practices for teachers in schools in the United States of America (Hursh & Martina, 2016). This educational context positioned teachers as compliant and submissive employees, rather than as critical, creative, and forward-thinking autonomous professionals (Barrett & Moore, 2009; Hursh & Henderson, 2011).

The ongoing accountability for the standard of teacher performance has created a "tyranny of numbers" within education (Ball, 2015, p. 299), and this has led to teachers abandoning their vision and creativity and instead preparing students with the knowledge 'to pass the test' (Hursh & Martina, 2016). Education has become focused on a transmission culture whereby teachers impart knowledge *to* students, and this style of teaching targets the learning styles of certain students and negates others. Thus, teacher quality is judged on an ability to efficiently implement a set of standard competencies with a high level of effect, rather than creatively and effectively implementing practices to target particular student and context demands. The objective mindset underpinning teacher quality reforms in the United States of America is that quality teachers "are not born, they are made" (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. ix). This perspective implies that quality teaching is premised solely on the visible dimension, and it negates the critical role that personal dispositional characteristics and subjective factors have on shaping teacher quality. A perspective closely aligned to that now found in Australia.

2.3.4 The Australian Story

Within Australia, teacher quality has been at the forefront of government education agendas during the past decade. Dinham (2010) argues that one of the key issues facing education in Australia today does not relate to students' access to

> …computers, new buildings or equipment. It's each student having quality teachers and quality teaching in schools supported by effective leadership and professional learning (p. 12).

Various policy documents have been developed to target the improvement and sustainability of a quality teaching workforce in this nation. A key goal of Australian governments has been the creation of a 'good business climate' in education. This climate seeks to establish a profitable situation which yields an improvement in employees' performance in order to affect an increase in the achieved output (e.g. student achievement outcomes). From this perspective, capital accumulation becomes more important than any consequences impacting on the welfare of people involved in 'delivering the service' (Hursh & Henderson, 2011). Education is being viewed as an important determinant of the economic wellbeing of this nation and is perceived as being the vehicle for improving and strengthening Australia's economic and social fabric (Cassells, Duncan, Abello, D'Souza & Nepal, 2012). By having a "highly skilled, educated and an innovative population and workforce", it is anticipated that the nation will experience increased rates of future invention, production methods, and new technologies (Cassells et al. 2012, p. 3). Improving education is seen as a critical process in enhancing the human capital of the labour force, and this is intended to have an influence on productivity and output which will lead to economic benefits in the future (Cooray, 2009; Hanushek, 2009a; Hanushek & Woessmann, 2010).

By 2008, the Australian government's emphasis on international competition became evident with the release of the Melbourne Declaration (MCEETYA, 2008a). This declaration documented that the government aspired to improving "outcomes for all young Australians to become second to none against the world's best school systems" (MCEETYA, 2008a, p. 5). In order to achieve this aspiration, teacher quality became a key consideration of the government. It was at this point that the National Partnership Agreement for Improving Teacher Quality was instigated (Council of Australian Governments, 2008a). This agreement was premised on the notion that teacher quality was currently regarded as being insufficient for enabling Australia to compete effectively on international 'league tables' of student achievement. Thus, the introduction of system-wide reforms into education occurred and these sought to target improvement in the quality of teachers at *each*

career stage. To this end, the National Assessment Programme for Literacy and Numeracy testing [NAPLAN] (MCEETYA, 2008b), MySchool website (ACARA, 2010), and Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012) formed key milestones in the government's effort to have a teaching workforce that was built on quality teaching. These initiatives introduced accountability and standardisation of practice and assessment into education. Teacher quality came to be judged on teachers' ability to use Direct Instruction to impart the content knowledge of the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012) and also on students' level of achievement on NAPLAN testing (MCEETYA, 2008b).

The formation of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL] in 2010 was intended to promote excellence in the profession of teaching by directly targeting teacher quality (Education Services Australia, 2011a). AITSL has been instrumental in developing a nationally consistent set of professional standards for teachers. The road to developing a nationally consistent process for recognising standards for teacher quality has been taken previously by nations such as England and the United States of America (Tuinamuana, 2011). AITSL catapulted the teacher quality agenda into prominence within every Australian school with their explicit documentation of what quality teaching was expected to look like and what quality teachers should know at each career stage (Education Services Australia, 2011a). Attaining and then maintaining teacher registration was connected to ongoing demonstration of teacher competence in alignment with AITSL's set professional standards.

There has been some criticism surrounding the introduction of nationally consistent professional standards for teachers in countries such as England and the United States of America, and most recently Australia (Tuinamuana, 2011). From a common-sense perspective, having standards that define teaching assists in enhancing the professionalism of education, and this reflects what occurs in professions such as law and medicine where there are clearly defined professional standards for practitioners. However, Zuzovsky and Lipman (2006) explain, it is not the value of professional standards that is questioned, but rather "what is questioned is their imposition as controlling devices" (p. 48). Taubman (2009) cautions that professional standards for teachers have the potential to be used to quantify their role as a set of objective reproduceable and observable behaviours, and thus, become a tool for measuring teacher performance. When professional standards for teachers are introduced to serve a political purpose, it can be argued that this cements the foundations

whereby a culture of de-professionalisation can be promulgated (Alexander, 2010; Johnston, 2014; Sachs & Mockler, 2012; Taubman, 2009).

A further initiative to elevate teacher quality, was the Australian government's decision to gain increased control over teachers' engagement in ongoing opportunities for teacher learning. A nationally consistent teacher registration approach was implemented and this was modelled on the approach that had been in place for teachers in New South Wales, Victoria and the Northern Territory. Qualified teachers were expected to participate in 100 hours of teacher learning over a five-year period (Australian Institute for Teachers and School Leaders [AITSL], 2013). This requirement was divided into 50 hours of 'Institute registered' learning (e.g. lectures, seminars) and 50 hours of 'Teacher Identified' learning (e.g. professional reading, observations, research) (AITSL, 2013). Attaining the set number of hours of teacher learning became a mandatory requirement for each teacher's periodic re-registration. This process resulted in teacher learning becoming the vehicle for teachers demonstrating high-quality standards of professional practice. This was in alignment with the Productivity Commission's (2012) report that called for teacher learning to be connected with teacher performance appraisal.

In 2013, in response to the continued decline in student achievement, further initiatives to target teacher quality were implemented. AITSL developed a resource package, in collaboration with the Hay Group (2013), and this targeted how teachers engage in opportunities for further learning. This resource drew information from both the corporate and education sector and was endorsed by the Australian government. This initiative supported a school-based coaching model of learning, and this reflected a parallel with the style of teacher learning implemented during the past decade in schools within the United States of America (Cornett & Knight, 2009; Fullan & Knight, 2011). The endorsement of this style of teacher learning reflected the government's position that teacher quality can be raised by facilitators teaching a set of practices to teachers who then replicate these within their classroom context.

Also, the previously mentioned Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group [TEMAG] established in 2014 produced a number of recommendations intended to raise teacher quality. Many of these recommendations relate to university processes regarding the enrolment of suitable entrants, the standard of content that is taught, as well as the assessment procedures to gauge teacher quality. This particular government Advisory Group

recommended that teacher education students needed to be based in high-quality contexts in order for them to observe teachers' use of high-quality practice. The emphasis of the Advisory Group is for teacher education students to demonstrate quality by replicating the practices of high-quality teachers. Once again, this reflects the government's premise that teacher quality is a teachable phenomenon.

From 2016, aspiring graduates from teacher education programs are expected to demonstrate a high standard of personal literacy and numeracy skills by satisfactorily completing a national test that is administered by the Australian Council for Educational Research (Department of Education & Training, 2015). AITSL are working with State and Territory bodies to develop a nationally consistent induction process for beginning teachers to support teachers to become quality teachers as they enter the profession (Department of Education & Training, 2015). To ascertain how best to support graduates' transition from teacher preparation courses to being high-quality classroom educators, AITSL will facilitate a national focus on research. This research is being led by John Hattie from the Melbourne University, and it is presumed that the reliability of his findings will be closely scrutinised by educationalists following the publication of his *Visible Learning* meta-analyses that contains considerable statistical errors (Higgins & Simpson, 2011).

More specific to the core focus of the Emmanuel College's guided reading change initiative, the Australian government instigated the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy (Department of Education Science & Training, 2005a). This Inquiry was in response to their perception that the decline in literacy standards of students in Australia was directly attributed to the quality of teachers in Australian schools. The Inquiry reported that outdated and ineffective pedagogical practices and philosophies for teaching were firmly embedded within classrooms and were impacting students' performance (O'Loan, 2008). Recommendations from the Inquiry centred on teachers' need for explicit instruction on how to teach, having a school-wide approach, and engaging specialist teachers to facilitate improvement in teachers' pedagogy by modelling 'high-quality' practice (Department of Education Science & Training, 2005b). Thus, the recommendations from this Inquiry premised teacher quality as something that could be taught to teachers as a set of standardised objective school-wide processes.

In 2009, Masters conducted a review into primary education in Queensland and he reported that teacher quality was a key contributor to students' poor academic achievement in

reading. The findings of this review coincided with the publication of the National Partnership Agreement for Improving Teacher Quality (Council of Australian Governments, 2008a). This paved the way for Education Queensland to introduce literacy coaches into low-performing schools, and this was despite this approach being highly criticised in schools within the United States of America due to their emphasis on performance and accountability (Hursh, 2013; Hursh & Martina, 2016). The literacy coaches provided individual teachers with clarification of expectations about implementing high-quality pedagogy and they modelled quality practice for teachers in their classrooms (Education Queensland, 2010). Monitoring of teachers' pedagogy occurred to ensure compliance with modelled practice (Education Queensland 2010). Teachers were given support from a literacy coach based on student achievement outcomes from NAPLAN testing, and this was premised on the notion that this was a valid measure of teacher quality.

However, despite the government's intention to raise teacher quality and impact student achievement through the introduction of processes centred on control, compliance, and accountability, data from PISA testing in 2012 ranked Australian students tenth in reading compared to students in other OECD nations (Australian Council for Educational Research [ACER], 2013). Furthermore, comparisons of mean reading performance of students on PISA testing reported a decline between 2000 and 2012 which was equivalent to approximately half a year of schooling (ACER, 2013). In addition, the Progress in Reading Literacy Student [PIRLS] tests identified that 25% of Year 4 students in Australia continued not to reach the expected standard for reading for their age.

2.3.5 The Education System Story

Emmanuel College is a school administered by a Catholic Education Office within the Australian state of Queensland. This Education Office has been cognisant of the growing international teacher quality reform agendas and also Australia's ranking on international 'league tables' of student achievement. In order to explore the trend performance of students in each Catholic Education Office school on NAPLAN tests of achievement (MCEETYA, 2008b), a system-wide computerised data analysis tool was made available to principals, and more recently, to all staff within this education system. Using this analysis tool, comparisons can be made within and across cohorts for each of the areas of NAPLAN testing as well as against national standards, and also the overall school performance can be monitored across the years. Throughout the past decade, this particular Catholic Education Office has also connected with a range of key scholars in the area of change and learning.

These scholars have included people such as Crevola and Hill (1998), Hattie (2009), and Sharratt and Fullan (2012). These scholars have presented keynote addresses at a number of Catholic Education Office principal forums and conferences during the past decade, and these have focused on topical areas such as educational change, processes to build teacher quality, and school-based strategies to improve the teaching of literacy.

Also, during the past decade, this Catholic Education Office has been committed to striving to be a high-quality education system. It has placed a high value on the establishment of a system-wide expectation for high-quality teaching and learning. During this time, systemic expectations have been placed on principals and they have been called to develop an improvement-orientated culture within their schools (Catholic Education Office, 2012a). This has had the dual intention of raising teacher quality as well as realising an elevation in student achievement outcomes, as measured by State-wide and then NAPLAN tests (MCEETYA, 2008b). Today, principals in this system can no longer have a purely school-based vision for change, but rather they must have a vision for change that places a school's performance within the overarching systemic direction for change. Principals are not only positioned to lead a school community towards an improved future, but they are also accountable to ensure that their leadership aligns with systemic-level educational goals and priorities.

A system-wide expectation for quality teaching and learning has underpinned the content of this Catholic Education Office's Systemic Renewal Frameworks for more than a decade (2004, 2008, 2012a, 2016). These frameworks acknowledge the central role that quality teaching plays in shaping student achievement. Coupled with this perspective, is the view that the quality of teaching that students experience is influenced by the quality of teachers within a school (Catholic Education Office, 2008). This position has foregrounded the importance of teachers' continued involvement in opportunities for teacher learning. Thus, at a systemic level, a teacher's regular participation in 'professional development' has moved to the forefront of the professional responsibilities of teachers in recent times (Catholic Education Office, 2012a).

Furthermore, at the systemic-level, there is an acknowledgement from the Catholic Education Office (2012a) that effective teaching is premised on building collaborative professional relationships. This is reflected in their development of a framework that focuses on building a community of professional learners (Catholic Education Office, 2012b) as it

identifies that teaching today requires a transformation from a teacher being a colleague to a teacher being a co-learner within a school. This framework has affirmed the importance of school-based approaches to teacher learning as it acknowledges the value that can be gained by tapping into the richness and diversity of the perspectives that exist amongst the educators of a single-school context.

Importantly, this particular Catholic Education Office (2017) has a concentrated focus on literacy and it views this area of the curriculum as an essential capability for all students to master. Building teachers' capacity as quality educators of literacy remains a key emphasis and is discussed in the current Catholic Education Office (2017) position paper. In this position paper, teachers in the Catholic Education schools in this system are called to work collaboratively to improve their own and others' literacy teaching practices, to use evidence-based high-quality explicit instruction, as well as using innovation and action-learning inquiry-based processes to sustain improvements in teaching and learning (Catholic Education Office, 2017). Building teachers' capacity as high-quality literacy educators involves providing them with authentic class-based opportunities to develop a repertoire of effective teaching practices, having opportunities to engage in peer observation, to receive personalised feedback on their practice, as well as engaging in action learning cycles of inquiry to extend their professional knowledge and practice (Catholic Education Office, 2017). Differentiation in the way teachers implement their pedagogical practice is regarded as a key capability of a quality teacher as this highlights their willingness to modify their practice and be responsive to the learning needs of each student in their class (Catholic Education Office, 2017). A key view of this Catholic Education Office (2017) is that quality teachers seek to support all students to learn by establishing where they are at academically, and then enacting individualised processes to extend their opportunity to learn. The current perception of this Catholic Education Office is that teaching and learning is an active, collaborative process whereby the needs of all learners, both adults and students, are foregrounded by having a contextualised view of learning and by utilising a range of pedagogical strategies.

2.3.6 The Emmanuel College Story

The previous discussion acknowledges the professional complexity and changeability surrounding the concept of teacher quality that was the lived reality of the Emmanuel College teachers. These teachers were very much aware of the international, national, State and system concerns and initiatives regarding teacher quality, including that associated with

literacy. However, for much of this era of teacher quality questioning and change, the Emmanuel College teaching culture had been premised on professional isolation and individualism with regards to the implementation of pedagogical practice (Emmanuel College, 2000b). Teachers periodically engaged in opportunities for teacher learning at venues external to the school context, and these were related to areas of their perceived professional need and/or interest (Emmanuel College, 2001). There was a strong acceptance from teachers at this school regarding the value of engaging in lifelong learning and there was an established culture of openness as they were willing to informally share their professional knowledge and resources with their colleagues (Emmanuel College, 2001). The teachers at Emmanuel College had been used to engaging in periodic opportunities for learning with a view to enhancing their professional knowledge and/or practice (Emmanuel College, 2000b). These teachers were willing to independently make modifications to their pedagogical practice in an effort to address the learning needs of the students in their class (Emmanuel College, 2000a). These teachers felt that they had autonomy to make discretionary decisions about how they engaged in teaching and learning (Emmanuel College, 2001).

Two documents produced by the Leadership Team at Emmanuel College in 2000 explained the philosophy that influenced how teachers at the school taught reading, and how professional development occurred to build teacher capacity. Prior to the introduction of the principal's change initiative at Emmanuel College in 2005, teachers' involvement in change initiatives had occurred to varying degrees. Some teachers actively pursued their own opportunities for learning, and this involved researching 'best-practice' in a particular curriculum area. During this era of education, some teachers were also typically selected by their leadership team to assume the role of 'lead teacher' in a particular curriculum area, and this was often assigned to teachers based on years of service (Emmanuel College, 2000b). These teachers attended a number of professional development opportunities throughout the year at venues external to their school context, and this information was then disseminated to their staff during a presentation at a staff meeting. While lead teachers presented information about pedagogical change innovations to all staff, it was typically left to the discretion of individual teachers whether any aspects of these presentations were translated into practice (Emmanuel College, 2000b). At Emmanuel College, there had not been any formal expectation for teachers' adherence with a school-wide change initiative in any curriculum area during the past three decades (Emmanuel College, 2000a). At this school,

the teaching of reading had traditionally been regarded by each successive principal as an individualised class-specific practice that was premised on the direct instruction of phonics (Emmanuel College, 2000a). During the 1990s, the 'Reading Recovery Program' was evident within many Australian schools, including Emmanuel College (2000a). Students whose reading achievement fell below identified benchmarks were withdrawn from the class for specific and often individualised reading instruction support lessons facilitated by a teacher trained as a 'Reading Recovery' teacher. By 2000, this program was no longer implemented at Emmanuel College. It became the expectation that classroom teachers would assume the responsibility of providing differentiated lessons to support the variation in their students' levels of reading achievement (Emmanuel College, 2000a, 2000b).

When the principal commenced his leadership role at Emmanuel College, he began so with a determination to raise his students' performance on State-wide testing (Emmanuel College, 2002, 2003, 2004). This perspective was greatly influenced by National and systemic education directives at this point in time, in conjunction with the principal's previous professional experiences as a leader in business and education. During his semi-structured interview, the principal shared his perception that it was the school's prevailing culture of isolation and an acceptance of discontinuity in pedagogical practice that had led to inconsistencies in the way that teaching and learning occurred at this school. Furthermore, the principal added in his interview the perspective that when people were permitted to be 'masters of their own domain', it afforded them a comfort zone and he argued that this provided the foundations that enabled mediocrity in quality to flourish. Thus, he explained that control and consistency of teachers' standard of pedagogical practice were to be key tenets of his vision for educational change. Thus, from the outset of the change initiative at Emmanuel College, there was a difference in perspective with regards to how the teachers and the principal viewed effective teaching and learning.

The first school documents that were developed by the principal of Emmanuel College were the Community Profile and Shared Vision of Beliefs and Understandings about Reading (Emmanuel College, 2005a, 2005b). These documents highlighted to the teachers at Emmanuel College, the principal's steadfast determination to introduce a change initiative that addressed their quality of pedagogical practice and students' standard of reading achievement. As consistency of practice was seen as a key element of the principal's change initiative, he developed the School Reading Policy (Emmanuel College, 2006a) and this was endorsed by the school's change facilitator. This document made explicit to the teachers at

this school, that they must commit to the implementation of guided reading according to a school-wide approach. This Policy states that teachers from "all year levels are to implement a two-hour literacy block four times per week using a small group instructional approach for the teaching of guided reading" (Emmanuel College, 2006a, p. 1). The School Reading Policy (Emmanuel College, 2006a) also makes it explicit to teachers the principal's non-negotiable expectation that they engage in professional development. This required all teachers, irrespective of their career stage, to observe the change facilitator modelling pedagogy for reading in their classroom, to use this pedagogy themselves in their teaching of guided reading, be observed on a periodic basis by the change facilitator when using this pedagogy and receiving feedback from the change facilitator that targets areas for improvement in their implementation of the school-wide approach to guided reading.

To support teachers' ability to implement the expected school-wide approach to guided reading, a *Reading at Emmanuel College* DVD (Emmanuel College, 2006b) was developed. This DVD contained an introduction from the principal of Emmanuel College that made clear his expectations for teacher compliance with the school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading. It then contained footage showing a selection of teachers at Emmanuel College implementing the school-wide approach to guided reading in their classrooms, as well as a commentary from the change facilitator explaining each component of the guided reading lesson. A copy of this DVD was provided to each teacher at the school, and was used as part of an induction process, with each new teacher employed at the school in subsequent years. Segments of this DVD were played by the principal and/or change facilitator at staff meetings during the first few years of the change initiative and this enabled them to highlight certain elements relating to the teaching of guided reading or to reinforce the principal's expectations for teachers' compliance with the school-wide approach to guided reading.

In response to the growing systemic acknowledgement that teaching is a collaborative and social process (Catholic Education Office, 2012a), the principal of Emmanuel College developed a school-based document titled Emmanuel College Community Beliefs and Values about Learners, Learning, and Learning Communities (Emmanuel College, 2008). Herein, the principal of Emmanuel College states that teachers, as learners, have unique abilities, and that they should be positioned as creators of knowledge, and benefit from opportunities to learn that are premised on collaboration and communication. This document further states that learning is regarded as being beneficial to teachers when it connects with

their world, and when it enables them to use inquiry processes to develop their curiosity and thirst for learning. The document states that the principal intends for Emmanuel College to be a learning community whereby teachers can be lifelong learners who learn from and teach their colleagues, and can identify professional issues and areas for improvement and then set about solving or improving things collaboratively.

Furthermore, these principal perceptions were subsequently published in a journal feature article following his attendance at a national-level leadership forum. This article highlighted his perspective that teachers should be positioned as passive and compliant implementers of an imposed school-wide vision for change, and that control measures are needed to maintain teachers' compliance with school-specific expectations for change. In order to maintain the anonymity of the principal and to conform with ethical guidelines from the Australian Catholic University and the Catholic Education Office, the reference for the principal's journal article has been intentionally omitted from being published in this thesis. The authenticity of the content referenced from this journal article has been established to the satisfaction of the research supervisors.

2.4 Chapter Review

This chapter has described how international political concerns during much of the last decade or more have concentrated on the pivotal role that teacher quality makes towards student achievement. Moreover, it has shown how student performance on international tests (e.g. PISA, TIMSS) has been used to rank nations, and this has been used as an impetus for teacher quality reform agendas. Thus, as nations seek to improve their ranking on these international 'league tables' of student achievement, implementing processes to build and sustain high-quality teachers has become a key issue for educational systems including that of Australia. Importantly, it is within this global milieu of constant educational change aligned with redressing perceived deficiencies in teacher quality that this research exploring teachers' phenomenological responses to a change initiative in a single-school context was situated.

Importantly, what this chapter highlights is that the Emmanuel College teachers were not ignorant of, or immune to, this educational environment with its emphasis upon an ongoing search for ways to improve teacher quality. For their principal to raise the incentive to improve teacher quality as a key reason for introducing a new educational change would not have been a surprise for the Emmanuel College teachers. Similarly, given the Australian and

Educational System's commitment to improving student academic achievement scores for reading in standardised international tests, the choice of guided reading as a focus for the educational change initiative would not have been a cause for surprise or concern amongst these teachers either. In other words, any phenomenological response by the teachers to the proposed change initiative in focus in this research is more likely to have been as a result of the nature of the change process, and how it was led, than its introduction or focus per se.

In the light of these understandings about the concept of teacher quality, the next chapter will review literature that provides further guidance and insight into the nature of teacher quality and its implication upon educational change, and how teacher learning, professional identity, and leadership influence teachers' phenomenological responses to change.

CHAPTER THREE
A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the current international, national and particular systemic educational contexts were discussed. Here it was highlighted that, at present, the governments of many nations throughout the world have an emphasis on performativity and competitiveness, and this has promulgated a culture in education whereby the perceived quality of teachers is regarded as the cornerstone of a nation's success on 'league tables' of student achievement (OECD, 2011). This perspective has led to a suite of educational changes being introduced in various nations during the past decade with a view to improving the quality of teachers in schools. Largely, the goal of such change initiatives has been to promulgate education reforms that are intended to improve teacher quality, and in turn, realise improvement in student achievement outcomes, and this has occurred in a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to educational change. This approach negates the personalised and contextualised nature of teaching.

Arguably, these educational change agendas have placed principals in a difficult position as they have been expected to lead their staff to embrace change, yet they have been provided with little opportunities to further develop their own professional understanding about how to effectively lead educational change in this current era. This situation can lead to educational change initiatives being influenced by the style of leadership of a principal and their interpretation of how teachers should enact change within a particular school-based context. Without opportunities to access further professional knowledge on how to effectively lead educational change, principals may continue to emphasise only the objective dimension of change instead of supporting the real needs of the teachers tasked with the responsibility for bringing about the change.

The purpose of this chapter is to situate the research problem within the current theoretical understandings relating to the nature of teacher quality and the enactment of educational change in order to improve teacher quality. Hence, for this literature review, five areas of scholarship are explored, and these are: teacher quality, change, teacher learning, professional identity, and leadership. The exploration of these areas of scholarship is relevant in light of the purpose of this research which is to explore the phenomenological

responses that teachers have to a change initiative in a single-school context. The first area of scholarship relates to exploring the philosophical nature of teacher quality rather than the processes aimed at improving it as was discussed in the previous chapter.

3.2 The Nature of Teacher Quality

As described in Chapter Two, teacher quality is frequently cited as the goal for teacher preparation courses and involvement in opportunities for teacher learning, and it is used to justify the implementation of change initiatives in schools. It has also been a keenly studied area for at least 30 years so that the importance of quality teaching has been consistently reiterated in research (Louden, 2008; Rowe, 2003). Despite all of this, there is limited consensus as to what constitutes teacher quality (Australian Government, 2015). As a result, at present there is no profession-wide definition on this concept despite the frequency of its use, and it continues to remain "an ambiguous and complex term" (Zammit, Sinclair, Cole, Singh, Costley, Brown a'Court & Rushton, 2007, p. 1).

Within Australia, research has sought to contribute to an understanding of teacher quality. However, this has led to further highlighting the inconsistencies in understanding surrounding this concept (Ingvarson & Rowe, 2008; Zammit et al. 2007). Although research has demonstrated the usefulness of scales and rubrics for measuring the observed *effectiveness* of teachers (Louden, Rohl, Barratt Pugh, Brown, Cairney, Elderfield, House, Meiers, Rivalland & Rowe, 2003), these have fallen short in being able to elucidate the essence of what underpins teacher *quality* (Bahr & Pendergast, 2002; Meiers & Ingvarson, 2005).

One school of thought on teacher quality is centred on Socrates' argument that ''quality' is equated with the soul (Pirsig, 1974). This assertion positions quality as a far more complex construct than 'effectiveness', and this implies that quality is premised on more than the observable practices of teachers. There is a subjective dimension to the role of the teacher (Hargreaves, 2005, 2008; Nias, 1991; Zembylas, 2003). Pirsig (1974) asserted that deconstruction of teachers' observable practice in order to attempt to imitate 'quality' does little more "than kill it", and by trying to define "it we are defining something less than quality itself" (p. 252). It is argued that deconstruction of teaching does not elucidate teacher quality "since quality is holistic, a catalytic product of the united whole" (Barr & Mellor, 2016, p. 59). From this perspective, it is regarded as ineffective to develop a standard set of professional competencies to define teacher quality as it is influenced by multifaceted factors

that are interdependent of each other (Zammit et al. 2007). Thus, it is argued that the core essence of what lies at the heart of teacher quality cannot be defined nor measured. Quality teaching involves not only a practical observable and objective element, but it is also characterised by an elusive, non-tangible, and subjective dimension that considerably contributes to empowering and motivating learners (Pirsig, 1974; Zammit et al. 2007).

Crosby (2005), however, influenced by a strong business perspective, presents very much a transactional view of quality. His perspective is premised on a theory of 'Zero Defects'. Within an educational context, this presupposes that teacher quality is characterised by pedagogy that is free from errors and oversights as it involves conformity to a suite of pre-determined professional practices and competencies that are regarded as 'best practice' (Crosby, 2005). This transactional view maintains that the quality of a teacher's performance is something that is quantifiable. Comparisons can be made between a teacher's actual implementation of pedagogy and the practices and competencies that are expected of them within a particular workplace context. Embedding a 'Zero Defects' perspective into education results in the unquantifiable elements of teaching being disregarded in lieu of embedding a culture of teacher compliance with a criterion of expected performance.

The work of Ingvarson and Rowe (2008) supports this transactional perspective of teacher quality, and their premise is that teacher quality can be objectively evaluated. They sought to provide some clarity on the concept of teacher quality and this condemned the use of proxy measures of quality such as teacher qualifications, years of professional experience, and student achievement outcomes. Instead, their definition of teacher quality centred on the depth of teachers' professional knowledge and their pedagogical capacity (Ingvarson & Rowe, 2008). It is argued that:

> …quality teaching cannot exist where teacher knowledge is weak, flawed
> or patchy, and neither can it exist where a teacher does not have appropriate
> pedagogical skills (Barr & Mellor, 2016, p. 58).

This research by Ingvarson and Rowe (2008) sought to affirm the place of professional standards for teachers that target continued improvement in what they know and can do within the context of their classroom. They provided no recognition of the role of contextual factors of schools or the influence of a teacher's personal characteristics on teacher quality.

Thus, in contrast to this perspective, other authors posit that teaching has traditionally been viewed as an isolated and individualised profession, and it is the diversity of the workforce that has typically accounted for such variation in teacher quality over the years (Lortie, 1975;

Turney, 1969). The way teachers teach reflects a personalised combination of factors and these include professional experience, school context, life experience, personality, and professional identity (Zammit et al. 2007). These variables are non-quantifiable factors that have a considerable impact on shaping the quality of teachers within schools. Thus, teacher practice can vary within and across school contexts.

However, in this current era of educational change, governments are seeking to raise teacher quality in order to yield measurable improvements in student achievement outcomes on international testing (e.g. PISA tests). This has heralded a culture of marketization into education and, in Australia, this has resulted in the promulgation of professional standards, testing regimes, national standard curricular, and a comparative website of school performance (ACARA, 2010, 2012; Education Services Australia, 2011a; MCEETYA, 2008b). Consequently, it is the transactional business perspective centred on uniformity of practice and performativity that has been superimposed onto an education system that has traditionally been perceived as being "greater than the sum of its elements" (Barr & Mellor, 2016, p. 2). Governments and policy-makers have foregrounded key professional competencies that define the role of quality teachers and leaders have used these for measurability and comparability purposes (Education Services Australia, 2011a).

But what is overlooked in these competencies, however, is what has been referred to as the invisible dimension of teacher quality. The next section of this literature review will now describe this in some detail.

3.2.1 The Invisible Dimension of Teacher Quality

To more fully comprehend the concept of teacher quality, it is necessary to go beyond a surface level understanding and to explore how teachers effectively deal with the intersecting demands of the invisible contextual dimensions of their profession. A considerable portion of a teacher's role is invisible as there are multiple demands placed on their time and effort to ensure a high level of competence and preparedness, and this goes typically unnoticed to those other than colleagues and family. These demands that can occur 'behind the scenes' may include practices such as planning tasks, meetings, engaging in opportunities for teacher learning, as well as the informal social interaction that teachers have with colleagues focused on pedagogical practice.

It is expected that teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of learning and development theory. While teachers are exposed to theory during their initial teacher

education courses, ongoing access to opportunities for teacher learning throughout a teacher's career needs to occur. Regular and ongoing teacher learning enables teachers to be informed consumers of research and this can reinforce and supplement their knowledge. It is an expectation that teachers continue to engage in opportunities for further learning (Education Services Australia, 2012a) so that they are well-positioned to effectively translate theoretical knowledge into high-quality class-based instruction that aligns with the learning needs and styles of their students (Grasha, 1996). However, there is more to being a quality teacher than regularly participating in opportunities for teacher learning and possessing a high level of content knowledge.

While quality teachers have deep content knowledge, this is merged with their personality or teacher experience in order to bring learning alive for their students. They have the capacity to bring students *into* the learning process and make content relevant to each of them, rather than simply having a solid grasp of how to transmit content *to* students. Quality teachers have an intangible ability to present learning in a way that activates students' curiosity and motivation and heightens their willingness to engage in learning. Yet not all students will engage in learning at the same time or for the same duration, and thus quality teachers can 'craft' their teaching in such a way that they can facilitate high-quality teaching while also managing variation in student behaviour and levels of engagement. Quality teachers do not just apply their 'craft' within a context, but rather

> …their skill is demonstrated in their quick evaluation of situations and ability to select appropriate approaches to classroom management. Their quality is seen in their ability to bring the learners to the task of learning without overt calls for attention or demands. They have an air of positive and high self-regulatory expectation that students respond positively to, and quickly. Experience plays a part, but…there is something extra in the … capacity of true quality teaching (Barr & Mellor, 2016, p. 35).

Teaching is a highly relational profession, and quality teachers are able to engage in interaction with students, parents/guardians and colleagues in such a way that they establish and foster positive classroom climates for learning.

Quality teachers know their students as learners and are able to differentiate their practice and assessment to best support student learning. The provision of personalised feedback targeting individualised learning goals supports students' learning progression (Hattie, 2009; Sharratt & Fullan, 2012). The macro contextual factors have a considerable influence on how learning is assessed, and these have been influenced by various government policies and funding for reform initiatives. This has resulted in a myriad of approaches being

implemented over the years, including State-level and national examinations, essays, projects, and engagement in "Rich Tasks" which characterised the Productive Pedagogies era of education in Queensland (Lingard, Hayes, Mills & Christie, 2003). Despite the contextual demands, quality teachers are able to develop and implement assessment "in such a way that motivates students, provides them with meaningful mastery goals, while maintaining an authentic connection with the conventions of the discipline and the contemporary problems of the real world" (Barr & Mellor, 2016, p. 36). Thus, quality teachers transcend a standard level of competency in both their professional knowledge and practice.

Teacher quality is influenced by the personalised interweaving of the invisible and contextual demands of the profession and the unique way that a teacher 'crafts' together a pedagogical approach to learning. Quality teaching entails more than demonstrating compliance with generic professional competencies, rather it is shaped by a teacher's individualised combination of personal and professional characteristics. Teaching is not something that teachers '*do*', but rather it encapsulates their identity and is something that they '*are*'. Teachers "build their life and identity around their role" (Barr & Mellor, 2016, p. 25).

In the current educational climate, rather than seeking to explore the complexities of the role of teaching (e.g. the invisible and contextual dimensions) to help define teacher quality, the Australian government and its affiliated bodies (e.g. AITSL, TEMAG) have focused on acknowledging only the visible role of teaching. Thus, the teacher quality reforms have largely sought to introduce pedagogical practices that are premised on compliance-type guidelines and are underscored by a culture of accountability (Barr & Mellor, 2016). But research has acknowledged that 'top-down' imposed expectations for the implementation of particular pedagogical practice can lead to professional conflict for teachers as it destabilises and undermines the complexity of their role. Removing teachers' ability to respond to the myriad of "students' responses and learning needs is disastrous, as it is this purpose that drives the essence of quality teaching beyond mere competence" (Barr & Mellor, 2016, p. 30). This implies that, while compliance-based reforms may be enforced with a misguided intent to target teacher quality, in effect they can have a considerable negative influence on a teacher's professional identity. Literature associated with describing the concept of professional identity will now be presented.

3.3 Professional Identity

Professional identity is not a tangible phenomenon that teachers possess, but rather it is a lens that is used as they strive to make sense of their self as a teacher within a particular social context at a specific point in time (Beijaard et al. 2004). Recently, Crow et al. (2016) explained that identity "is a work in progress that is shaped by our efforts, our past, future and present, and is negotiated" (p. 3), it "is a way of making sense of yourself, within yourself and through interaction with others" (p. 7). Individuals attach meaning to who or what they perceive they are within a particular context (Beijaard et al. 2000), and who they perceive they are recognised as being by others within that context (Gee, 2000).

To this end, social interaction and communication with others is regarded as being "pivotal to the development of teachers' professional identities" (O'Connor, 2008, p. 118). Identity is not a stable phenomenon, but rather is a relational phenomenon as it is something that develops and changes throughout one's life as they experience new people, new contexts, and new professional expectations (Beijaard et al. 2004; Erikson, 1968). For teachers, their professional identity is shaped in various ways throughout their career. The changing political and contextual landscape of schools has a considerable influence on teachers' professional identity, as does the variation in their professional experiences and personal familial demands (Beijaard et al. 2004; Huberman, 1989). Ongoing changes to how teachers are positioned as learners has a further influence on teachers' professional identity (Day, 1999). Thus, professional identity is shaped by a person's internal and personalised synthesis of their experiences within a particular socio-cultural context.

3.3.1 The Influence of Context on Professional Identity

As just mentioned, it is argued that people develop their identity through social interaction that occurs within their context (Beijaard et al. 2004). However, this perspective has not always been presented in literature. While Kant (1966) maintained that people are free to construct their identity independent of others, Hegel (1977) argued that a person cannot know their self in isolation as their thoughts, values and beliefs are interconnected with the particular context in which they live and work. Context influences "how the learner will understand the situation…what is learned, and how existing resources will be used" (Marsick, Volpe & Watkins, 1999, p. 90). It is during interaction in a social context that people construct their identity by engaging in social communication, and in turn, assuming the roles of others and monitoring their own actions (Mead, 1934). Wenger (1998) was a

further supporter of the Hegelian perspective that supports a social constructionist orientation to identity. His position is that identity develops through participation in a community, and because it involves 'lived experience' there is both an individual and collective dimension to identity formation. Thus, it is argued that within a community of practice, it can be difficult to delineate the point at which an individual ends and the social influence begins (Wenger, 1998).

This suggests that the school, as a clearly distinguishable community, can provide an identity defining influence upon all of the members of that community. A school context can be described as being a workplace landscape (Reynolds, 1996), and in each landscape, there are cultural scripts present that guide the way that individuals are expected to think, teach, and learn. These scripts emerge during the social and professional interactions that occur between individuals within a school. These cultural scripts are accepted, resisted, or transformed by teachers, and in doing this, they shape each teacher's professional identity (Schmidt & Datnow, 2005). The teachers' experiences can vary across contexts as they reflect the particularistic norms and values of the school staff and leadership team, in addition to the embedded historical practices (Nias, 1989). Thus, professional identity "is a complex and dynamic equilibrium where professional self-image is balanced with a variety of roles that teachers feel they have to play" within a specific context (Beijaard et al. 2004, p. 113).

This means that the professional identity of teachers is continually being redefined and legitimated based on the social context in which they work. Often teacher identities can be "shaped by and constructed within potentially contradictory interests and ideologies, competing conceptions of rights and responsibilities of teachers, and differing ways of understanding success or effectiveness" (Robinson & McMillan, 2006, p. 33). Reynolds (1996) argues that what surrounds a teacher, what others expect from the teacher, and what the teacher allows to impact on him or her greatly affect his/her identity as a teacher. The formation and ongoing development of a teacher's professional identity is a struggle to negotiate the perspectives, expectations, and roles that impact on them within a particular context (Bullough, Knowles & Crow, 1991; Samuel & Stephens, 2000).

Moreover, professional identity is shaped by the teacher's "interpretations of their continuing interaction within their context" (Canrinus et al. 2011, p. 594). As teachers enter a specific context, or are presented with a change within that context, they initially establish

a provisional identity of themselves as a teacher and/or learner at that moment in time. This identity is then shaped and refined over time by their social interactions and professional experiences within that school context (Ibarra, 1999). The process of continued interpretation and reinterpretation of experiences (Beijaard et al. 2004) leads to a more fully established sense of professional identity within the particular school context. While identity formation is influenced by contextual factors, there still remains an individualised and internally constructed element.

3.3.2 Professional Identity as a Constructionist Process

Professional identity formation reflects a constructionist view of learning as it recognises that development occurs through the activity of the learner (Beijaard et al. 2004). Teachers are constantly in a state of accommodation and assimilation in terms of their professional experiences and context-based expectations (Vygotsky, 1978, 1981). Teachers actively seek to construct their professional identity within a particular context, and they are engaged in an ongoing struggle to balance their needs with the specific demands of the context in which they teach.

When forming a professional identity, there needs to be a balance between the personal and social identities of teachers, and this is reflected in Brewer's (1991) optimal distinctiveness theory. This posits that teachers seek a balance between assimilation and differentiation within groups and any imbalance results in counterbalancing behaviour (Brewer, 1991). Experiencing a high level of assimilation yet no avenue for differentiation results in teachers seeking to distinguish themselves from the group in word and/or action. This would lead to a high level of resistance from teachers (Brewer, 1991). Conversely, experiencing a high level of differentiation can result in teachers seeking to make themselves more similar to the group. Thus, the degree of assimilation or differentiation perceived by teachers can influence their professional identity and this can, in turn, lead them to present with a particular subjective response to change.

Traditionally, the work of Mead (1934) and Erikson (1968) proposed that professional identity was a personally-influenced phenomenon. However, Vygotsky (1978, 1981) foregrounded the influence of context and this contributed to professional identity being seen as a construct that can be influenced by the social and cultural contexts in which teachers work. In recent times, theorists have continued to explore the area of professional identity in an effort to elucidate the underpinning dimensions of professional identity.

3.3.3 Dimensions of Professional Identity

Day and Leithwood (2007) outlined three dimensions of teachers' professional identity, and these are the *professional dimension, situated dimension,* and the *personal dimension*. The *professional dimension* refers to the social and policy expectations and the educational ideals of a quality teacher. This dimension is influenced by national and local-level policy documents, by teachers' engagement in opportunities for learning, and by the context-based roles and responsibilities of teachers. The *situated dimension* acknowledges that teaching occurs within a specific school context, and is thus, affected by localised influences such as student behaviour and the school demographic profile. The *personal dimension* refers to the fact that teachers have a life outside of school and consequently, have identities as a member of a family and social community. Teachers can experience a subjective response (e.g. tension or frustration) as they engage in an ongoing battle to strike a balance between these three dimensions of identity. When change initiatives are implemented within a school context, this exacerbates the teachers' sense of balance and becomes what MacLure (1993) refers to as "a continuing site of struggle" (p. 312).

Crow et al. (2016) present a framework that expands on the work of Day and Leithwood (2007) as they propose the existence of five dimensions of professional identity. These dimensions are: the *narrative dimension, epistemic dimension, emotional dimension, historical/cultural dimension,* and *political dimension.* There are a number of similarities between the dimensions presented by Crow et al. (2016) and those already proposed by Day and Leithwood (2007). Crow et al. (2016) acknowledge that professional identity is influenced by the power structures that exist at a national and local context level as these seek to define what constitutes quality teachers. There is commonality also with regards to the influence of the historical and cultural rules and behaviours that exist within each school-based context, as these inform teachers' perceptions of themselves as educators. Crow et al. (2016) also acknowledge that professional identity is influenced by the personal lives of teachers as they regard it to be a temporally and socially constructed phenomenon.

Crow et al. (2016), however, also add to the number of dimensions of professional identity that were presented by Day and Leithwood (2007) by presenting two further dimensions. The *epistemic dimension* highlights that professional identity is shaped by teachers' ongoing cognitive processes of assimilation and accommodation. Thus, professional identity is seen as an active process of meaning-making, and this occurs over time as perceptions are

continually shaped and reshaped. Crow et al. (2016) also foreground the significant influence that teachers' subjective responses have on shaping their professional identity. To reflect this position, the *emotional dimension* has been added to Crow et al.'s (2016) framework of professional identity. The influence that the emotional dimension has on shaping teachers' professional identity is now discussed.

3.3.4 The Influence of Emotion on Teachers' Professional Identity

Teaching is an emotional practice (Hargreaves, 1998, 2001), and exploring teachers' emotions in relation to the development of their professional identity leads to a richer understanding of this phenomenon (O'Connor, 2008). Emotions are experiences that occur due to teachers' embeddedness within a particular context and are influenced by the professional and social interactions that they have with others (Kelchtermans, 2005; Mead, 1934). As a teacher's view of their self is socially grounded within a particular context, their emotional response is context-specific (Nias, 1996). Emotionality is not just a peripheral phenomenon in teaching, it lies at the very heart of it and has a considerable effect on shaping the way teachers view themselves, how they engage in opportunities for learning, the way they implement pedagogical practice, and how they respond to change (Crawford, 2007; Hargreaves, 1994; Nias, 1989, 1996; Schutz & Zembylas, 2009; Zembylas, 2003; Day & Lee, 2011).

Teachers typically define themselves in relation to both the social and professional roles they play within their school-based context (Barber, 2002; Nias, 1989), and so it is difficult to separate the 'craft' of teaching from the teacher. Assuming these roles encompasses both a practical and 'non-work' element, with the latter being defined as the caring and empathetic dimension of teaching. It is this humanistic subjective dimension of teaching that is emotion-charged and frequently acts as a source of intrinsic motivation for teachers to continue striving for excellence in quality teaching (Hargreaves, 2001; O'Connor, 2008). This contrasts with an objective mindset, which enables teachers to view an experience from a detached standpoint while employing perspective and rationality.

Emotion is an appropriate lens to view teachers' perception of change within a school-based context (Reio, 2005). Emotions are "mental states accompanied by intense feelings and [which involve] bodily changes of a widespread character" (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 835). Teachers are typically passionate about their pedagogical practice (Hargreaves, 1998), and their professional philosophy for teaching is influenced by their personal belief system

(O'Connor, 2008). Teachers will "invest in the values that they believe their teaching represents" (Zembylas, 2003, p. 213). Teachers often develop a perception of themselves as a "crusader", and they derive a sense of personal pleasure and professional satisfaction from their emotional investment in their students' learning (Nias, 1989). The teaching profession

> …is charged with positive emotion. It is not just a matter of knowing one's subject, being efficient, having the correct competencies, or learning all the right techniques. Good teachers are not just well-oiled machines. They are emotional, passionate beings who connect with their students and fill their work and classes with pleasure, creativity, challenge and joy (Hargreaves, 1998, p. 835).

Teachers' behaviour, pedagogical practice, and sense of identity are "held together with emotional bonds" (Woods & Jeffrey, 1996, p. 71). Teaching is mediated through the beliefs, values, and perspectives of the teacher, and the way that pedagogical practice is implemented at the classroom level is shaped by the teachers' personal and professional identity.

This argues that teaching is a profession that cannot be reduced to a technical or cognitive practice, as it is underscored by emotion (Denzin, 1984). Teaching involves both emotional understanding and emotional labour (Hargreaves, 1998). Teachers' emotions are inseparable from the moral purposes and their ability to achieve those purposes (Hargreaves, 1998). For many teachers, teaching is a labour of love. Without teachers giving their all to the profession, classrooms would be barren and boring places (Hargreaves, 1998). As teachers, on the whole, are dedicated to the moral pursuit of excellence for students, they can become vulnerable to the demands and pressures of leaders at a government, system, and/or local school-based level (Hochschild, 1993).

As teachers have a strong emotional investment in their career, they can experience a sense of vulnerability. This was acknowledged by Bullough (2005) who stated that "to teach is to be vulnerable…to be vulnerable is to be capable of being hurt" (p. 23). Kelchtermans (2005) explained that vulnerability "is mediated by the context (policy environment, social and cultural climate in schools) and is directly linked to teachers' identity" (p. 997). Feelings of vulnerability can be particularly compounded in school contexts underpinned by control and regulation processes (Blase, 1988; Kelchtermans, 2005). Teachers can display a subjective response when processes and protocols are not in place for teachers to openly voice their opinion or defend themselves as professionals (Kelchtermans, 2005). These teachers can feel powerless, threatened, and questioned by others (Measor, 1985).

The level of emotion that is expressed by the teachers in a school highlights what is *at stake* for them when having to engage in change or negotiate aspects of their social context (Van Veen, Sleegers & van de Ven, 2005). Embracing change is an emotionally laden task

> …as teachers sort through feelings of anxiety of the unknown, frustration of the ambiguous, joy and recognition of shared ideologies (i.e. reform and self), and guilt in constructing modifications despite possible professional repercussions (Kelchtermans, 2005, p. 996).

When change initiatives are introduced in a school and target classroom level reform, there is typically a more intense emotional response from teachers than if reform occurs at an administrative level (Schmidt & Datnow, 2005). This is attributed to the fact that classroom level reform affects teachers' pedagogical practice and their relationships with students, and these lie at the very heart of teaching (Kelchtermans, 2005). Teachers' sense of professional identity is premised on their ability to connect with students and make a difference to their holistic development.

Teachers can present with a positive sense of identity and express feelings of happiness and belonging within a particular context when they believe their professional purpose is being fulfilled (Oatley, 1991). When teachers experience positive emotions, they are more likely to commit greater amounts of time and effort to processes for teaching and learning (Hargreaves, 1998). When presented with a change initiative, teachers can demonstrate *willing vulnerability* (Lasky, 2005). This occurs when teachers feel positive and safe to open themselves to the possibility of embarrassment and/or the potential for emotional stress in order to foster collegial relationships that may be of benefit to students' learning (Lasky, 2005).

The complexity of a change initiative, and the degree of impact it will have on teachers' practice, contribute to the depth of teachers' emotional response to change. When teachers feel their labour of love is being exploited, their sense of purpose is being negated, or when they feel the demands placed on them within a particular context are contrary to their vision for teaching and learning, they can experience a negative subjective response (Hargreaves, 1998). Having to abandon pedagogical practice that reflects their deeply held beliefs regarding what constitutes good teaching, can be perceived by teachers as an attack on their self-esteem and identity (Kelchtermans, 2005). This can trigger intense emotional responses from teachers and lead to them demonstrating emotional resistance by displaying feelings of frustration, anger, and guilt (Hargreaves, 1998; Zembylas, 2003, 2005). Placing teachers in situations where they feel professionally threatened, fearful, or highly anxious can lead

them to display *protective vulnerability* (Lasky, 2005). When this occurs, teachers are less inclined to be open to risk taking to build relationships and extend student learning. Lasky (2005) argues that protective vulnerability inhibits quality teaching. It is imperative that teachers feel comfortable to take real risks in order to authentically develop an effective professional identity, and these type of risks involve standing up for one's beliefs, putting student learning first, and being open to implementing spontaneous teachable moments (Lasky, 2005).

Teachers' willingness to be vulnerable and take risks can be affected by their perception of the level of control and involvement they have in a change initiative (Reio, 2005). Teachers may begin by attempting to embrace a change initiative and exercise risk taking behaviours. However, some teachers can become immobilised by new challenges to their identity and sense of self. For these teachers, a change initiative seeks to adjust or replace valued workplace conditions or question teachers' level of professional knowledge and/or practice. Often change initiatives require teachers to comply with other people's goals and practices, and this can lead to feelings of disempowerment (Nias, 1991). When teachers feel they have lost their purpose, they can become demoralised (Nias, 1991). Teachers may also fear communicating their views on a change initiative as they perceive their perspective may be interpreted by the leader or change facilitator as professionally inappropriate (Hargreaves, 2005). Teachers experience negative emotions and feel vulnerable when they perceive their professional identity is being affected by a change initiative, and this can lead to them developing protective coping strategies in order to preserve the status quo (Blase, 1988). This situation can result in teachers withdrawing their commitment to change and limiting their desire to take risks to foster collegiality and/or implement certain pedagogical practice (Reio, 2005).

In addition, Hargreaves (2005) argues that teachers' willingness to embrace change and engage in risk taking behaviours declines as they move through the career stages. He claims that teachers with less than six years of teaching experience are more inclined to positively respond to change, and teachers with 20 or more years of experience are the least inclined to embrace change. For experienced teachers, expectations for participation in change and processes associated with reform agendas, such as participation in external inspection processes, can wreak havoc on teachers' emotions and sense of identity (Jeffrey & Woods, 1996). This can lead to teachers reporting feelings of inadequacy, guilt, and heightened levels of self-sacrifice (Hargreaves, 1994). Experienced teachers can also report feelings of

loss and bereavement for certain pedagogical practice and routines that they may have once greatly valued and considered as vital to the development of their professional identity (Nias, 1991).

Teaching has been traditionally perceived as a caring-orientated and nurturing profession as it was viewed as an extension of motherhood (Grant, Murray & Grant, 2009). Teaching has been premised on this orientation for more than half a century, yet the critical role that this subjective dimension to teaching has on shaping teachers' identity, pedagogical practice, and willingness to embrace change is only now beginning to move to the foreground of literature on educational change. Jackson (1968) acknowledged the existence of the emotional dimension to teaching, however, he dismissed its value by regarding it as being nothing more than 'sticky sentimentality'. Lortie (1975) attempted to acknowledge the critical importance of teachers' emotional dimension, and he argued that teachers' most pride-filled moments in the profession typically related to their successes with individual students.

3.3.5 Research Question

Teaching is more than technically transmitting to students the pedagogical practice that is perceived to be the most effective at improving student achievement outcomes (Kelchtermans, 2005). Teaching is a deeply emotive profession as teachers have a strong professional interest in aligning their pedagogical practice with the social and academic learning needs of their students. The pedagogical relationship that exists between teachers and students cannot be fully controlled, and nor can it be sure that one's actions will convey the intended or expected meaning (Kelchtermans, 2005). Teaching should therefore be seen as a fluid and dynamic profession whereby teachers continually adjust and modify their pedagogical practice in relation to the emerging needs of the students in their class. Keltchermans (2005) argues that teaching is a profession that should "radically escape control and intervention" (p. 998).

This perspective, however, contrasts with what typically occurs in education, and so teachers experience a juxtaposition between what they are instructed to do by their system and/or principal and what they feel they need to do within the context of their classroom. It is this juncture that can create a locus of tension for teachers and lead them to elicit an emotional

response. This line of argument has led to the generation of a contributing research question:

In what ways did the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College impact on the professional identity of the teachers?

3.3.6 Concluding Comment

Today, it is becoming increasingly more accepted, in practice and reported in literature, that emotion is the epicentre of teachers' work (Hargreaves, 1994, 1998; Zembylas, 2003). Yet this intangible phenomenon can still often be "considered worthless" by governments, systems, school leaders, and change facilitators when enacting change within a school-based context (Constanti & Gibbs, 2004, p. 247). Positioning teachers as passive implementers of an institutional or government-level vision for change negates the personal and individualised nature of teaching (O'Connor, 2008). Disregarding the critical place of teachers' emotional 'buy-in' to a change initiative is an antecedent to its non-successful implementation within a school-based context (O'Connor, 2008). Thus, the following section explores literature associated with the nature and practice of change.

3.4 Exploring the Nature of Change

The leadership of successful educational change has been an area of considerable interest for many decades, and research literature since the early 1970s has endeavoured to elucidate characteristics of effective change processes. An ongoing synthesis of the aspects of change processes that have failed and succeeded throughout the decades has led to an evolving understanding of this phenomenon. While hindsight has helped to provide a greater understanding about leading educational change and has shaped the implementation of change initiatives within education, the problem is that a comprehensive awareness of how to successfully lead educational change remains elusive (Crowther, 2011; Fullan, 2006). In this era of education where there is a clear intent to outperform other international nations with regards to student achievement outcomes, the desire to understand and apply theories that describe how to effectively enact change is of paramount interest to governments, educationalists, and policy-makers, and school principals.

3.4.1 Change Theories

A number of change theories have been proposed throughout the last century and these have commonality in that people are positioned at the centre of the change process. Theories by Lewin (1946), Lippett, Watson and Westley (1958), Fuller (1969), Prochaska and

DiClemente (1986), Kotter (2003), and Kotter and Rathgeber (2006) are frequently quoted in literature as being effective guides for the achievement of successful change.

Lewin's (1936) perspective on change was that *behaviour* is influenced by a combination of a person's *predisposition* (individual characteristics) and the *environment*. Change in behaviour is seen as the result of the interplay between these opposing forces, and Lewin (1936) argued that change only occurs when one force is greater than the opposing forces. Lewin's (1946) theory of change proposed that enacting change within an organisation involved three steps, and he referred to these as: *unfreeze, movement,* and *refreezing*.

The first step in Lewin's (1936) change model is to *unfreeze* the equilibrium point (the 'status quo'). This mirrors Schein's (2004) consideration that cognitive restructuring of practices and routines need to occur for the facilitation of change. Unfreezing overcomes an individual's resistances to change and seeks to break down existing structures of uniformity. Motivating people about the need for change, building trust, and involving them in identification of solutions can facilitate effective unfreezing within a context (Schein, 1996, 2004).

The second step in Lewin's (1936) change model requires moving people to a new level of equilibrium. This occurs by persuading people to recognise that their current level of equilibrium is non-beneficial and that by working together they can achieve a fresh new and better position (Schein, 2004). Embracing change requires people to let go of familiar patterns, thoughts and actions, and this involves people experiencing a sense of grief before they can cope with embracing new practices (Argyris, 1992). Well-respected and supportive leaders and change facilitators assist in the facilitation of people moving through this transition curve characterised by feelings of pessimism, resistance and negativity, through to feelings of gradual acceptance of change (Conner, 1992; Corner, 2000; Mulford & Silins, 2003).

Finally, the third stage in Lewin's (1936) change model is that of *refreezing* and this occurs after the change process in order to sustain the change. This stage serves to stabilise the newly developed equilibrium by balancing the driving and restraining forces. Without refreezing, a change process is short-lived, and people typically return to their previous state of equilibrium.

Murray (1938) extended Lewin's (1936) theory by maintaining that internal needs and environmental presses affect people's engagement with a change strategy within an environment, and this was referred to as the Needs-Press Theory. *Needs* refer to an individual's personalised areas for further learning and development, while *presses* are the contextual factors that are enforced on individuals, as well as the organisation's policies and directives. There are two types of presses within a particular environment. *Alpha* press is the perceived environmental effect from the perspective of an external observer, and *beta* press is the perceptions that an individual has of the environment that affects their behaviour within that particular context (Creswell & Fisher, 1999). When perceptions of all individuals within an environment are combined *(consensual beta press)*, an insight is obtained regarding the degree of alignment between what individuals need in order to improve the quality of their professional knowledge and practice and the way they are provided with access to opportunities for further learning. Within any organisation there is typically a sense of equilibrium (or 'status quo') as there is a balance between the driving and restraining forces.

Lippett et al. (1958) later extended the change theory proposed by Lewin (1936, 1946) by placing more of an emphasis on the role played by the facilitator of change. Hence, the facilitator is described as being responsible for guiding people through the change process by remaining one step ahead of them (Kotter, 2003). Once change is embedded in an organisation's culture, the change agent/facilitator is no longer required and people take responsibility for the continuation of the process. Thus, the goal of a successful change agent/facilitator is to become obsolete. When this has occurred, change is said to become firmly established, refrozen or anchored, within an organisation's culture and the new behaviour is regarded as the organisational norm (Kotter & Rathgeber, 2006; Lippett et al. 1958).

Both Lewin (1946) and Lippett et al. (1958) present linear models of change. However, in contrast, Prochaska and DiClemente (1986) propose a spiral model. Their model recognises that people can relapse on their change journey and also that change is often unsuccessful on the first attempt. The stages in Prochaska and DiClemente's (1986) change theory are: *pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action,* and *maintenance.* At the first stage, an individual does not acknowledge there is a need for change *(pre-contemplation).* However, once an individual is consciously aware there is a need for change, they have transitioned to the *contemplation* stage. They have reached the realisation that they need to

engage in change, although they have not made a commitment to engage in change initiatives as yet. Once an individual is ready to commit to change they have moved to the *preparation* stage, and it is at this juncture where support and assistance facilitates an individual to embrace change. The *action* stage is next and is evidenced by an individual implementing particular change activities. By the *maintenance* stage, the individual works towards integrating change into their lifestyle and routines, and this typically spans more than six months. Support is evidenced at this maintenance stage, so the change becomes sustained and relapses do not occur.

In the 1960s, Fuller's (1969) research centred on how teachers experience change. This research led her to maintain that teachers at particular stages of their career present with certain clusters of concern. When experiencing a change initiative, researchers at the University of Texas Research and Development Centre for Teacher Education extended the pioneering work of Fuller (1969). This led to the development of the Concerns-Based Adoption Model of Change (Hall & Hord, 1987). Fuller (1969), and later Hall and Hord (1987), argue that being cognisant of the stage of concern that a teacher is at in relation to a change initiative is a key factor in being able to successfully enact a particular change initiative. This model of change identifies seven developmental stages that a teacher can experience when a change initiative is introduced in a school-based context.

The Concerns-Based Adoption Model indicates that at the beginning of a change process, a teacher's concerns are typically related to *self* (Hall & Hord, 1987). At the *Awareness* [Stage 0], *Informational* [Stage 1] and *Personal* [Stage 2] stages, teachers seek to gather information about a change initiative, and to ascertain how they perceive the change initiative will affect them personally (Evans & Chauvin, 1993). At the next juncture of concern about a change initiative, teachers shift to being concern about *task-related* issues such as management and efficiency [Stage 3] (Evans & Chauvin, 1993). As teachers become skilled at managing the demands of a change initiative, their concerns can then shift to centre on the impact that change is having on their students (Evans & Chauvin, 1993). These stages are referred to as *Consequence* [Stage 4], *Collaboration* [Stage 5], and *Refocusing* [Stage 6] (Evans & Chauvin, 1993). Fuller (1969) and Hall and Hord (1987) indicate that with a Concerns-Based Theory of Change, teachers' concerns do not disappear as they progress through the stage, but rather the relative intensity of their concerns decrease. Like Proschaska and Clemente's (1986) model, progression through the various stages presented in the Concerns-Based Model of Change is not an automatic and linear process.

A further theory of change was proposed by Kotter and Rathgeber (2006). Their model also reflects the linear process that was characteristic of Lewin's (1946) and Lippett et al's (1958) earlier models of change. Kotter and Rathgeber's (2006) process for change is intended to reflect a 'top down' process of change occurring from senior management to employees and it contains four steps. The first step is the *presentation of the vision and key strategies for change,* and these are outlined by the senior management team in an organisation. At the second stage, the team engage in a decision-making process and *identify 'the way forward'.* Strategies that align with the vision and strategic plan are selected and a plan for change is communicated with key stakeholders of the change process. In this plan it is clearly articulated as to why change is needed, how new strategies will differ from those currently employed within the organisation, the consultative process to date, and a proposed timeline for the change. The third step in Kotter and Rathgeber's (2006) theory of change involves *making the change happen.* At this stage, a high level of engagement with staff occurs and support is provided as they transition through the process of change. An awareness of saboteurs, and a commitment to 'press on' despite resistance, needs to occur at a senior management level. By the fourth step, management continues to *apply ongoing pressure* to their staff in order to ensure new practices become embedded and replace old traditions.

Throughout past decades, change initiatives have been introduced in organisations in business, industry, and education, and these have reflected the dominant change theories of the particular era. Change is essential within an organisation as it seeks to ensure that policies, practices, and processes continue to stay relevant to the needs of the context, their consumers, and employees. Organisational change will now be discussed.

3.4.2 Organisational Change

Organisations today operate in a culture characterised by increasing demands for productivity and output, and thus change is viewed as being necessary to meet demand and expectations (Luecke, 2003). Hence, change is an ever-present aspect of the operational and strategic dimensions of an organisation (Burnes, 2004), and a key responsibility of management is to lead organisational change (Todnam, 2005). Organisational change "is the process of continually renewing an organisation's direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers" (Moran & Brightman, 2001, p. 111). Literature on organisational change suggests a number of reasons why change occurs, and these range from leadership turnover, to internal pressures, through to mandated

governmental policies (El-Khawas, 2000). Change can often be unpredictable, and therefore it can be reactive and discontinuous (Burnes, 2004; De Wit & Meyer, 2005; El-Khawas, 2000; Luecke, 2003; Nelson, 2003).

According to Gamage (1992), there are three types of organisational change: *evolutionary change, spontaneous change*, and *planned change*. Evolutionary change refers to the cumulative modifications that occur within an organisation over an extended duration of time. Spontaneous change occurs over a short duration and arises due to natural circumstances and ad-hoc occurrences. Planned change involves deliberate effort to manage events towards a predetermined outcome and this occurs by employing rational, normative re-educative or power-coercive strategies (Chin & Benne, 1969; Gamage, 1992). When organisations continually monitor and respond to planned events in small incremental steps then change occurs as an ongoing process (Burnes, 2004; Luecke, 2003) rather than as a series of one-off discontinuous processes for change.

Also, organisational change transcends all workplaces, including education, and a number of underpinning steps have been presented by researchers. For example, Australian researchers Matthews, O'Mahony and Barnett (2006) identified seven steps of organisational change, and these are outlined in Figure 3.1.

Pressure for Change	Clear Shared Vision	Capacity for Change	Actionable First Steps	Model the Way	Reinforce and Solidify Change	Evaluate and Improve	Successful Change
OMISSION	Clear Shared Vision	Capacity for Change	Actionable First Steps	Model the Way	Reinforce and Solidify Change	Evaluate and Improve	Successful Change
Pressure for Change	**OMISSION**	Capacity for Change	Actionable First Steps	Model the Way	Reinforce and Solidify Change	Evaluate and Improve	A Quick Start that Fizzles
Pressure for Change	Clear Shared Vision	**OMISSION** *Decision Gate One*	Actionable First Steps	Model the Way	Reinforce and Solidify Change	Evaluate and Improve	Anxiety and Frustration
Pressure for Change	Clear Shared Vision	Capacity for Change	**OMISSION**	Model the Way	Reinforce and Solidify Change	Evaluate and Improve	Haphazard Efforts and False Starts
Pressure for Change	Clear Shared Vision	Capacity for Change	Actionable First Steps	**OMISSION**	Reinforce and Solidify Change	Evaluate and Improve	Cynicism and Distrust
Pressure for Change	Clear Shared Vision	Capacity for Change	Actionable First Steps	Model the Way	**OMISSION** *Decision Gate Two*	Evaluate and Improve	Go Back to Old Ways
Pressure for Change	Clear Shared Vision	Capacity for Change	Actionable First Steps	Model the Way	Reinforce and Solidify Change	**OMISSION**	Sceptical and Stagnate

Figure 3.1. The seven steps of change. Adapted from "Managing Change: Leading School Improvement," by R. Matthews, G. O'Mahony and B. Barnett, 2006, Heatherton, VIC: Hawker Brownlow Education and "Change Management Theories, Change Management Models", by J, Kotter, 1996, http://www.practical-management-skills-co/change-management-theories.htm.

This framework suggests that the institutionalisation and sustainability of new knowledge and practice requires the seven steps of change to be embedded within an organisation, such as a school. Omission of a particular step affects the successful implementation of a change initiative and can lead to members of the organisation exhibiting subjective responses such as anxiety, frustration, cynicism, distrust, and scepticism. For organisational change to become ingrained in the culture of a workplace, development and articulation of strategic renewal planning processes need to occur. The importance of a change agent/facilitator articulating a clear vision, providing actionable steps, modelling practice, giving opportunities to embed practice, and providing evaluation are acknowledged as key steps in a change process (O'Mahony et al. 2006).

This implies that the members of an organisation must commit cognitively and emotionally to the process of change, and Kotter (1996) explains that when people are involved in change there are two decision 'gates' they encounter. These are identified in Figure 3.1. These gates exist towards the commencement and the conclusion of a change process. Kotter's (1996) decision gates align with Matthew et al's (2006) *capacity to change* and *reinforce and solidify* components, as it is at these junctures where people need to personally commit to change by investing their time and effort. At these two decision gates, the potential for individuals to abandon change is a real possibility if high levels of support are not provided.

Traditionally, theories of change indicated that organisations needed routine and stability to demonstrate effectiveness and improvement in employee performance (Luecke, 2003; Rieley & Clarkson, 2001). A process of change was viewed as being of a relatively short duration as employees were moved through linear stages and emerged at the end with new skills and competencies which then formed part of the employees' repertoire of practice. However, today it is considered vital that organisations undergo continuous cycles of change whereby employees continually renew their knowledge and practice (Burnes, 2004; Rieley & Clarkson, 2001), and this seeks to minimise impacts on their productivity and financial viability (Gamage, 1992). This form of organisational change requires employees to regularly discard their existing practices and assume those of the change agent/facilitator (Lewin, 1946). However, the challenge in establishing such an ever-changing environment is on enabling the members to overcome their anxieties (Schein, 2004). For some members, change engenders images of opportunities, events, and conditions that are better than at present and they positively embrace new learning, yet for others, change engenders feelings

of confusion, fear and uncertainty prevail because they feel threatened (Gamage, 1992; Horn, 2008; Lewin, 1946).

Despite a considerable investment of time, energy, and finances, successful organisational change "on a widespread basis continues to be infuriatingly elusive" (Hargreaves, 2005, p. 282). Despite acknowledgement of the central place that change has within organisational cultures, approximately 75% of change initiatives fail (Balogun & Hope Hailey, 2004; Fine, Hansen & Roggenhofer, 2008; Fullan, 1998; Hargreaves, 2005; Kotter, 1996; Standish Group, 2011; Turner & Crawford, 1998; Wheatley, 2006). Like organisations in business and industry, schools have been neither immune to, nor protected from, change. There have been "massive inputs of resources" and "numerous different types of plans and strategies" implemented to realise change to teachers' quality of professional knowledge and pedagogical practice throughout the decades (Fullan, 1998, p. 217). However, Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) argue that change processes continue to have little effect on shaping teacher quality and positively effecting student achievement outcomes. Despite a long history of change in education, there still remains a significant void in understanding with regards to the effective implementation of change. Thus, further literary informed elaboration on the topic of educational change follows.

3.4.3 Educational Change

Throughout the decades, change initiatives have been introduced by school leaders with a view to enact and sustain school improvement. Change initiatives have been implemented in schools in response to various significant world events, with the intent being to remedy, rescue or rectify society from the effect of these events. Informed by the outcomes generated from past educational change initiatives. Three universal aspects are now described as underpinning educational change, and these are the *technological, socio-political,* and *structural* perspectives on change (Blenkin, Edwards & Kelly, 1997; Hopkins, Ainscow & West, 1994; House & McQuillan, 1998). The *technological perspective* centres on the notion that change cannot occur without a plan, and that this typically maps the presumed most effective strategy for a particular change initiative within a specific context. The *socio-political perspective* is premised on the realisation that change does not occur in isolation, but rather occurs within a context and diversity of people. Thus, schools are sites where there are various sources of power and influence coming from different political, social, cultural and personal levels. This particular perspective is of high importance to this research because it emphasises the crucially influential role played by the personal and phenomenological

side of educational change. The *structural perspective* acknowledges that "schools are not isolated social entities but rather they are an integral cog in our social construction mechanisms" (Branson, 2010, p. 11). In other words, often there are a number of changes expected to be happening in schools at the same time. Furthermore, within Australia, there have been various phases of educational change, and these are now discussed. The following review of these phases of change shows how they have slowly included all three of the above universal aspects of change.

3.4.3.1 Phases of Educational Change in Australia

The 1960s was a phase in education whereby considerable change occurred. The post-war baby boom resulted in a high demand for teachers (Turney, 1969). Teacher quality became victim to the need for mass production of teachers in order to significantly expand the teaching workforce. Authoritative power became the criteria used to determine who made the decisions regarding what the change initiative targeted and how it would be enacted (Branson, 2010). As teaching was viewed as a 'craft' that involved a series of skills, leading educational change during this era was premised on an approach characterised by transmission and replication to meet personal and contextual demands (Turney, 1969). Teachers became positioned as passive implementers of an imposed vision. Funding was made available to resource change initiatives. However, these were typically "ad hoc, idiosyncratic, isolated, individualistic, and narrowly focussed innovations" that targeted individuals within a particular context (Branson, 2010, p. 1).

By the 1970s, the Vietnam War, women's liberation movement, and the 'hippy-culture lifestyle' had contributed to a paradigm shift in the values and processes which underpinned society. During this era, education was viewed as the means through which society could be shaped and stabilised at this time of heightened uncertainty. The intent of educational change initiatives shifted from targeting individual teachers within a context to focusing on the contribution that education could make towards fostering a productive and stable society. The political and social movements of the time led to a culture of scepticism and resistance to authoritative power. Teachers were no longer willing to be passive and compliant implementers of imposed 'top down' directives, and this gave rise to a more collaborative approach to educational change. While the leader of the change initiative still retained the balance of power in the relationship, the change initiative "was far more people-focused, flexible, and collaborative" (Branson, 2010, p. 3) than what it had been in the previous decade.

While it is acknowledged that educational change is not a smooth and linear process, by and large, each successive era of education learns from past approaches to educational change and then transcends them to some degree by making relevant adjustments and amendments targeted towards improvement. While the previous approach to educational change had come a long way by recognising the importance of involving individuals in a change initiative, the resultant outcome was, however, still largely controlled by an authority figure – the principal. Thus, in the next era of educational change, a duality in the leadership of change became evident (Branson, 2010). Not only did the leader need to consider the outcome of a change initiative, they were also required to consider the people who were involved. This consideration extended beyond a cursory recognition and required the change leader to be cognisant of how it was of personal benefit to those involved. Thus, educational change in this particular era was premised on not only having an effective strategy, but also ensuring it was advantageous to those who were intended to enact the change.

In the current era, educational change is called upon to be based on an ethical dimension in conjunction with a managerial component. A leader of educational change is thus required to consider 'the good of all' rather than be focused on self-determined outcomes or driven by a desire for self-glorification. Now a leader of educational change is expected to:

> …honour others, to take positive stands, and to behave in ways that clearly show that their own self-interests are not the driving motivation behind their leadership as it is about achieving a desirable change…those who lead educational change will always act justly, rightly and promote good rather than harm (Branson, 2010, p. 4).

There is a recognition today that effective change does not involve linear pre-determined processes imposed *onto* teachers, but rather it involves an ethical and morally grounded relationship between the people involved in the change (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). By necessity, successful educational change must attend to the socio-political aspects of the change initiative. This enables a merging of the ideas, resources, and capabilities of the leader and teachers within a context.

However, research and literature, to date, has failed to fully elucidate how best to lead this form of educational change. While the current perspective acknowledges there is an ethical and moral dimension to educational change, it is acknowledged that it is by no means the 'holy grail'. Hargreaves (2005) argues that despite the considerable outlay of finances, time and effort, "successful school change on a widespread basis continues to be infuriatingly

elusive" (p. 282). Literature on educational change and change theories have been centred predominantly on exploring the objective dimension of change, and this could be due to its ability to be observed and quantified. However, "with every objective reality there is a subjective response" (Branson, 2010, p. 14). This position reflects that of Marris (1974) who argued that change elicits intense feelings and requires a paradigm shift in the values and beliefs of teachers. Principals need to be cognisant of the potential that can be achieved if they work *with* teachers rather than work *on* teachers for change. The current perspective on educational change is beginning to recognise that teaching is a highly relational and emotionally-laden profession (Wheatley, 2006).

3.4.4 Research Question

Educational change theorists have sought to elucidate the elusive element/s that may lead to successful educational change. To do this, it has been suggested, they need to view change from a different perspective to how it has traditionally been conceptualised, as continuing to promote the same perspective cannot be expected to yield different results. Branson (2010), however, adds a cautionary note by explaining that "it is not possible to instantaneously and magically create a totally new and completely credible and reliable educational change process" (p. 10). To have this perspective "is an unrealistic and ridiculous presumption" (Branson, 2010, p. 10).

In contrast, new learning is seen as evolving from the past rather than emerging from the future, as it "incorporates, integrates and then transcends what we currently know about how best to lead educational change" (Branson, 2010, p. 10). While past change initiatives may have been "neither deep nor sustainable" (Fullan, 2005, p. 1), and thus failed to produce the intended results within a particular context, there are often many aspects that can provide rich opportunities to enhance the current knowledge base about educational change. The elusive goal for successful educational change may lie within these facets which can be regarded as "overlooked insights" (Branson, 2010, p. 10).

Hence, it can be argued that exploring the subjective dimension of change may be one of these 'overlooked insights', and it provides an avenue for further exploration in order to transcend the current understanding of educational change. In order to contribute to literature in this area, this research will explore teachers' subjective responses to a school-based change initiative. Consequently, the overarching research question emanating from this discussion about educational change and guiding this study is:

What are the teachers' phenomenological experiences of an educational change initiative in a Queensland Catholic primary school?

Data to address this question are gathered from the principal, change facilitator, and teachers in a single-school context.

3.4.5 Concluding Comment

Inherent within this ongoing commitment to educational change, especially as it involves an enhancement to teacher quality, is the act of teacher learning. Such change necessitates teachers learning new professional knowledge and skills and learning how best to apply these in their classroom in a sustainable way. This raises the need to review literature about what constitutes best practices in the achievement of teacher learning.

3.5 Teacher Learning

Teacher learning is shaped by an individual's subjective response to change (Day & Lee, 2011; Hargreaves, 1998, 2001; Leithwood, 2006). While the subjective nature of teaching is becoming seen as a critical determinant of teacher quality, the difficulty in quantifying a personalised and context-specific experience can explain its omission, to date, in lists of characteristics of effective teacher learning. However, seeking to understand the critical role that subjectivity plays in shaping the way teachers engage in learning is beginning to rise to the fore of research literature in this area. Gaining a greater understanding of the way that teachers feel when being positioned as learners, can contribute to a more comprehensive appreciation of the emotional side of teaching. Within schools, there can be variation in the way that teachers feel that they have been positioned as learners, and this can lead to shaping their sense of professional autonomy and influencing their perceived level of professionalism.

Arguably, the initial perspective regarding teacher learning was premised on a deficit mindset, and it centred on the direct transmission of knowledge from an 'expert' *to* teachers (Girvan, Conneely & Tangney, 2016). This perspective led to teacher learning being conceptualised as isolated events that occurred external to teachers' school context. This perspective gave rise to styles of teacher learning that were grounded in direct instruction and lecturing and seminars became the typical approach to raising the quality of teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical practice (Girvan et al. 2016). These opportunities for learning were referred to as 'in-service' attendance.

In more recent times, teacher learning is being seen as a context-based activity, as it arises due to the active and lived experiences of teachers who span a number of career stages (Huberman, 1985; Girvan et al. 2016). This perspective has led to different models of teacher learning being suggested as beneficial for use in education, and these have been transferred from those utilised in the areas of business and industry. These models of learning include mentoring (Danielson & McGreal, 2000), coaching (Joyce & Showers, 1981, 1983; Knight, 2009), and inquiry-based action research (Lewin, 1946). These styles of learning recognise adult learning principles and align more closely with the characteristics of effective teacher learning articulated in literature (Hawley & Valli, 1999; Ingvarson, Meiers & Beavis, 2005; Knowles, 1998). While literature and research is identifying teacher learning as being an active and context-based phenomenon, there still remains a dissonance between what is being presented in literature as effective approaches to teacher learning and what may be teachers' lived experiences within schools.

3.5.1 Teachers as Learners

Adult learners have different needs to those of students who are taught using a pedagogical approach (Webster-Wright, 2009). As learners, adults are typically self-directed, problem-oriented, internally motivated, independent learners, and ready to learn (Chan, 2010; Knowles, 1980; Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007). Thus, the provision of flexible pathways to learning, and drawing on previous situated experiences of learners are key tenets underlying effective adult learning – termed *andragogy* (Chan, 2010; Knowles, 1980; Webster-Wright, 2009). Andragogy is not an education-specific concept, but rather it spans various disciplines including criminal justice (Birzer, 2004), education (Bolton, 2006), management (Forest & Peterson, 2006), medicine (Bedi, 2004), nursing (Norrie & Dalby, 2007), and social justice (Brown, 2006). The development of the term, andragogy, as distinct from pedagogy, is now explained, in addition to the assumptions that underpin andragogy.

3.5.1.1 Development of the Term Andragogy

The transference of knowledge and skills from an adult to a child is traced back to the Stone Age (Swanson & Holton, 2001). By the Greek and Roman periods (100B.C.E-300A.D) the educational system had become more organised, and by the seventh century pedagogy became evident within Cathedral schools (Ozuah, 2005). Pedagogy is defined as "the art and science of teaching children" (Ozuah, 2005, p. 83). Also, until the latter part of the last century, pedagogy was premised on a number of assumptions, and these were: a) learners

have dependent personalities, b) learning is subject-oriented, c) extrinsic motivation is an essential factor in learning, and d) learner's previous experience is not relevant to learning (Knowles, 1998). Initially, adults who engaged in learning were taught in the same manner as students, despite incongruence between their purpose, motivation, and experience. Adult education became more formalised around the year 1920, and it was at this point in time that the shortcomings of using a pedagogical approach for adults began to be more widely acknowledged (Knowles, 1998; Lindeman, 1926). Adult learners were "resistant frequently to the strategies that pedagogy prescribed, including fact-laden lectures, assigned readings, drills, rote memorising, and examinations" (Knowles, 1980, p. 40). It became recognised that adult learners needed to learn in a different manner to that of students, and the term *andragogy* began to be applied to the field of education.

The perspectives of a number of key theorists shaped the term, andragogy. While andragogy was coined by a German educationalist, Alexander Knapp, in 1833, it was not commonly used until after 1921 as this is when Eugen Rosenback reintroduced the term during a conference in Frankfurt (Forest & Peterson, 2006). Andragogy is defined as being "the art and science of helping adults learn" (Knowles, 1980, p. 43) and it is learner-centred rather than teacher-centred (Connor, 2004). It was during this decade that Edward Thorndike's psychological perspective on the capacity of adults as learners was presented in his publication titled *Adult Learning*. He maintained adults brought intelligence, memory, and purpose to learning experiences. Eduard C. Lindeman developed the concept of adult education further by strongly arguing that adult learning should connect with their lived experience (Moberg, 2006; Ozuah, 2005). His perspective was that adult learning was premised on too much "vicarious substitution of someone else's experience and knowledge" (Lindeman, 1926, p. 6). During the next two decades, scholars continued to seek to elucidate the most effective methods for the learning of adults (Cartor, 1990), and by 1959 Malcolm Knowles had formulated a theory of adult learning.

Despite Knowles' recognition that adults learn differently to students, a transmission style of learning remained the most prominent approach to teachers' learning for almost half a century (Kennedy, 2014). Today it is becoming increasingly acknowledged in education that adult learning is not a process of transmission, but rather is embedded in and evolves out of the interactions that a teacher has within the sociocultural community of their school-based context (Ahedo, 2009; Webster-Wright, 2009).

3.5.1.2 Assumptions of Andragogy

In Knowles' publication, titled *The Modern Practice of Adult Education: Andragogy versus Pedagogy,* he argued that adult education should be premised on different learning principles than those intended for students (Forest & Peterson, 2006). This has implications for teachers of adults as they are called to become "facilitators of learning instead of being transmitters of knowledge and evaluators" (Taylor & Kroth, 2009, p. 3). There are six assumptions that underpin andragogy, and these relate to teachers': *self-concept, role of experience; readiness to learn; orientation to learning; motivation;* and *need to know* (Knowles, 1980, 1998).

Adults have a wealth of background knowledge and depth of life experience that underpins their learning (Moberg, 2006). The "richest resource available" to adult learners is activation of their prior experience (Taylor & Kroth, 2009, p. 6). Adults are typically intrinsically motivated learners and "tend to be problem-centred in their orientation" (Knowles, 1980, p. 54). Adult learners

> …do not expect an immediate return, they are capable of supporting interest without recognition or with little support, and they become caught up in the feedback loop between learning, interest, and enjoyment (Baskas, 2011, p. 3).

Adults learn by focusing on professionally relevant real-word problems (Chan, 2010) and by becoming problem-solvers (Birzer, 2004). Adults become actively involved "in the learning process to construct their own knowledge, to make sense of the learning, and to apply what is learned" (Chan, 2010, p. 33). They desire an opportunity to connect with a group, and when this occurs they are able to socially connect to discuss professional work-based issues (Maslow, 1954). Adults are autonomous and independent thinkers and actively pose questions and present alternate perspectives to others (Taylor & Kroth, 2009).

All learners have a need to know the purpose for learning (Hattie, 2012; Knowles, 1998), and for teachers, learning is oriented towards tasks associated with their social roles within a school-based context (Taylor & Kroth, 2009). When teachers understand and value the purpose of learning new knowledge and/or practice, their motivation to learn is enhanced and they are more likely to engage in professional conversation and exert time and effort to learn new professional knowledge and embrace new pedagogical practice (Knowles, 1998). If adults "feel that others are imposing their wills on them", they tend to "resent and resist [these] situations" (Knowles, 1998, p. 65). This has implications for the way teachers perceive curriculum change, how they experience change initiatives within their school-

based context, and the extent to which they engage in opportunities for further learning to enhance their professional knowledge and practice.

3.5.2 Characteristics of Effective Approaches to Teacher Learning

Teacher learning has traditionally been a teacher-centred approach focused on the transmission of knowledge and practice *to* teachers. The assumption has been that teachers' participation in opportunities for learning has resulted in an immediate change to their level of knowledge and standard of pedagogical practice, and also that teachers are able to apply their learning in a number of contexts (Bausmith & Barry, 2011). However, research has shown that these assumptions do not translate into practice (Guskey, 2002; Pickering, 2007). It is argued that a traditional transmission style of teacher learning is "insufficient to foster learning which fundamentally alters what teachers teach or how they teach" (Boyle, While & Boyle, 2004, p. 47). It also overlooks the critical role that a teacher's subjectivity plays in shaping the way they engage in opportunities for learning, and their willingness to embrace change (Bell & Gilbert, 1994). The work of Knowles (1980) has emphasised the central place of relevance, motivation, experience, and active involvement in teacher learning, and this highlights shortcomings of the approach to teacher learning that has been embedded in education for more than half a century.

In light of Knowles' (1980) assumptions of adult learners, there has been considerable interest from researchers who have sought to elucidate the characteristics that underpin effective approaches to teachers' learning. In 1998, the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation [CERI] conducted a synthesis of research and identified seven characteristics that underpin effective approaches to teacher learning. CERI (1998) maintained that teacher learning needed to be relevant, participant driven, collaborative, class-based, supported by the modelling and coaching of an expert, inquiry-focused, ongoing, and part of a school-wide process of change. Hawley and Valli (1999) and amanc, Ainsworth, Groves, Rowland & Zbar (2001) supported the characteristics proposed by CERI (1998). Hawley and Valli (1999) added that effective approaches to teacher learning needed to be goal-driven, position teachers as active learners, and provide teachers with theoretical knowledge. Newmann, King and Young (2000) and Ingvarson et al. (2005) added further to this list by highlighting the importance of teachers de-privatising their practice and gaining feedback about their teaching. Desimone's (2009) research also aligned with these findings and reinforced that these characteristics were necessary if improvement to teachers' professional knowledge, skill, and practice was to be realised. Pedder and Opfer (2013) argued that effective teacher

learning should be relevant to teachers' professional needs, be "dynamic, unfolding and continuous", span throughout teachers' careers, and be "embedded in the full range and contexts of their professional activity" (p. 540).

During the past two decades, literature has primarily documented the objective, observable and quantifiable characteristics of teacher learning. However, today teacher learning is being described as an ongoing, situated, interactive and social process based in discourse, embedded within a community of practice, involves support, and targets improvement in the quality of teachers' individual levels of professional capacity (Armour & Makopoulou, 2012; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009; Cole, 2012; Desimone, 2009; Fletcher, 2012; Killion, 2012; Lieberman & Pointer-Mace, 2010). It is becoming more recognised that the social and emotional dimension of teaching plays a considerable role in shaping the quality of teachers' knowledge and practice, and it also influences their willingness to embrace change and integrate new knowledge and practice into their existing repertoire (Day & Less, 2011; Hargreaves, 1998, 2001; Leithwood, 2006; Leithwood & Beatty, 2007; Nias, 1996). The evolving nature of teacher learning has led to a shift in the terminology that is used to describe it, and this has led to some confusion and misuse of key terms. Hence, the terms *professional development* and *professional learning* are now explained.

3.5.3 Nomenclature of Teacher Learning

At present, there remains no universally accepted definition to explain teacher learning despite attempts at a national and international level. As a consequence, there can be some overlap in the use of terminology to describe approaches to teachers' learning. This is acknowledged by Doecke, Parr & North (2008) who explain that "the same words spoken by different people can mean different things" (p. 9). This is particularly pertinent in education with regards to the use of the terms '*professional development*' and '*professional learning*'. These two terms can often be mistakenly assumed as being synonymous and thus, can be used interchangeably (Webster-Wright, 2009). However, this is not an accurate perspective to have as both terms refer to different yet complimentary processes with regards to teachers' learning.

In Australia, the *National Mapping of Teacher Professional Learning Project* (Doecke et al. 2008) attempted to provide a distinction between these two terms as they apply to an educational context. *Professional development* is defined as the "activities done at the behest of employers or systems, involving knowledge that is delivered by outside experts" (Doecke

et al. 2008, p. 9). A Teaching and Learning International Survey [TALIS] conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development [OECD] (2009) supported Doecke et al's (2008) definition and add that professional development targets improvement of "an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher" (p. 49). In contrast, *professional learning* is regarded as facilitating:

> …individual autonomy and motivation, an image of professionals consciously monitoring their professional practice, learning from their work, and arriving at new understandings or knowledge on that basis. Such learning is typically situated learning, reflecting the professional experiences and insights that become available to teachers within their local school communities (Doecke et al. 2008, p. 9).

Thus, the key distinction between the two terms, *professional development* and *professional learning,* is that the first term relates to imposed external processes for teacher learning, whereas the second term refers to an individual's "internal process of creating professional knowledge and expertise" (Cordingley & Buckler, 2012, p. 219). It is quite likely that teachers will experience both professional development and professional learning within the course of each school year. This is due to there being times when teachers are positioned as passive recipients of knowledge and times when they can be active and self-directed learners. These perspectives reflect different approaches to teacher learning, and the three approaches are now discussed.

3.5.4 Approaches to Teacher Learning

Kennedy (2014) clustered together a number of approaches to teacher learning based on the purpose for using them within education. She presented three typologies, and these are: *transmission, transformative,* and *transitional* approaches to teacher learning. The most common approach to teacher learning within education has been the transmission style of learning, despite Lindeman (1926) highlighting the shortcomings of this model more than 80 years ago (Kennedy, 2014; Lieberman & Miller, 2014; Swan Dagen & Bean, 2014).

3.5.4.1 A Transmission Style of Learning

With a transmission style of learning, the person positioned as the deliverer of expertise in curriculum, policy, or practice has the position of power and determines the content to be delivered to teachers who are positioned in a passive learning role as recipients of knowledge (Kennedy, 2014; Lofthouse & Hall, 2014; Pedder, Storey & Opfer, 2008; Putnam, Smith & Cassady, 2009; Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002). This style of learning involves no repetition, is low in intensity, of a short duration, has low participant engagement, and assumes that

learning is an isolated activity (Rodgers, 2014; Rodgers & Rodgers, 2007). Teacher learning is conceptualised as a process of "filling up a reservoir of knowledge in a professional's mind that will run dry if left too long" (Webster-Wright, 2009, p. 712). Knowledge is typically disseminated to teachers, often at an off-site location, "to a broad constituency and when for logistic reasons they do not try to teach how to implement and refine instructional practice" (Cole, 2012, p. 8). Teachers then return to their own school and 'pass-on' their knowledge to colleagues. This process underscored the 'key teacher' approach to learning in Australian schools during the 1990s and early 2000s. Cascading of new information throughout a school's staff centres on transmission of knowledge and skills, but rarely on the reason underpinning the selection of the content or practice. Nieto (2003) argues that teacher learning needs to move from focusing on "what" and "how" to a consideration of "why" certain knowledge and practice is most relevant (p. 395).

Moreover, a transmission style of learning has been criticised for perpetuating cycles of faddism within schools as innovations are often adopted, implemented in an ad-hoc manner, and then abandoned when the 'next big thing' comes along (Midgley & Snartt, 2008). This style of learning is viewed as being "episodic, kaleidoscopic, a patchwork quilt of topics which are rarely sequential" (Yates, 2007, p. 215), and are provided to teachers through "fragmented, one-shot and de-contextualised 'in-service' workshops" (Mayer & Lloyd, 2011, p. 3). Having teachers attend "thousands of workshops" is seen as being "frustratingly wasteful" as there is typically "no significant change in practice" evident at the classroom level (Fullan, 1991, p. 315). The lack of connection between the content of teachers' learning and the school context is a further criticism of this approach to teacher learning (Kennedy, 2014).

3.5.4.2 A Transformative Style of Learning

A transformative approach to teacher learning is typically premised on an action research style of learning. Action research is defined as "the study of a social situation, involving the participants themselves as researchers, with a view to improving the quality of action within it" (Day, 1999, p. 34). 'Quality of action' refers to teachers' knowledge of the situation in addition to improved practice. A high level of collaboration and active learning by teachers underscores this model, and this markedly contrasts how teachers are positioned as learners to that of a transmission-style of learning. In the transformative style, teacher learning is considered to be a process rather than a product, and teachers are encouraged to identify and

implement research activities rather than solely rely on externally produced research to inform and guide practice (Burbank & Kauchack, 2003).

Furthermore, this style of learning provides the opportunity for teachers to actively transform their own pedagogical capacity and also affords them a high level of professional autonomy (Kennedy, 2014). An advantage of this approach to teacher learning is that it encourages teachers to critically reflect on their own and others' practice and to ask "why" certain phenomena occur (Girvan et al. 2016; Lieberman, 1995). Fullan (2001) considers that providing teachers with opportunities to engage in conversation, collaboration, and observation are necessary to realise change to their professional practice.

However, critics of this style of learning highlight that critical reflection is limited to a teachers' practice, and not to "the political determinants that shape the parameters of their practice" (Kennedy, 2014, p. 347). It is also seen as a time-intensive approach to teacher learning, and this can lead to the potential of it being abandoned due to other school-based demands and commitments placed on teachers (Girvan et al. 2016).

3.5.4.3 A Transitional Style of Learning

A transitional style of teacher learning differs to the other two styles as it emphasises the importance of relationships and interactions among people while building competency and capability (Moyle, 2015). Coaching and mentoring are both part of this category and the terms are often used synonymously. However, this should not be so. Coaching has a predominantly skills-based purpose, whereas mentoring is premised on a professional friendship targeting career transition or advancement (de Paor, 2015; Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002). With coaching, knowledge and expertise is seen as external and brought into the school context by the facilitator, whereas with mentoring, the mentor highlights to the protégé the inside knowledge and technical expertise relating to the school context (Western, 2012). Both approaches do, however, share commonality in that they are premised on confidentiality and mutual respect (Western, 2012), and focus on operational tasks rather than on problem-solving, critical thinking and engaging with school and system-level policy (de Paor, 2015).

Mentoring involves positioning a senior colleague as the expert (mentor) to another colleague (the protégé) who is encountering new knowledge and/or practice (Anderson & Cawsey, 2008). A mentor within a school is someone with the "experience, expertise, wisdom, and/or power, and who teaches, counsels and helps less experienced or less

knowledgeable persons to develop professionally and personally" (Danielson & McGreal, 2000, p. 251). Mentoring is underscored by collaborative goal setting and action planning, in order to move the protégé towards advancement in knowledge or career transition (Carmel & Paul, 2015). Not only does a mentor provide the protégé with knowledge and skill, they also convey social and cultural norms of the particular learning context in which they are based (Kennedy, 2014).

Coaching is a supportive and contextually relevant approach to teacher learning that places the teacher at the centre of the learning process (Caldwell, 2006; Fullan & Knight, 2011; Knight, 2009; van Leent & Exley, 2013). Thus, learning is conceptualised from the teachers' perspective rather than the coach's perspective. The coach facilitates a teacher's identification of their ideal self and contrasts this with their real self (Boyatzis, 2006). Areas of strength and gaps in capacity are identified collaboratively and these enable documentation of a teacher's 'learning agenda' (Boyatzis, 2006). Coaching actively involves teachers in a cyclical process of learning whereby the coach models high-quality pedagogical practice, observes teachers' implementation of this practice, and provides constructive feedback targeting improved practice (van Leent & Exley, 2013).

Throughout the decades, teacher learning has moved from being a process premised predominantly on the transmission of knowledge and practice, to something that can involve collegial collaboration and inquiry. This shift reflects the changing perspective on the role of teachers and influences the level of professionalism they are afforded. Since the 1950s, there have been four different 'ages' of teacher learning.

3.5.5 Ages of Teacher Learning as Professionalism

Research in the area of teacher learning as professionalism has had a relatively short history, beginning in the mid-1950s when sociologists began to explore the key features that an occupation should have to be considered a profession. These features include: the use of skills based on theoretical knowledge; education and training in those skills; a code of conduct oriented toward the 'public good'; and being a power organisation within society (Millerson, 1964). To this list, Hargreaves (2001) and Riley (2003) add: having a societal purpose and obligation; being committed to a client's needs and having a high degree of autonomy. When defining professionalism, occupations such as law and medicine were typically used to serve as the benchmark as they met these standards (Servage, 2009). In society,

> …one expects doctors to make use of an increasingly sophisticated battery of tests and select a treatment [to] keep up to date with the latest developments in their field through private reading and successful participation in regularly organised programs of professional development. We expect full accountability (Caldwell, 2000, p. 194).

Caldwell (2000) argues that it is "entirely appropriate to show that teachers can be as fully professional as medical specialists" (p. 194), and the central role of ongoing learning has been foregrounded as a critical element in shaping teachers' quality of knowledge and practice. Throughout the decades, the level of professionalism that teachers have been afforded has varied. Hargreaves (2000) organised this history into four eras and these reflect the changing nature of school social contexts and variation in how teachers' learning has been conceptualised and actioned. These eras are referred to as 'ages of professionalism'.

3.5.5.1 The Pre-Professional Age

The pre-1960s era was referred to as the pre-professional age and during this time teachers' work was considered "managerially demanding but technically simple" (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 156). Instruction was provided to large groups through the delivery of a standardised curriculum, and recitation/lecturing, note-taking and seatwork were evident (Cuban, 1984). Teachers taught their class as a 'collective student' and little recognition was made for individual learning needs (Hargreaves, 2000). Order and control were critical skills for a teacher to master, and knowledge was transmitted to students. The teacher typically delayed presentation of the objective of each lesson to maintain students' attention while getting a pre-determined point across (Hargreaves, 2000).

This transmission style of teaching was the accepted and unquestioned method for many decades. Teacher learning was considered to emerge from daily teaching experience (Day & Gu, 2010). Thus, apprenticing oneself to a more experienced teacher was considered the most suitable way of extending a teacher's professional competence. As teaching was considered technically simple, the perception was that once teachers understood the necessary content and could control a class they required no more assistance with learning. Periodic observation of teachers' practice occurred by 'inspectors' to ensure they maintained their standard of practice. This approach to teaching was based on the assumptions that teacher quality is formed at the career entry stage and remains fixed over time, and that teaching occurs generally in isolation, which results in limited opportunities for collegial interaction.

3.5.5.2 The Age of the Autonomous Professional

The 1960s and 1970s were seen as the age of the autonomous professional. The professional status of teachers improved considerably with the transference of teacher education courses from colleges into Universities (Hargreaves, 2000). During this age, the classroom became an "ideological battleground between child-centred and subject-centred education, open classrooms and closed classrooms, traditional models and progressive models" (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 159). Government funding was provided to schools for the implementation of imaginative and ambitious curriculum projects. Teachers became more autonomous and began to experiment with practice that they perceived aligned with students' learning needs.

However, while this professional autonomy stimulated the interest of teachers, the lack of support structures within schools stopped these projects from being institutionalised (Fullan, 1991; Hargreaves, 2000). During this time, recognition that teacher quality could be enhanced throughout a teacher's career resulted in a sharp rise in the number of 'in-service learning opportunities' provided for teachers at external venues [e.g. seminars/lectures] (Day & Gu, 2010; Hargreaves, 2000). Translation of teachers' newly acquired knowledge into practice occurred sporadically and in an ad-hoc manner at an individual level as school cultures were still characterised by individualism, isolation, and privatism (Rosenholt, 1989). It was during this age that teachers' access to professional development became a political issue, and the *Schools in Australia* report, later known as the *Karmel Report* (Karmel, 1973), argued for the importance of providing teachers' access to ongoing opportunities for learning.

3.5.5.3 The Age of the Collegial Professional

The 1980s and 1990s was seen as the age of the collegial professional. Teaching once again changed considerably and teachers were required to teach in ways they had not themselves been taught (McLaughlin, 1997). This required teachers to commit greater amounts of time and effort in order to reshape their identity and approach to teaching. Engaging in opportunities for further learning was seen as crucial to enable teachers to meet this challenge. Teachers also began to place a greater emphasis on accessing the professional knowledge and support of colleagues.

During this era, approaches to teacher learning such as peer coaching emerged in education (Joyce & Showers, 1981, 1983), and the traditional transmission-style of learning was adjusted to include some emphasis on including opportunities for teachers to engage in

collegial participation during workshops. Longstanding school cultures of isolation and individualism began to be effected as teachers started to discuss with their colleagues how to improve their practice, and they began to request opportunities to observe their pedagogical practice. It was during this age that teachers were afforded greater professional autonomy and this enabled them to decide "what, where, when and how their students learnt" (Helterbran, 2008, p. 124), in addition to how they engaged in opportunities for learning. At this point in time, teacher learning was seen as being facilitated through collegial relationships that had a context-specific focus.

3.5.5.4 The Post-Professional Age

Since the 2000s, the professionalism of teachers has again experienced a paradigm shift and it is regarded as the post-professional age. Education is seen to be 'looping back' to an earlier era as increasing requirements for teacher accountability begin to dominate the educational landscape. In this current post-professional age, there is a:

> …return to an amateur, de-professionalised, almost pre-modern craft, where existing skills and knowledge are passed on practically from expert to novice, but where practice at best can only be reproduced, not improved (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 168).

Teachers are being repositioned from autonomous learners and teachers, to being non-experts who are "cogs in the bureaucratic machine, who need to be told what to do, what to know, and how to be a 'good' teacher" (Ryan & Bourke, 2013, p. 420).

Governments have come to have a considerable influence on the teaching profession in recent times, and teachers are now expected to conform to government-endorsed statements of what constitutes teacher quality. Governments in nations such as England, the United States of America and most recently Australia, have sought to raise the performance of teachers by defining:

> …not only what can be said and thought but also about who can speak, where, when and with what authority. Therefore, policy discourses on teacher professionalism or teacher quality define both what a professional teacher should be like as well as what quality teaching can and should be (Ryan & Bourke, 2013, p. 415).

Consequently, it is argued that this has led to the advent of prescriptive national curricula, professional standards, and instructional strategies (Helterbran, 2008) that shape how teachers engage in teaching and learning.

Today, the academic literature is claiming that the level of professional autonomy afforded to teachers with regards to teaching and guiding their own learning is progressively declining. Professionalism has become tied to teachers' mandatory compliance with educational decisions made by those in higher levels of 'power', and their willingness to be unquestioning supporters and implementers of 'top down' imposed policies and processes for teaching and learning (Ryan & Bourke, 2013). Teaching is becoming premised on the reproduction of lessons, rather than on teachers' involvement in active, collaborative, and inquiry-based learning. Teachers are being reduced to "drones and clones of policy makers' ambitions" or principals' expectations (Hargreaves, 2003, p. 2) and this undermines teachers' sense of autonomy and erodes professional identity (Day & Smethem, 2009; Stone-Johnson, 2014; Wills & Sandholtz, 2009). Schools are becoming places characterised by hierarchical and managerial accountability and regulation. It is argued that having to deliver "someone else's thoughts, ideas, strategies, and lesson plans hardly counts as professionalism" (Dainton, 2005, p. 159). A paradox has emerged in education, and this is: as the teaching profession becomes more professionalised, teachers have to surrender their professionalism (Stone-Johnson, 2014).

This discussion has raised the view that the current educational climate is seeking to de-professionalise teaching and to herald in a culture of compliance and conformity with 'top down' imposed directives regarding change initiatives. This seeks to negate the individualised nature of teaching and fails to recognise that teachers at different career stages present with varied personal and professional learning needs. Hence, the following section explores literature associated with the teacher learning at different career stages. This is of interest to this research because, like most schools, the Emmanuel College teaching staff during the time of this research comprised teachers with considerably different years of experience.

3.5.6 Teacher Learning at Different Career Stages

Throughout past decades, researchers have sought to elucidate the stages that occur during the career of teachers as this has a considerable influence on the way they approach opportunities for further learning (Huberman, 1989, 1993; Levinson, 1986; Sikes, Measor & Woods, 1985; Super, 1957). As teachers progress through their career stages, they tend to carry "a distinct and distinctive orientation to the world and the place of their self within it" (Hargreaves, 2005, p. 967). Huberman (1989) proposed a stage-based model to describe a teacher's progression throughout their career. He recognises that teachers' "professional

career journeys are not adequately linear, predictable or identical" (Huberman, 1993, p. 264). Huberman's (1989) model acknowledges the variation in teachers' trajectories by including different pathways that may exist through a teacher's career. This seeks to show the non-linear dimension to teacher learning, as well as recognising that a teacher's personal and professional experiences and relationships within particular contexts can diversify their attitude towards opportunities for learning and their level of participation in educational change. Huberman's (1989) career stage model is organised into five stages, presented in Figure 3.2, and each of the stages are now discussed.
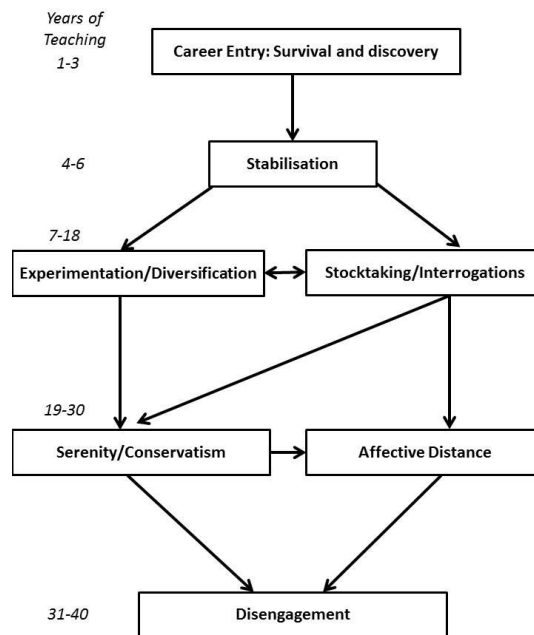
Figure 3.2. Teacher career cycle model (Huberman, 1989).

3.5.6.1 The Career Entry: Survival and Discovery Career Stage

Today, career entrants to the teaching profession represent a wide age demographic, and this results in them viewing teaching and learning through a lens of varied life experience. Younger aged early career teachers are not only establishing themselves as professionals, but also seeking to understand themselves as people (Sikes et al, 1985). They are endeavouring to define who they are, what they stand for, and what knowledge and wisdom they have to share (Hargreaves, 2000). Some entrants to the teaching profession are mature-aged and bring their life experience, knowledge, and maturity to their role as teacher. While there are benefits to having these features, these teachers may present with solidified views, which could affect their adaptability and willingness to engage in certain opportunities for learning (Bullough et al. 1991). When confronted with involvement in a change initiative,

early career teachers have had no time for which they could become nostalgic, no lost past that they might mourn, and compared to which they may now feel deprived (Runciman, 1966). They also bring a sense of naivety to opportunities for learning as they have not developed a professional memory, and so they are unaware that previous change initiatives have not been successful in their implementation.

During the first few years of teachers' careers [*discovery/survival*], they are typically establishing themselves as members of the teaching profession. They begin their career with "a sense that their work is socially meaningful and will yield great personal satisfaction" (Fullan, 1993, p. 1). Graduate teachers do not have an independent level of control over pedagogical and behavioural aspects of teaching, and they seek opportunities for further teacher learning in these areas.

3.5.6.2 The Stabilisation Career Stage

Teachers experience a transition to the second career stage [*stabilisation*] when they demonstrate independent mastery of pedagogical practice and when their self-concept has grown (Huberman, 1989). It is at this juncture of their career when a teacher's identity and sense of self-efficacy is forming (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). These teachers perceive that they are "now a teacher, both in one's own eyes and in the eyes of others" (McCormick & Barnett, 2006, p. 2). Consequently, they strive to be autonomous, and they value opportunities to engage in teacher learning. Teachers typically spend between one and three years at each of the first two career stages.

3.5.6.3 The Experimentation/Diversification or Stocktaking/Interrogations Career Stage

Teachers at the mid stage of career typically have between six and eighteen years of teaching experience. They 'have found their feet' in the profession and view themselves as capable and confident professionals (Huberman, 1993). These teachers have a sense of enthusiasm towards teaching and respond to opportunities for teacher learning in a generally positive way due to their perceived competence and confidence, and they desire to extend their professional knowledge and repertoire of practices. The teacher's broad range of professional and personal life experience gives them an open mind for learning as well as a healthy sense of scepticism (Hargreaves, 2005). In general, teachers at the mid-career stage "are open but not innocent, critical but not curmudgeonly, relaxed but not withdrawn" (Hargreaves, 2005, p. 981).

By a teacher's seventh year of teaching it is said that their career trajectory begins to branch out and form two alternate pathways. The first way leads the teachers towards a need for experimentation and diversification, and the alternate to this pathway is the stocktaking and interrogation route. Teachers in the *experimentation/diversification* stage are confident in their pedagogy, they can manage change as it is encountered, and they are capable of being autonomous learners. They actively seek opportunities for learning as they crave new stimulation and experimentation with pedagogical practice (Huberman, 1989). *Stocktaking and interrogation* is the alternate route for teachers transitioning to the third career stage. For some teachers, their personality type and/or experiences within a school-based context leads them to perceive a sense of monotony in the profession and they have self-doubts about their ability. Teachers can experience a 'mid-career crisis' at this point.

Also, Huberman's (1989) career stage model allows for teachers' movement from one area to another within the same career stage. Some teachers initially enter their third career stage feeling positive to engage in opportunities for learning and experiment with pedagogical practice [*experimentation/diversification*]. However, these teachers may at times become overwhelmed as

> …the inevitable difficulties of teaching interact with personal issues and vulnerabilities, as well as social pressure and values, to engender a sense of frustration and force a reassessment of the possibilities of the job and the investment one wants to make in it (Fullan, 1993, p. 2).

Thus, increased tension and work pressure can overwhelm certain teachers and this results in them having less positive perceptions and transitioning to the alternate route to the third career stage by means of the *stocktaking/interrogations* pathway.

3.5.6.4 The Serenity/Conservatism or Affective Distance Career Stage

It is posited that teachers typically enter this stage of their career at approximately their 19th year of teaching and remain in this stage until they have spent about 30 years in the profession. In this career stage, teachers do not progress on a single trajectory, but rather there are a number of paths that may be taken (Huberman, 1993). These pathways are referred to as *serenity/conservatism* and *affective distance*. Teachers can demonstrate either serene/conservative views about the profession or a sense of affective distance.

Teachers at this stage may have conservative views about what constitutes appropriate and/or effective pedagogical practice, and may wish to continue to implement these practices rather than engage in processes of change or opportunities for further learning (Huberman,

1989). Resistance to innovation may occur as these teachers experience a sense of nostalgia for 'the past'. Being forced to embrace change requires an abolishment and abandonment of 'tried and tested' pedagogical practice, and for experienced teachers this can lead to emotive expressions of reluctance. These teachers may vocally oppose opportunities for learning and change initiatives that they perceive will be labour intensive.

Huberman (1989) maintained that there are four sub-trajectories of the fourth career stage. There are some teachers at this career stage who embrace opportunities for *renewal* of their knowledge and practice and they lead innovation and improvement within schools by advocating for and exemplifying teacher leadership (Crowther, 2011; Huberman, 1993). Hence, the majority of such teachers at this stage select one of the other three sub-trajectories – *positive focusers, negative focusers,* and *disenchanted*.

Positive focusers actively avoid sporadic innovations and short-lived initiatives. Instead, these teachers focus their time and energy towards making a difference at the classroom level (Huberman, 1993). While they are "not cheerleaders for the next big thing" in pedagogy, they have a positive attitude towards change and see benefits for themselves and their students' learning (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 67). *Negative focusers*, on the other hand, are predominantly centred on protecting their self-interest rather than on meeting student needs (Huberman, 1993). These teachers "are not interested in learning new things, they are really stuck in their old ways…jaded and cynical" (Hargreaves, 2005, p. 976). These teachers are considerably vocal regarding perceptions of "unreasonable, repetitive changes imposed from the outside" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 66). They are "antagonistic towards and embittered" about teaching as they perceive change "threatens to destroy all they believe in and have committed themselves to achieving for their students and their school" (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006, p. 25). They dismiss all new innovations and change initiatives on principle and endeavour to sway the attitudes of others to do the same (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

The *disenchanted* teachers are often mistakenly confused with the *negative focusers*. For these teachers, they have demonstrated wholehearted commitment to school-based expectations in the past and have had "the rug pulled from under their feet" when the focus has been shifted, resources withdrawn, or when leaders have moved on (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 66). *Disenchanted* teachers have had the sense of magic for teaching eroded along with their idealism and optimism for learning and change. These teachers are typically

the most vociferous members of staff when they perceive that expectations are being imposed on them (Huberman, 1989). This is particularly evident when teachers perceive the motives of facilitators of learning or reform designers to be suspect or non-genuine (Bailey, 2000). These teachers have the potential to be re-enchanted.

3.5.6.5 The Disengagement Career Stage

The final sub-stage in a teacher's career is described as the *disengagement* stage, and this occurs after approximately 30 years of teaching. This stage is characterised by a gradual cognitive and behavioural withdrawal from the profession (Huberman, 1989). Some teachers exit the teaching profession feeling satisfied and serene. However, others exit with feelings of bitterness. When teachers perceive that change is "done *by* teachers, *for* teachers, and *with* teachers, then most people's teaching career will end in a bang, not a whimper" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 67).

3.5.7 Research Questions

First, teachers can experience variation in their standard of knowledge and practice at different career stages (Huberman, 1989) as learning to teach is "complex and occurs over a professional lifetime" (Beynon, Geddis & Onslow, 2001, p. 76). Development of teachers' professional knowledge and practice is a non-linear process that is considerably shaped by the personal and professional experiences of teachers within specific school-based contexts (Huberman, 1993; van Eekelen, Boshiuzen & Vermunt, 2005). Huberman (1989) explains that at each stage of a teacher's career their particular professional and personal needs influence their sense of identity, their level of motivation to engage in opportunities for learning, and their willingness to embrace change. Teachers' engagement in learning can also be influenced by 'triggering events' that emerge from their daily-situated school and class-based experiences (Spear & Mocker, 1984; van Eeklelen et al. 2005). Within some school-based contexts, a transmission style of learning is adopted on the presumption that learning is similar for all teachers and that it exists irrespective of the socio-cultural context in which it occurs. This perspective disregards the variation that career stage makes to the way teachers perceive and engage in teaching and learning.

At the research school, teachers from the first four career stages were involved in a school-based approach to teacher learning. All teachers, irrespective of career stage, were expected to participate in the same opportunities for teacher learning to promulgate a school-wide consistent approach to the teaching of guided reading. A contributing research question is:

How do teachers from different career stages respond to the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College?

Second, in this current era of ongoing educational change, teacher professionalism is being tied to mandatory compliance with educational decisions made by those in higher levels of 'power' with teachers positioned as unquestioning supporters and implementers of 'top down' imposed policies and processes for teaching and learning (Ryan & Bourke, 2013). Transmission of knowledge and practice from an 'expert' to a 'novice' is, once again, becoming an accepted and expected practice in schools. Teacher learning is being conceptualised as a process of reproduction and replication of pedagogical practice. This change to the way that teachers are positioned as educators and learners can have an influence on their sense of professionalism. This led to generation of a further contributing research question:

In what ways do teachers feel that the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College influences their sense of professionalism?

Data to address these two questions are gathered from teachers at a single-school context.

3.5.8 Concluding Comment

All of the previous discussion in this chapter raises leadership issues. It is the school leader, the principal, who has the ultimate responsibility for overseeing the attainment of high teacher quality within their school. But their level of success in this endeavour will depend upon the type of educational change that they choose in order to enhance teacher quality, which will be influenced by issues associated with teacher professional identity, optimum teacher learning processes, and teacher career stage needs. Thus, it is important within the context of this particular research to explore leadership literature that provides understanding of how a school principal might best address such a multiplicity of demands.

3.6 Leadership

Principals have been traditionally afforded a position of authority when it comes to leading change at a school level, and they have been responsible for the development and articulation of a school-based vision for change (Amanchukwu, Stanley & Ololube, 2015; Lavery, 2011). This has led to change initiatives being reflective of a principal's style of leadership and their dispositional characteristics. Traditionally, principals embraced a transactional style of leadership (Bass, 1985). This resulted in educational change being introduced in an authoritarian and highly prescriptive manner, which led to it having a strong emphasis on the rational and objective reasons for change (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). In recent times, there is a growing awareness of the role that subjectivity plays in shaping the way that teachers embrace educational change (Branson, 2010; Fullan, 1983; Hargreaves, 1998). This has led to a deeper understanding of the effect that change has on teachers' behaviour and attitudes, and it has called for principals to lead with greater levels of authenticity and relationality (Branson, 2011; Branson et al. 2016; Duignan, 2012).

Arguably, leadership is one of the most observed, yet least understood phenomenon that exists in society today (Burns, in Abbasialiya, 2010). This is an area where more has been written yet less is known about leadership than about any other topic in the behavioural sciences (Abbasialiya, 2010). While effective leadership is easy to identify in practice, it is very difficult to define (Day & Antonakis, 2012). Difficulty in defining effective leadership stems from a recognition that it is an evolving construct which is shaped by the social and political climate in which it is conducted (Day & Antonakis, 2012).

As just mentioned, it is now thought that leadership has a strong subjective dimension to it, and this contributes to the considerable variation in the way that individuals enact their role as leader. As there is no one universally accepted definition of leadership that is used within all organisations (Amanchukwu et al. 2015), Day and Antonakis (2012) indicate that there is commonality, however, in an understanding that leadership involves

> …(a) an influencing process - and its resultant outcomes - that occurs between a leader and followers and (b) how this influencing process is explained by the leader's dispositional characteristics and behaviours, follower perceptions and attributions of the leader, and the context in which the influencing process occurs.

Thus, although the role of a leader was traditionally conceptualised as having a strong managerial component, in more recent times there is growing awareness that a leader's style of leadership needs to be cognisant of the subjective dimension to their role. Furthermore,

research into the motivation of teachers towards engaging in change highlights the importance of enacting a person-centred approach, whereby the leader is called upon "to gain a better understanding of teachers' individual motivation…and well-being" associated with any desired change (Van den Berg, Soenens, Aelterman, Cardon, Talliv & Haerens, 2014, p. 415). The following discussion of styles of leadership explores this transition in some detail.

3.6.1 Styles of Leadership

As mentioned, there is an extensive body of literature that has focused on the nature and practice of leadership, and this has led to an identification of various leadership theories (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Charry, 2012; Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999; Sergiovanni, 1984). Early personality-based theories began with a focus on the qualities of leaders, and later theories acknowledged variables such as situational factors and the leadership skills and characteristics of leaders (Amanchukwu et al. 2015; Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009). Burns (1978) is credited as being the first to introduce the concepts of *transformational* and *transactional* leadership when discussing political leadership. While Burns (1978) argued that leaders are either transformational or transactional, Bass (1985) disputed this. While Bass (1985) based his theory of transformational leadership on the work of Burns (1978), he made some modifications. Bass' (1985) main point of contention was that he argued that transformational and transactional leadership are not two ends of a single continuum, whereby leaders have to lead a community from one or the other of these styles of leadership. His perspective is that the best leaders have both transformational and transactional skills. In practice, transactional leadership is a more common typology of leadership than the transformational style (Burns, 1978; Lamb, 2013). There are three dimensions of transactional leadership and four dimensions of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985), and these are now described.

3.6.1.1 A Transactional Style of Leadership

Transactional leadership is premised on a managerial perspective that seeks to raise 'the bottom line' (Bolden et al. 2003). This style of leadership involves the use of hierarchical authority and is centred on task completion (Tracey & Hinkin, 1998). Such leaders are described as performance-driven and they make it explicitly clear to staff what their expectations are and also the associated consequences related to their expectations (Lamb, 2013; Russell, 2011). Transactional leadership is premised on an exchange process, whereby staff have their needs met "if their performance measures up to their explicit or implicit

contracts with their leader" (Bass, 1985, p. 103). Reward and punitive systems are utilised to either foster or discourage work behaviours (Penn, 2015; Russell, 2011).

Transactional leadership is premised on three dimensions: contingent reward, management-by-exception (active), and management-by-exception (passive). *Contingent reward* involves clarification of the expectations for task completion, and the leader's establishment of "constructive transactions or exchanges" with staff (Judge & Piccolo, 2004, p. 755). The leader and staff engage in a process of negotiation to explicate the rewards that will be issued by the leader in return for the staffs' demonstration of a particular standard of performance (Bass, 1985). Contingent reward leads to staff being extrinsically motivated to perform and meet their leader's expectations (Dartey-Baah, 2015). *Management-by-exception* relates to "the degree to which the leader takes corrective action on the basis of results of leader-follower transactions" (Judge & Piccolo, 2004, p. 755). The distinction between management-by-exception (active) and management-by-exception (passive) relates to the timing of the leader's intervention (Howell & Avolio, 1993). *Management-by-exception (active)* occurs when leaders enforce rules on a staff in order to avoid certain courses of action/performance or to make corrections in behaviour (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Management-by-exception (active) entails a leader paying strict attention to staffs' adherence to established procedures and their performance in order to anticipate and rectify deviations in quality or compliance, and this occurs prior to them becoming a problem or being of concern (Dartey-Baah, 2015; Hatter & Bass, 1988). This approach to leadership focuses on staffs' perceived potential for deviations and mistakes, and interventions are enacted to remedy staffs' errors of judgement and/or poor performance. Conversely, *management-by-exception (passive)* involves leaders addressing the behaviour of staff and taking corrective action following noted deviations in their quality and/or standard of performance (Dartey-Baah, 2015; Hatter & Bass, 1988). Common to both types of management-by-exception is the use of discipline, punishment, and negative feedback in order to coerce staff into compliance with the leader's perspective and expectations (Bass & Avolio, 1993).

A strength of having a leader who employs transactional leadership is that managerial structures are made explicit for staff. They have a sense of clarity with regard to performance expectations and they have a keen awareness of the specific dimensions of their role within that particular context (Lavery, 2011). While the articulation of structures and processes can serve as a strength of this style of leadership, it can also serve as a limitation. For some

leaders, the development, articulation, and maintenance of context-based structures and procedures can become regarded as the endpoint rather than the process of their leadership (Lavery, 2011). When this situation occurs, the relational dynamics and the culture of a workplace context can become very rigid and procedural (Lavery, 2011). This type of context can result in the promulgation of a culture of compliance rather than one characterised by innovation, autonomy, and creativity. As transactional leaders operate from an extrinsic reward perspective, staff can become disinclined to be intrinsically motivated and show enthusiasm and initiative towards enacting their role (Bass, 1985).

3.6.1.2 A Transformational Style of Leadership

Until the mid-1980s, leadership theory had been premised on a transactional perspective. At this time, Bass (1985) argued for a different form of leadership – one that was premised on staff having a sense of purpose and mission, rather than the mutual satisfaction of transactional obligations. This type of leadership was referred to as *transformational leadership* and it involved "idealised and inspiring leader behaviours [that] induced followers to transcend their interests for that of the greater good" (Day & Antonakis, 2012, p. 11). Transformational leadership is the most widely researched of the leadership typologies (Bass, 1985; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Transformational leadership focuses on the connection that is established between a leader and his/her staff (Amanchukwu et al. 2015). These leaders build a sense of community as they strive to lead staff towards seeking common aims (Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1997; Hatter & Bass, 1988; Quinn, 1996), and they demonstrate enthusiasm and optimism in order to unite staff to go beyond their separate interests (Lai, 2011; Lavery, 2011; Warrilow, 2012). The attitudes, values, and beliefs of staff are transformed from being self-seeking to becoming oriented towards the good of the organisation (Amanchukwu et al. 2015; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1993) and "directed in service of corporate goals" (Burrell, 1992, p. 66). Bass (1990) summarises transformational leadership as occurring

> …when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their self-interest for the good of the group (p. 21).

Transformational leaders demonstrate enthusiasm and optimism towards being committed to having a shared goal (Lai, 2011). These leaders seek to empower their staff to embrace

change and, in turn, to become leaders themselves in order to be agents of change for others (Lavery, 2011).

Transformational leadership embodies four dimensions, and these, often referred to as the Four I's by Leithwood (1994), are: idealised influenced (charisma), inspirational motivation, individual consideration, and intellectual stimulation (Deluga & College, 2000; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Transformational leaders are seen as being *charismatic*, and this leads to them being admired, adored, and respected by their staff (Avolio & Bass, 2002; Bass, 1985; Gunter, 2001). These leaders act as role models for others, and staff seek to emulate them (Arokiasamy, Abdullah, Shaari & Ismail, 2016). Leithwood et al. (1999) explained that transformational leaders

> …are perceived to exercise power in socially positive ways. They create trust among colleagues in their ability to overcome any obstacle and are a source of pride to have as associates. Colleagues consider these leaders to be symbols of success and accomplishment, and to have unusual insights about what is really important to attend to; they are highly respected by colleagues (p. 57).

Nikezic, Puric and Puric (2012) explain that the charismatic dimension of transformational leadership reflects Weber's charismatic approach to leadership, whereby "such leaders are perceived as being with exceptional traits not found in other men (sic)" (p. 103). The charismatic nature of a transformational leader inspires staff to embrace a futuristic vision for change.

Transformational leaders are passionate communicators and effectively use *inspirational motivation* to cultivate team work, to provide meaning for tasks, to challenge staff with high standards, and to present a sense of optimism about the likelihood of goal attainment (Arokiasamy et al. 2016; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Transformational leaders recognise that there is variation in the professional needs amongst staff, and they actively offer *individualised consideration* by providing mentorship and/or coaching (Deluga & College, 2000). These leaders develop two-way communication, delegate tasks, and then unobtrusively monitor staffs' completion of tasks to ascertain the need for further support (Avolio & Bass, 2002; Bass, 1998; Behling & McFillen, 1996). *Intellectual stimulation* is used by transformational leaders to gather staffs' ideas, challenge their assumptions, encourage risk taking, and to stimulate their creativity (Avolio & Bass, 2002; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Transformational leadership is an appropriate style of leadership for principals (Crowther, Ferguson & Hann, 2009). Being able to inspire and motivate a staff while providing them with intellectual stimulation, and a sense of individual consideration for their professional needs, are regarded as essential capabilities for principals in order to meet the demands of the 21st century (Leithwood, 1994; Marzano, Waters & McNulty, 2005). Principals who exercise a transformational approach to leadership have the potential to transform the core business of a school (e.g. pedagogy, curriculum, and assessment) rather than limit themselves to facilitate surface level change (Lavery, 2011). Hargreaves and Fink (2006) argue that transformational leaders within schools achieve such a significant level of change through the pursuit of common goals, empowerment of people in the organisation, development and maintenance of a collaborative culture, promoting processes of teacher development, and engaging people in collaborative problem-solving strategies.

Principals ascribing to a transformational style of leadership can be focused on the 'big picture' of education and can, at times, become so focused on the vision that they overlook the practical elements of managing educational change (Lavery, 2011). Some transformational leaders can present with such a charismatic and dynamic personality that their passion and enthusiasm for change can be mistaken for truth (Lavery, 2011). In some school contexts, these types of leaders can forego practicality and rationality, and as a result they can passionately lead their staff 'right over the cliff into a bottomless chasm' (ChangingMinds.org, 2010).

3.6.1.3 A Transrelational Style of Leadership

Despite their significant difference, it is now seen that both the transactional and transformational styles are premised on a relationship between a leader and his/her staff, and that this relationship has involved the use of hierarchical power, coercive words and actions, or charismatic influence (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Leithwood et al. 1999). In both styles, the staff have been positioned as passive and compliant implementers of a leader's vision for change, or alternatively they are motivated to forgo their individuality in order to work together for 'the common good' of an organisation (Amanchukwu et al. 2015). Both perspectives on leadership have been premised on the view that individuals are separate entities, and the role of a leader is to manage and influence the performance of each individual entity (Hosking & Bouwen, 2000). There is a clear delineation perceived between the internal selves of staff and their external environments (Uhl-Bien, 2006). However, in recent times, greater attention has been placed on explicating the relational and subjective

dimension of leadership, and this has led to the proposition of a further style of leadership, termed *transrelational leadership* (Branson, 2011; Branson et al. 2016; Duignan, 2014; Eacott, 2015; Uhl-Bien, 2006). This perspective posits that leadership "is best understood as a transrelational phenomenon as its essence is to move others, the organisation and the leader to another level of functioning by means of relationships" (Branson et al. 2016, p. 155).

Transrelational leadership is regarded as being constructionist in nature. A relational style of leadership is premised on the assumption that professional knowledge is constructed within relationships rather than as being a tangible, unified, or fixed phenomenon (Bradbury & Lichtenstein, 2000, p. 551). This position is reflected by Eacott (2015) who explained that a relational style of leadership views "knowledge as socially constructed and socially distributed" (p. 6). This supports Uhl-Bien's (2006) perspective that meaning is something that coevolves and is constructed within a relationship with others within the social field (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Dachler and Hoskings (1995) explained that what people understand to be "real is differently constructed in different relational and historical/cultural settings" (p. 4). From a relational perspective,

> …knowing is always a process of relating; relating is a constructive, ongoing process of meaning making – an actively relational process of creating (common) understandings on the basis of language; meaning can never be finalised, nor has it any ultimate origin, it is always in the process of making; and meanings are limited by socio-cultural contexts (Uhl-Bien, 2006, p. 655).

A relational perspective on leadership does not view power as a commodity belonging to people in hierarchical positions (Branson et al. 2016; Foucault, 1977), but instead it is seen as being one voice among many and it is distributed throughout an organisation and belonging to all of the collective dynamic (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Leaders "share responsibility with others for the construction of particular understanding of relationships and their enactment" (Dachler & Hosking, 1995, p. 15). From this perspective, staff become co-creators of knowledge and skill rather than being seen as clients (O'Rielly & Reed, 2010). They come to have a deeper sense of connection, a clearer appreciation of their world, and a stronger grasp on their part in the process of change (Branson et al. 2016). In recent times, a relational style of leadership is moving to the forefront of scholarship in an effort to more fully understand how to effectively enact change within a workplace context (Hunt & Dodge, 2000; Uhl-Bien, 2006).

Today, principals are becoming increasingly cognisant of the fact that organisational complexities are making it improbably for a school's leadership to be facilitated by only one individual (Bush, 2013; Ross, Lutfi & Hope, 2016). Johnston (2015) posits that the leadership demands placed on a principal have become greater than what can be practically achieved by one individual, no matter how inspirational they may be. A transrelational approach to leadership that is gaining prominence within education is distributed leadership. This approach is premised on affording a team of educators a sense of trust, respect, collegiality and collective responsibility (Ritchie & Woods, 2007; Ross et al. 2016). By embedding an approach to leadership that acknowledges the power of relationships and collective decision-making, De Matthew (2014) argues that a principal can enhance a staffs' capacity to learn and can build their problem-solving skills. Further to this, when a principal recognises the value of having a transrelational style of leadership and distributing some power and responsibility to their staff, teachers' sense of ownership for the quality of their practice can be enhanced (De Matthew, 2014) and they have a greater subjective investment in enacting change (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

When introducing change in a school-based context, principals need to have an awareness of not only the objective element of their role, but also the subjective dimension. In some instances, principals can facilitate high-quality relationships with teachers, yet in others, teachers can experience feelings of inauthenticity and a sense of non-trustworthiness with regard to the principal's character. The way a principal leads a particular staff is influenced by his/her beliefs and values, and the way that their leadership is experienced by others is informed by the personalised interpretations which are constructed during day-to-day interactions with the principal. If teachers perceive that the principal has little concern for them personally, they may view any attempt at sincerity as a façade. When teachers perceive insincerity and inauthenticity with respect to a principal's words and actions, this begins to breed feelings of distrust which over time can lead to resentment, resistance, and disengagement from a change initiative. Thibodeaux, Labat, Lee and Labat (2015) state there is a statistically significant relationship between a principal's style of leadership and teachers' subjective feelings relating to morale, satisfaction and commitment to teaching and learning.

Importantly, empirical research reports the importance of relationships in leadership (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Ilies, Nahrgang & Morgeson, 2007). Such research highlights that high-quality relationships between leaders and their staff are based

on trust and mutual respect, and they generate more positive outcomes than low quality relationships that are based on compliance and fulfilling imposed contractual obligations. This perspective emphasises the importance of relationality in leadership, and has foregrounded the critical influence that the dispositional character traits of a leader have on shaping the perceptions and behaviours of a staff.

3.6.1.4 Dispositional Character Traits of Transrelational Leaders

A transrelational leader possesses a strong character and demonstrates intentionality as they respond to the demands of their leadership role. There are two sides to the character of a transrelational leader. First, there is the performance side, and this involves a leader addressing the many and varied demands that are placed on them within a particular context. These can include interpersonal, strategic, managerial, and systemic demands (Branson, 2011). Transrelational leaders have not only the capability but also the integrity to "live and work with purpose and confidence amidst the tension created from having the dual responsibility for progressing the change while caring for others" (Branson, 2010, p. 90). It is in the decisions that leaders make when responding to demands placed on them where their true character is revealed. Gavin, Quick, Cooper & Quick (2003) define character as

> …personal integrity…the individual is undivided in his or her fundamental beliefs and attitudes, presenting those values to everyone…it is the strength and conviction to stand one's ground and make the morally right decision even when it is difficult (p. 169).

Acting with character, or integrity, involves a leader doing the right thing despite outside pressure to the contrary (Duignan, 2012; Gavin, Quick, Cooper & Quick, 2003). The character of a leader "helps to identify who they really are on the inside to those they are leading" (Branson, 2011, p. 10). Intentionality of a leader is premised on a commitment to honour staff by displaying subjective qualities such as sincerity, respect, compassion, honesty, openness, and transparency during their interactions and context-based processes and procedures (Branson, 2010; Duignan, 2012). Fullan's (1993) perspective is that the key building block for education "is the moral purpose of the *individual*" (p. 10). He argues for the relentless pursuit of moral purpose, as he cautioned that "it can easily slip away" during a leader's interactions with staff (Fullan, 2005, p. 88).

Transrelational leaders acknowledge that their role entails more than a managerial component, and that it requires them to have a keen sense of relational awareness. They realise that fostering a workplace culture premised on collegiality, cooperation and

teamwork lies at the very essence of their leadership (Branson et al. 2016), and so these leaders are skilful in their use of collaboration and inclusion. They seek to make staff perceive themselves to be professionally competent and "feel that they are at the very heart of things, not on the periphery (Amanchukwu et al. 2015, p. 12). Transrelational leaders value the wellbeing of their staff, and the leader keeps his/her focus "at the horizon and not just at the bottom line" (Amanchukwu et al. 2015, p. 12). These leaders understand the importance of subjectivity, and they make staff feel acknowledged and empowered as professionals (Amanchukwu et al. 2015). They realise staffs' response to change is more positively influenced by who they perceive a leader to be, rather than from what a leader says or does (Duignan, 2012).

Leaders who display, through personal example, a strong sense of integrity and virtuousness create a workplace culture where employees seek to emulate these qualities in their daily practice and interactions with others. Engaging with transrelational leaders who display positive and ethical character leaves staff "feeling lively and motivated, [it] builds energy in people [and is seen as] an inspiring experience" (Cameron, 2008, p. 42). Having a transrelational leader elevates a staffs' level of wellbeing and inspires them to achieve collective professional action, and this has been shown to have a positive impact on the performance and engagement of staff (Cameron, 2013; Duignan, 2012; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing & Peterson, 2008).

This, however, does not occur in all schools as not all leaders are authentically transrelational. In schools, there can be leaders who "tell a compelling and morally rich story", but they do not always "embody and live the story" that they tell (Freeman, 2006, p. 3). In these school contexts, outcomes are achieved by processes of deception and exploitation of the good will of teachers.

In a world characterised by constant change, leadership cannot be premised on a static and unchanging perspective whereby staff are seen as organised and mobilised social actors that work towards the achievement of predetermined goals (Riveros, 2016). Rather leadership needs to be characterised by adaptability and flexibility (Branson, 2011). Heifetz and Linksy (2002) described transrelational leadership as an "improvisational art". They used this term to acknowledge that while leaders work within an overarching strategic plan for change, "what [they] actually do from moment to moment cannot be scripted" (p. 73). A transrelational leader begins with a vision for change, yet this is regarded as a tentative map

towards a desired endpoint. These leaders are personally involved in the process of change and they monitor the situation as it develops. Transrelational leaders are flexible and adaptable, and they willingly make amendments to the process of change as it is occurring in response to their interpretation of its implementation (Branson, 2011). These amendments can be influenced by unforeseen needs, new circumstances, or to mitigate the impact that the change is having on a staff (Branson, 2011). Furthermore, a transrelational leader may also choose to terminate a particular change process if it is perceived to be no longer necessary, becomes non-beneficial to staff, or if the desired endpoint is deemed to be unrealistic or unachievable. Transrelational leaders are not only willing and confident to be adaptable if they perceive a need, they are also actively attentive to the feedback from their staff.

In recent times, there has been a significant shift in perspective with regards to the dispositional character traits of an effective leader of change. Traditionally, effective leaders were conceptualised as being people who were powerful and authoritative, and Parks (2005) likened this to "Charlton Heston atop the mountain, a grand figure who dwarfs others" (p. x). These are the "hard-nosed, aggressive, ruthlessly ambitious extroverts and win-at-all cost leaders" (Duignan, 2012, p. 160). This disposition was viewed as being necessary for a leader to possess in order to deliver enhanced performance outcomes for an organisation. However, in recent times, this perspective has shifted and the "arena of power" is no longer seen as the criteria for determining an effective leader (Branson et al. 2016). Instead, there is now a growing recognition that it is authenticity and relationality that underpins effective leadership (Branson, 2011; Branson et al. 2016; Duignan, 2012). The most effective leaders are emerging as those that have "little or no 'charisma' [e.g. outgoing, gregarious, charm, magnetism]" (Cain, 2012, p. 53), that is, those who are "self-effacing, quiet, reserved, even shy" (Collins, 2001, p. 12). Research from various organisations and industries supports the position that values-inspired organisations led by transrelational leaders outperform those led by power-orientated leaders (Collins, 2001; Duignan, 2012; Korac-Kakabadse, Kouzmin & Kakabase, 2002). Cain (2012) reported the findings of Agle, Nagarajan, Sonnenfeld and Srinivasan (2006) who stated that employees who are considered charismatic by their leaders had bigger salaries but not better corporate performance.

These findings have implications for the way that leadership occurs within education. Contemporary principals are called to base their leadership on relationships rather than authority. This involves principals displaying qualities such as humility and empathy, and

approaching their leadership with a spirit of respect, acknowledgement, and collaborativeness. Principals should approach their leadership role with a sincere and genuine sensitivity regarding the professional experiences of their staff, and seek to understand their day-to-day lived experience within a context (Cloud, 2009). Being relational requires a principal to be genuine and open and to honestly hear "the underlying meanings and voices" of those that they are leading (Bennis, 2005, p. 115). It is argued that

> …when the leader has the courage, resilience, confidence, honesty and forthrightness to provide transparent channels of open communication for the emotional element of change to be empathically and purposefully attended to, will the change process have the chance of being successfully implemented (Branson, 2010, p. 17).

Thus, successful enactment of educational change requires a leader to skilfully demonstrate relationality, authenticity and flexibility instead of "coercion, intimidation or manipulation" (Branson, 2010, p. 100).

3.6.2 Implications for School Principals

This discussion of leadership suggests that amidst the challenging experiences of an educational change, the teachers wish to see relationality demonstrated by the principal. As explained by Branson (2010),

> Relationality is to our subjectivity as relationality is to our objectivity. Relationality is how we think in our objective, logical, empirical realm. In this particular realm, we think rationally based on facts, concrete evidence, and physical objects. Relationality is how we think in our subjective, emotional, intuitive realm. In this particular realm, we think relationally based on interpretations, perceptions, and beliefs (p. 91).

Especially during times of uncertainty associated with change, teachers perceive that a principal's relationality underpins all interactions and decisions made on their behalf, and these exist in the unconscious and subjective realm. These decisions and episodes of social interaction help to shape teachers' perceptions of their leader. When staff feel that their leader acts with integrity and is trustworthy, they have faith in their decisions and are more likely to support these wholeheartedly (Duignan, 2012). However, when staff perceive that their leader is non-genuine, their level of trust in his/her decisions is eroded. Their social interactions with the leader, and decisions that are made on their behalf, are filtered through a lens of suspicion, and this can lead to subjective responses such as resentment, resistance, and disengagement. Thus, the perceived trustworthiness of the leader is an antecedent to a staff's active engagement in a change initiative.

Trust is a subjective judgement that is formed by an individual during their experiences with the principal, and it is shaped by subsequent interpretations of their experiences over time. School leaders need to earn the trust of teachers in order to harness their commitment to embrace a change initiative. In order to earn trust, a principal must seek to establish where each teacher is at on a personal and professional level, and show a sense of empathy for their individual experiences (Branson, 2010). Teachers want to be able to fully trust their principal in times of uncertainty and pressure. Branson (2010) explains that people want to

> …be able to rely on their leaders, have faith in their leader's decision-making processes, have confidence in their leader's actions, and have hope that their leader will safeguard their future. People want to know and trust their leaders, rather than be dazzled by their charisma. People want their leaders to be trustworthy (p. 92).

Trust is not a fixed phenomenon, but rather it is something that needs to be maintained over time. Principals can do this by displaying honesty, authenticity, and moral integrity, and by showing through word and action that a proposed change has a purpose that is greater than serving the leaders' self-interest or agenda. Also, since trust is a personally constructed subjective judgement, there can be variation in the perceptions held by different members of a staff. As Branson (2010) explains, a decision to trust a leader "begins in rationality but concludes in relationality" (p. 92).

Once principals have been afforded the trust of their staff, they need to continue to nurture this subjective perspective throughout a change initiative. It can be argued that attending to the emotional needs of a staff is a far more critical dimension to a principal's role than managing the practical and logistical elements of a change initiative. Being able to foster positive and productive relationships with staff is an essential skill for the principal (Wheatley, 2006). In order to build strong relationships, a principal needs "to become better at listening, convalescing, [and] respecting one another's uniqueness" (Wheatley, 2006, p. 39). When principals have relational intelligence, they have the interaction skills that enable them to authentically connect with different people, "they're remarkably likeable and magnetic, they're genuinely interested in people, and they're curiously interesting to others" (Branson, 2010, p. 95). These types of leaders not only create mutually rewarding relationships between themselves and others, but they facilitate the development of positive relationships amongst those they are responsible for leading.

When it comes to educational change, fostering positive collegial relationships amongst staff creates a feeling of synchronicity (Senge et al. 2007) and provides them with the sense that

they are "creating something new together" (Bohm, 2006, p. 3). Further to this, Bohm (2006) adds:

> If people are to cooperate, literally to work together, they have to be able to create something in common; something that takes shape in their mutual discussions and actions, rather than something that is conveyed from one person who acts as an authority to the others, who act as passive instruments of this authority (p. 3-4).

Synchronicity strengthens a staffs' relationship network and provides them with an emotional connection to their colleagues, their daily work, and their vision for change.

Traditionally, educational change was facilitated from a reductionist and rational perspective where problems were viewed as singular and easily rectified by exerting increased levels of power or authority (Branson, 2010; Foucault, 1977). This mechanistic view of change fails to acknowledge the human and subjective dimension, and therefore, is typically destined for failure. Instead of seeking to control an imaginary organisation that operates on an objective and simplistic level, a transrelational principal needs to become skilful at working within the network of interdependent subjective relationships and powerful collegial dynamics that exist within their particular context-based situation (Wheatley, 2006).

3.6.3 Research Question

As leaders of a school context, principals are responsible for leading a staff towards a vision for change, and the facilitators of the change need to support the leader to translate this vision into a particular socio-cultural context. The dispositional characteristics of the principal and facilitator/s of change come to be interpreted by a staff over time, and this occurs through their formal and informal interactions on a day-to-day basis. These interpretations lead each staff member to make subjective judgements on the character of the principal and change facilitator, and these can influence their willingness to embrace a change. Thus, in the area of leadership the contributing research question is:

How do the dispositional characteristics of the principal and change facilitator influence the way teachers engage with the change initiative at Emmanuel College?

Data to address this question is gathered from the principal, change facilitator, and teachers at the research school.

3.7 Chapter Review

The discussion presented in this chapter has argued that teacher quality is a phenomenon that is greater than demonstrating basic competence in delivering content knowledge to students. It involves an effective integration of knowledge, practice, and personal characteristics to bring learning alive for students. Teacher quality should not be judged by compliance with a set of key standard competencies nor on students' performance on assessments. Teacher quality is a phenomenon that extends beyond the visible dimension of teaching. Rather, it incorporates and is considerably influenced by an invisible and emotive dimension. Failure to recognise the vital capacity that quality teachers have to win hearts and minds, and to establish positive relationships with students and their colleagues does not support the establishment of high-quality contexts for learning. This suggests that any educational change initiative that is genuinely committed to raising the quality of teaching needs to recognise that it is realised *through* the individualised way teachers 'craft' their knowledge and practice with their personal characteristics. Thus, teaching is more than an objective profession premised on a 'one-size-fits-all' approach to teaching and learning. Teaching is a highly emotion-laden profession as teachers invest themselves into their role. Thus, the introduction of a change initiative, in turn, must also result in a change not only in a teacher's professional knowledge and practice, but also their phenomenological sense of self.

Moreover, while it is acknowledged that teachers' response to change is individualised and influenced by an amalgam of a person's beliefs and values in conjunction with their perception of context-based expectations and experiences, Huberman (1989) sought to provide a generalised understanding of how teachers may typically respond to change at various career stages. This trajectory typically involves teachers presenting with increasingly positive perceptions of change until the mid-career point, whereby their cumulative body of professional experiences and familial demands impact on their time and sense of commitment to the profession. From this point forward, Huberman (1989) argued that teachers' attitude towards change begins a downward decline that continues until they retire.

This adds to the understanding that coping with a proposed education change is an individualised process as it is filtered through the perspective of each teacher. The way teachers come to view change is shaped by a number of factors, including their sense of

professional identity, their career stage, the level of trust they place in their leader, and the extent to which they have to adjust their current level of knowledge and practice. Change strikes at the very core of what teachers hold dear as they make considerable emotional investments in their relationships with others and how they define themselves in terms of their style of pedagogy.

This implies that enacting change elicits a subjective emotional response, to some degree, from teachers at all career stages as it requires a level of adjustment to their attitudes and beliefs about teaching and learning. Thus, it is unsurprising that Fullan (2001) conceptualised change as being "a double-edged sword" (p. 1) as some teachers can view change as exciting and energising, yet others perceive feelings of fear, anxiety, and loss. This means that teachers are more likely to embrace change if they perceive it presents little threat to their professional identity and if the change is considered as being personally relevant and will assist in improving their professional knowledge and pedagogical practice. But, implementing change in a school-based context can elicit also subjective feelings of loss, anxiety, bitterness, and resistance when teachers are expected to let go of the practices, procedures, routines, and behaviours that they perceive shape their identity, and instead embrace new ways of teaching and learning. If change is forced on teachers, they can feel a sense of doubt in their competence as well as a shift in their sense of professional identity.

Thus, in an attempt to successfully implement educational change leaders are now being required to have an ability to understand the phenomenology of change. It is argued that "leaders are being judged by a new yardstick: not just by how smart they are, or by their training or expertise, but also by how well they handle their self and others" (Goleman, 1999, p. 3). This perspective has necessitated a shift in the mindset of leaders away from a purely objective perspective on change, to one that foregrounds the importance of leaders' character, relationality and the critical influence of emotion. Today, leaders are called to be authentic and interact with others in an ethical and moral manner in order to earn the trust and support of those that they lead. Leaders need to be skilful at dealing with the complex web of relationships that exist within their context, and these are influenced by their staffs' beliefs, feelings, and emotions. They should seek to "create an underlying sense of safety and emotional security, in which risk and creativity can flourish" (Hargreaves, 2007, p. 5).

When teachers perceive that their leader facilitates a context premised on collegiality, respect, honesty, and transparency, they are more likely to actively and positively embrace

change to the way they engage in teaching and/or learning. Thus, in this political climate where improved teacher quality is being increasingly championed, the critical contribution that the principal makes to the way teachers engage in teaching and learning is becoming progressively acknowledged in literature. Today's school principals are required to be cognisant of the way that their dispositional characteristics and sense of relationality can influence teachers' subjective emotional responses to change.

In conclusion, while the purpose of this research is to explore teachers' phenomenological subjective experiences of a change initiative in a single-school context, this review of the literature provided four contributing research questions to guide this study, and these are:

- In what ways did the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College impact on the professional identity of the teachers?

- How do teachers from different career stages respond to the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College?

- In what ways do teachers feel the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College influences their sense of professionalism?

- How do the dispositional characteristics of the principal and change facilitator influence the way teachers engage with the change initiative at Emmanuel College?

These questions inform the research design for this study, and this is discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR
DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

4.1 Introduction

Teachers' experiences can elicit profound feelings, and these can shape the way they engage in both teaching and learning. It is argued by Fullan (1982) that the subjective dimension of change has been an 'overlooked insight' in research in past decades. He maintains that exploring what he refers to as the 'phenomenology of change' may provide new insights into how to effectively lead change within school contexts. In light of Fullan's (1982) perspective, this research explores teachers' phenomenological subjective responses to a change initiative within a single-school context. This change initiative seeks to target teachers' pedagogical practice for guided reading by introducing a school-wide consistent approach. In an effort to achieve this, a change facilitator was employed by the principal of the research school [Emmanuel College] to work individually with each teacher at this school. The change facilitator periodically modelled pedagogical practice for guided reading in the context of teachers' classrooms, and then returned to observe their implementation of this pedagogy and to provide feedback on areas for improvement. There are four contributing research questions that guided the conduct of this study. These are:

- In what ways did the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College impact on the professional identity of the teachers?

- How do teachers from different career stages respond to the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College?

- In what ways do teachers feel the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College influences their sense of professionalism?

- How do the dispositional characteristics of the principal and change facilitator influence the way teachers engage with the change initiative at Emmanuel College?

These questions guide the research design, and this is now explained.

4.2 Epistemology: Constructionism

Epistemology deals with nature and the origins of knowledge (Creswell, 2003) and it "is a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know" (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). One such epistemological perspective is that of constructionism. The basic premise of constructionism is that meaning is not discovered, but constructed by individuals as they

experience certain events in their environment (Crotty, 2003; Neuman, 2000). Individuals make sense of their world through their individual systems of meaning (Candy, 1989). Given that this study is exploring how the Emmanuel College teachers each interpreted what they saw, heard and felt during the proposed principal's change initiative in order to try and create meaning about it for their self, it is argued that constructionism is the epistemological perspective that aligns with this purpose. There are three assumptions that underpin constructionism, and these are:

1. Meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting;

2. Humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical, and social perspective; and,

3. The basic generation of meaning is always social, arising in and out of interaction with a human community (Crotty, 1998, p. 9).

This is to posit that individuals construct and reconstruct meaning by drawing on their existing understandings of their world, and integrating this in a constant process of interpretation during their interactions within a community (De Koster et al. 2004). Moreover, such meaning-making occurs through internalised processes of accommodation and assimilation. Accommodation occurs when an individual's knowledge is restructured in order to integrate new understandings, and assimilation involves an individual making sense of a phenomenon by developing new conceptual categories of meaning (De Koster et al. 2004).

However, the epistemological perspective of constructionism also supports the understanding that personal interpretations of phenomenon are not constructed in isolation but rather are influenced by shared social and cultural understandings, practices, and language in a particular context. Beliefs and practices of communities are internalised by people over time as they "invent concepts, models, and schemes to make sense of experience, and continually test and modify these constructions in light of new experiences" (Schwandt, 2004, p. 197). Thus, each person's beliefs, feelings, and interpretations are dependent on their situated perspective and are not the product of innate fixed characteristics (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This implies that within the school context of this research, the meaning that each individual teacher constructs about their experience of the proposed change is being influenced by a variety of environmental aspects such as a principal's style of leadership, their vision for teaching and learning, the actions and opinions of their

colleagues, the reactions of the parents and students, and the characteristics of a school-learning environment.

Constructionists question the notion that there is an objective truth to be discovered through rigorous research and statistical analysis. Researchers employing a constructionist epistemology make sense of the meanings others have about the world by conducting observation and/or engaging in conversation (Crotty, 2003). A strength of constructionism "is the close collaboration between the researcher and the participant…..while enabling participants to tell their stories" about a specific phenomenon (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 2). For this research, educators from a single-school context were invited to share their experiences of a change initiative that was implemented at their school. Semi-structured interviews were conducted as this enabled each participant the freedom to elaborate on their experience of the change initiative and to share the story behind their personally constructed meanings about engaging in the principal's change initiative.

4.3 Research Paradigm: Interpretivism

A research paradigm lies behind the methodology in research questions and reflects the assumptions of a particular area of thought (Crotty, 1998; Punch, 1998). The paradigm underpinning this research is interpretivism, and this is defined as

> …the systematic analysis of socially meaningful action through direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds (Neuman, 2000, p. 71).

Interpretivist research seeks to uncover people's understandings of a particular phenomenon by exploring it from their perspective (Candy, 1989; Chowdhury, 2014; Neuman, 2000; O'Donoghue, 2007). It goes beyond the immediate situation and instead explores the meanings and emotions that guide how people think and act within a particular context (Lin, 1998). For this research, the voices of the principal, change facilitator, and all teachers at the research school were sought in order to more fully explore teachers' phenomenological subjective experiences of the implementation of a change initiative.

Interpretivist research enables the researcher to explore how people perceive differently particular phenomena within the same context (O'Donoghue, 2007). This approach creates "a vast amount of detailed information about a small number of people" (O'Donoghue, 2007, p. 190). Multiple realities exist and are interrelated, and these can differ across time and place. An interpretive paradigm indicates that meaning

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> …is socially constructed through interaction and interpreted through the actors, and is based on the definition people attach to it (Sarantakos, 1998, p. 35).

People's underlying motivations, intentions and/or purposes in certain environments are understood by an exploration of language and/or behaviour (Neuman, 2006). The purpose of interpretive research is to "learn the personal reasons or motives that shape a person's internal feelings and guide decisions to act in particular ways" (Neuman, 2000, p. 70). At the research school in this study, teacher participants spanned four career stages, and their involvement in this research provided various perspectives about the implementation of the principal's change initiative. These perspectives highlighted teachers' perceptions of change, and how this shaped the way that teachers thought and acted.

There are four assumptions of an interpretivist paradigm. The first assumption is that human activity is the basis of society, and secondly that activity is always accompanied by some freedom or autonomy (O'Donoghue, 2007). The third assumption is that everyday activity includes interaction with others and is interpreted through the actions of others, and the fourth assumption is that negotiation of meaning is a continuous process (O'Donoghue, 2007). Thus, an interpretivist perspective maintains that an individual cannot be understood without gaining an understanding of the context in which they exist and that meaning develops over time (O'Donoghue, 2007). For this research, an array of educators' perceptions is gathered about the change initiative, and this is interpreted in conjunction with their perceptions of the context in which the change initiative occurred.

4.4 Theoretical Perspective: Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is considered to be a suitable theoretical perspective when conducting an interpretive research study founded upon an epistemological perspective of constructionism (Crotty, 2003). It is proposed that symbolic interactionism has been "one of the most enduring theories of the 20th century" and has guided the design and implementation of research that explores social phenomena (Oliver, 2012, p. 409). Essentially, this theoretical perspective explores the connection between an individual and the context in which they operate. The meaning that an individual attributes to phenomenon is derived from their social interaction with people in their specific context, and this is not something that is static or fixed across contexts (Blumer, 1998; Chalmers, 1998). As people socially interact with each other they assimilate a shared system of symbolic language and

behaviour, and this allows perceptions and meanings to be socially negotiated within contexts over time (Neuman, 2000). Each social context

> … is not the same as other social realities since each is constituted by the distinctive interactions, perceptions, and interpretations of the members of the social group. Each group will be defined in terms of its negotiated meanings. What can be said of one group cannot be applied to another…because each social setting is defined by the perceptions and interactions of those who are participating in that particular social context (Pring, 2010, p. 66).

This implies that, research needs to explore the diversities that exist in people's experiences and the individualised meanings that they attach to their experiences within a particular social context (Charon, 2004; Handberg et al. 2015). To do this, the researcher needs to "take, to the best of his [sic] ability, the standpoint of those studied" (Denzin, 1997, p. 99) in order to capture "the essence of the human being as a social being, a creator, a product and a shaper of society" (Charon, 2001, p. 6).

There are three assumptions that underpin a symbolic interactionist perspective (Blumer, 1969). The first assumption is that "human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that these things have for them" (Blumer, 1969, p. 2). This means that human behaviour is viewed as being shaped by social interaction within a context and individuals attach their own meaning to objects, people, or concepts and act according to these meanings (Blumer, 1969; Chalmers, 1998; Handberg et al. 2015). Symbolic interactionism purports that people act according to their "ongoing definitions arising from perspectives that are themselves dynamic" (Charon, 2001, p. 40). People "do not simply respond to stimuli or act out cultural scripts" within an environment (Dimmock & O'Donoghue, 1997, p. 42), but rather interpret their experiences and attach meaning to this, and in turn choose one "course or line of action over another" (Oliver, 2012, p. 410). Thus, behaviour is influenced by people's socially constructed meanings and the value they attribute to certain experiences (Handberg et al. 2015). This means that, at the research school, each teacher's level of engagement in the change initiative was likely to have been premised on the value or meaningfulness they attach to it.

The second assumption presented by Blumer (1969) is that meaning is actively constructed by individuals. It does not simply exist in isolation (Oliver, 2012), but rather meaning "is derived from, and arises out of, the social interaction one has with one's fellows" (p. 2). Meaning not only grows out of social interaction, but it also is adjusted and modified in relation to the actions of others (Handberg et al. 2015). Thus, construction of meaning occurs

within a context of co-constructed social experience (Handberg et al. 2015). Participation in opportunities for teacher learning enables teachers to interact with others to varying degrees and this helps them to develop and modify their meaning regarding a particular curriculum area of focus. Implementing the change initiative at Emmanuel College was intended to provide teachers with the opportunity to actively construct meaning, and to enable periodic social interaction with an 'expert' in order to raise the quality of their pedagogical practice for guided reading. However, at the same time all of these interactions and experiences were being personally internalised and interpreted by the teachers as they constructed a view about the overall meaning of the change initiative and its effect on their self as a teacher and how they felt about this.

The third assumption that underpins a symbolic interactionist approach is that meanings "are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he (sic) encounters" (Blumer, 1969, p. 2). There are two steps involved in an interpretive process of constructing meaning regarding a phenomenon (Handberg et al. 2015). The first step involves a person identifying what it is they are required to be acting towards. At this point, a person is establishing, either consciously or unconsciously, what constitutes meaning within a particular social situation or context. At the second step, a person communicates with their self and attaches their own interpretation of the meaning of a phenomenon, and this is influenced by their current experience in conjunction with those of their past. The interrelatedness between an individual and their perception of a phenomenon can result in multiple social realities existing within a context despite all people experiencing the same learning opportunities (Oliver, 2012). A person's individualised meaning then guides their future behaviour and perception regarding a phenomenon. An interpretive process is ongoing and participation in a social context continually shapes and redefines teachers' perception and influences their behaviour. In the context of this particular research, this assumption suggests that not only could a variety of different meanings co-exist amongst the staff, even though they all largely shared common experiences, but also that a teacher's feelings, impressions and engagement with the change could vary considerably as the change process unfolded. Teachers' experiences at Emmanuel College influenced the meaning they attached to learning and this shaped the way they engaged in future cycles of learning targeting improvement of their pedagogical practice.

4.5 Research Methodology

Methodology refers to the congruence between paradigm-related questions and the methods (Crotty, 1998). Three conditions guide the selection of a methodological approach, and these are: the type of research question posed, the extent of control a researcher has over actual events, and the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events (Yin, 2009, p. 8). The context-dependent nature of this particular study with its exploration of how individuals make meaning through social interaction, founded upon the epistemology of constructionism through the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism supports the application of case study as the research methodology. There are three different types of case study: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory (Yin, 2003). An exploratory case study is typically conducted to study a new or emerging phenomenon, descriptive case studies explore a phenomenon in its own context, and explanatory case studies explain events by highlighting cause-effect relationships.

A descriptive case study aligns with the purpose of this research as it enables an exploration of teachers' phenomenological experiences of a change initiative implemented within a particular school context. This case study "offers a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon" (Merriam, 1998, p. 41). This study is bounded by the educators in a single-school context who experienced an imposed change initiative that was intended to improve the quality of their pedagogical practice for guided reading. Educators' perspectives were gathered, and this illuminated their personally constructed meaning about teaching and learning, and their understanding about what was expected of them as teachers and learners within this particular social context.

4.5.1 Case Study

Case study methodology is suitable for research where the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and where manipulation of behaviour is not required (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Yin, 2009). This methodology focuses on individuals or groups of individuals and gathers data on their perceptions of events and/or each other (Hughes & Hitchcock, 2001). This methodology enables the complexities and contradictions in the social world to be presented in narrative form as it is impossible to accurately summarise experiences and/or phenomenon using "scientific formulae, general propositions, and theories" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 237). Case study research may differ to other qualitative

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approaches, as it allows researchers to also "collect and integrate quantitative survey data" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 554) in order to present a holistic understanding of the phenomenon being explored (Soy, 2006).

Importantly, case study researchers seek to have a close relationship with participants so they feel comfortable to share their thoughts, feelings, and desires regarding a particular phenomenon (Hughes & Hitchcock, 2001). Deconstruction and then reconstruction of phenomenon within a context occurs with this methodology, and this enables the underlying 'story' behind social behaviour to be unravelled (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Hughes & Hitchcock, 2001).

A criticism of case study is that it lacks scientific rigour and has the potential for inclusion of the researcher's bias and interpretation (Hughes & Hitchcock, 2001; Yin, 2009). Objectivity is not possible with case study research as the researcher interacts with participants during the collection of narrative data regarding the phenomenon being explored. It is posited that, while the researcher may have preconceived ideas regarding the phenomenon being explored, it is their role to authentically and comprehensively share the stories of the participants' experiences (O'Donoghue, 2007). Verifications such as dependability and confirmability emerge when the writer is able to demonstrate that the interpretations are based in the context and participants' experiences and not the researcher's imagination.

A further concern is that case studies do not allow for scientific generalisation (Yin, 2009). Social researchers argue that generalisation of findings "depend very heavily upon the richness and thickness of the data collected and, equally, on the context from which the generalisations arise" (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995, p. 326). Formalising generalisations is one way that researchers gain knowledge. However, the notion that some "knowledge cannot be formally generalised does not mean that it cannot enter into the collective process of knowledge accumulation in a given field or in a society" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 227). Hence, case studies are not assumed to be generalisable but, rather, rich in description and detailed in interpretation so that the reader can glean from this whatever is of personal value and worth to them.

Another concern about case study methodology relates to the often-lengthy nature of data collection and the generation of large quantities of narrative and/or observational data (Yin, 2009). Because a case study can generate large amounts of data, they can be viewed as being

rich in detail and low in theory (Yin, 1984). However, systematic organisation enables management of the large quantity of qualitative data gathered and this also ensures the research purpose and questions remain in focus during data analysis (Soy, 2006). Despite these concerns, case study remains a valid and popular methodological approach for the conduct of research (Yin, 2009), and this is particularly evident in research involving participants from school contexts.

4.6 Participants

This research focuses on a change initiative in a single-school context, and so the participants were all drawn from the one school – Emmanuel College (a pseudonym). An overview of the participants involved in this research in presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Overview of the Participants Involved in the Research

Participant	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Principal	1	0	1
Change Facilitator	0	1	1
Teachers: Teacher Survey	5	23	28
Teachers: Semi-structured Interviews	2	14	16

4.6.1 The Principal and Change Facilitator

The principal consented to research being conducted at his school and he also agreed to participate in a semi-structured interview. He received an Information Letter for Principals (Appendix C) and a Principal Consent Form (Appendix D), which he signed and placed in the sealed box provided on the staffroom table.

The principal of the research school was male, and he had 20 years of experience in education when this research was conducted. Prior to entering education in the 1980s, the principal of Emmanuel College had a number of financially-successful businesses. Thus, it can be argued that the principal brought with him to his role as an educative leader, a strong level of business knowledge and a positive perception of his effectiveness as a teacher. In a business context, he explained that he was confident to employ and train staff, to supervise their enactment of expected duties, and to attend to periodic staff performance appraisals. His forthright personality enabled him to assume an active daily presence amongst his staff as well as an ability to articulate any perceived areas of divergence between his business expectations and his staffs' performance.

The principal of Emmanuel College began as a classroom teacher in the 1980s and then progressed to experiencing various leadership roles such as Assistant to the Principal (Administration) and principal of a number of schools in rural contexts. The principal's employment at Emmanuel College began in 2002 when he accepted a short-term contract as a classroom teacher. In 2004, he became a member of the school's Leadership team as he was appointed to the role of Assistant to the Principal (Administration). After two years in this role, he became the principal of Emmanuel College. He held this position for a period of 11 years. During his time at Emmanuel College in 2011 and 2013, the principal was given the opportunity to experience two short-term (four week) senior leadership roles within the Catholic Education Office. These supervisor roles afforded him the opportunity to visit many other school contexts, to broaden his awareness of their change initiatives, and to interact with the staff in these school communities.

The principal was passionate about raising student achievement levels in reading, and he assumed that others shared his passion also. In many schools, funding for teaching learning is often used to extend teachers' professional knowledge and practice in a range of curriculum areas. However, the principal's passion for reading led him to dedicate the majority of annual school funding for teacher learning towards the area of guided reading. While this provided all teachers at the school with periodic opportunities to work with the change facilitator to target their teaching of guided reading, it left limited funding for teachers to extend their learning in any of the other curriculum areas. Even though the teaching of reading accounts for approximately only one third of the school week, reading exists as a component of the teaching required for other curriculum areas. Arguably, the subjective experiences that teachers had during the principal's change initiative, had the potential to influence teachers' generalised perceptions of themselves as an educator. This may be so because the principal developed a school culture that strongly foregrounded the importance of being a high-quality teacher of reading, irrespective of the curriculum area in which it was being taught.

The principal of Emmanuel College valued lifelong learning and he was a strong advocate for the importance of teachers fully engaging in opportunities for learning, both at school as well as through completing post-graduate studies. There were 11 teachers at Emmanuel College who were engaged in post-graduate studies when this research was conducted. The principal modelled learning himself as he was enrolled in a Masters' degree while being the principal of Emmanuel College. His area of study focused predominantly on the religious

dimension of leadership within a Catholic school. Thus, while the principal eagerly engaged in further study, it did not focus on expanding his knowledge about how to effectively lead educational change or what was regarded as 'best-practice' for the teaching of reading.

Once consent was received from the principal, the change facilitator was contacted via email to discuss her involvement in this research by participating in a semi-structured interview. Details of the research were presented to the change facilitator in an Information Letter to Participants (Appendix E) and she was provided with a Participant Consent Form (Appendix F). Once signed, this consent form was placed in the sealed box on the staffroom table.

The change facilitator at Emmanuel College was female. She entered teaching as a mature-aged graduate in the 1980s. The change facilitator had 15 years of classroom teaching experience prior to the establishment of her own educational consultancy business, which she has operated since 2001. Her formal qualifications are at Masters level. When commencing her role as change facilitator at Emmanuel College in 2005, she had five years of consultancy experience. She had provided professional development for teachers from Catholic, state, and independent education sectors. The change facilitator's approach to providing teachers with opportunities for learning had typically been in a seminar or workshop format. These were generally 'one-off' teacher learning sessions whereby the change facilitator delivered information to a large group of teachers at a venue external to the school, or alternatively at school during a staff meeting. The change facilitator's employment at Emmanuel College was the first time that she had taken an active role in leading a principal's change initiative in a single-school context.

4.6.2 Teachers

All teachers at Emmanuel College were contacted via email and invited to complete a survey, and also to volunteer to participate in a semi-structured interview. Details of the research were presented in an Information Letter to Participants (Appendix E) and this was emailed to all teachers along with a Participant Consent Form (Appendix F). Teachers were to indicate their willingness to complete a teacher survey and participate in a semi-structured interview by printing the consent form, signing it, and placing it in the sealed box on the staffroom table. There were twenty-three (82%) teachers at the research school who were female and five that were male (18%). Teachers had worked at the school for different periods of time. Five (18%) had been employed at the school for just one year and 13 (46%) had been employed from two to five years. The remaining 10 (36%) teachers had taught at

the school for more than six years. All teachers at the research school had a Bachelor of Education degree (or the equivalent) and two also had completed a Masters degree. All teachers had been personally involved in the school-based change initiative as a classroom teacher. The professional experience of the teachers at this school ranged from teacher graduates to those with 35 years of experience.

All teachers at the school (n=28) consented to being involved in the research by completing an electronic teacher survey. Non-probability purposive sampling was used with the teachers as they were afforded the opportunity to self-nominate for involvement in a semi-structured interview. Sixteen of the teachers volunteered to share their perceptions and experiences of the change initiative at Emmanuel College. These teachers aligned with one of Huberman's (1989) first four career stages, and each teacher was provided with their own alphanumeric code which distinguished their responses during data analysis. Teachers within each career stage formed a group and these are referred to as Group 1, 2, 3, and 4, and within each group each teacher was also allocated a letter of the alphabet (A-F). To enhance the readability of data presented, each teacher is referred to using a pseudonym. Teacher codes and pseudonyms are now displayed in Table 4.2 along with data associated with their respective career stage, according to the Huberman framework, their length of teaching at the research school, and their total years of teaching experience.

Table 4.2
Profile of Groups

Career Stage	Participant	Gender	Total Years of Teaching Experience	Years of Teaching Experience at this school
Discovery/ Survival	1A - Bonnie	Female	2	2
	1B - Rose	Female	2	2
	2A – Monica	Female	4	4
	2B – Graham	Male	5	2
	2C - Sally	Female	5	5
Experimentation/ Change or Stocktaking/ Interrogation	3A – Molly	Female	8	7
	3B – Mary	Female	13	3
	3C – Jenny	Female	7	7
	3D – Leila	Female	8	8
	3E – Paula	Female	8	8
	3F - Penny	Female	15	5
Serenity/ Conservatism Or Affective Distance	4A – Bert	Male	28	10
	4B – Abby	Female	23	24
	4C – Kate	Female	29	3
	4D – Tina	Female	20	4
	4E - Diane	Female	25	6

4.7 Data Collection Strategies

Case study methodology allows for the use of a variety of ethical data collection strategies as there are no predetermined boundaries or "specific methods of data collection or of analysis which are unique to it as a method of enquiry" (Bassey, 1999, p. 69). Hence, data collection strategies were chosen based on their connection with the research purpose and research questions, and their suitability to elucidate the social construction of meaning of each participant at the research school. The central premises of using both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study are that it can extract the strengths and diminish the weaknesses in both approaches within a single study, it enhances the validity of the findings from research, and it allows for a deeper exploration of the phenomenon being explored which provides a better understanding of the research problem than either approach alone can proffer (Andrew & Halcomb, 2006; Cameron, Sankaran & Scales, 2015; Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Hughes & Hitchcock, 1995).

In research employing both quantitative and qualitative data collection strategies, data can be presented as a joint display, and this involves quantitative and qualitative data being presented parallel to each other yet remaining clearly identifiable as distinct sources of data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Alternatively, using data transformation merged analysis one type of data (e.g. qualitative interview data) may be transformed into another type of data (e.g. quantitative descriptive or frequency data) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). For this research, data from document analysis, the teacher survey, and the semi-structured interviews are retained as independent sources of data and are presented in parallel to each other to highlight areas of convergence and divergence in teachers' phenomenological responses to the principal's change initiative. The timeframe for data collection is outlined in the research timeline, and this is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Research Timeline

Date of Data Collection	Data Collected
July 2002	The principal involved in this research began his employment at Emmanuel College as a classroom teacher.
January 2004	The principal involved in this research was appointed to a leadership role at Emmanuel College – Assistant to the Principal (Administration).
November 2004	The change facilitator was employed at Emmanuel College.
February 2005	The change facilitator commenced working with teachers at Emmanuel College.
July 2006	The Assistant to the Principal (Administration) was appointed as principal of Emmanuel College.
July 2011	Ethics Approval was received from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Australian Catholic University).
August 2011	Ethics Approval was received from the Catholic Education Office.
September 2011	Verbal consent to conduct the research at Emmanuel College was granted by the principal of Emmanuel College.
September 2011	The principal, change facilitator, and teachers received an Information Letter to Participants and completed a Consent Form to participate in this research.
September 2011	Document Analysis was conducted using school-related documents obtained from print and electronic documents.
October 2011	Each teacher (n=28) at Emmanuel College completed Part A, B and C of the Teacher Survey which was administered to them electronically.
October 2011	A semi-structured interview was conducted with the principal of Emmanuel College. Following this, a semi-structured interview was then held with the change facilitator employed at Emmanuel College.
October 2011	Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 16 teachers at Emmanuel College.
November 2011	Follow-up semi-structured interviews were offered to participants to enable them the opportunity to provide additional comments, to amend comments made during their initial interview, or to clarify further a comment recorded in their interview transcript.

Prior to this research being conducted, an application was submitted in writing for ethical clearance from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Australian Catholic University) and also the Director of the relevant Catholic Education Office. Ethical clearance was received from both of these institutions and these letters of approval are included as Appendices A & B. Once the relevant approvals were received, the data collection process began, and it was conducted between September and November 2011. Document analysis occurred first in September. For this research, quantitative data was then gathered early in October from all

of the school's teachers by means of their completion of the electronic survey. The intent of this instrument is to elucidate a school-wide picture of teachers' perceptions of the research context, the school's approach to learning, their enactment of pedagogical practices for guided reading, and their perceptions, reflections and interpretations of the change process. The next stage of data collection involved the principal and change facilitator participating in individual semi-structured interviews, and this occurred in mid-October. Following these interviews, in late-October, semi-structured interviews were held with each of the 16 teachers who each volunteered to participate further in this study. These qualitative data are used to add further depth to the results gleaned from the teacher survey and to provide additional insight and detail about teachers' phenomenological responses to the change. This action is in keeping with the view that an explanatory sequential design places a priority on the data gleaned from the second, qualitative, phase of data collection (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In November, each participant was offered the opportunity to request a follow-up semi-structured interview after reviewing their typed transcript. This afforded participants the opportunity to clarify any potential misrepresentation of their perspectives about their experience of the principal's change initiative at Emmanuel College.

As noted in literature describing symbolic interactionism, exploring an individual's construction of meaning is to occur through a two-stage investigative process (Charon, 2007), and for this research, data collection occurs at both of these stages. The first stage, referred to by Charon (2007) as the *Exploration Stage*, involves the researcher gaining a preliminary understanding of "what's going on around here" (p. 147). The next stage, termed the *Inspection Stage*, involves the researcher exploring specific issues that were identified during the Exploration Stage. For this research, there was a mixing of quantitative and qualitative data at the Exploration Stage. However, the Inspection Stage gathered qualitative data only. An overview of the two-stage investigative process used for this research is presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Two-stage Investigative Process used for this Research

Stage	Data Collection Strategy	Who is Involved
Exploration	Document Analysis Teacher Survey	Researcher Teachers (n=28)
Inspection	Semi-structured Interviews	Principal Change Facilitator Teachers (n=16)

4.7.1 Data Collection: Exploration Stage

4.7.1.1 Document Analysis

Qualitative research provides rich descriptions of a single phenomenon, event, organisation, or program (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994). Document analysis is applicable for research that incorporates a qualitative dimension as it provides data about the context in which participants operate (Bowen, 2009; Mills, Bonner & Francis, 2006). This can occur in a time efficient and cost-effective manner (Bowen, 2009). Context-generated documents that are collected and used for analysis can take a variety of forms, and may include items such as: advertisements, agendas, registers, minutes of meetings, papers, letters/emails, survey data, vision statements, and brochures (Bowen, 2009). Coffey, Atkinson and Omarzu (1997) use the term 'social facts' to refer to context-based documents as they "are produced, shared, and used in socially organised ways" (p. 47). This approach to data analysis enables the sphere of social life within a context to be illuminated and this helps to develop and sharpen the inquiry (Blumer, 1998). Document analysis enables data to "be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning and gain understanding" (Bowen, 2009, p. 27) and also to "discover insights relevant to the research problem" (Merriam, 1988, p. 118). Selecting, appraising, and synthesising data from school-based documents can contribute to category and theme development.

Document analysis is an iterative process that involves the researcher skimming, reading, and interpreting passages of print and visual data to establish their relevance to the research purpose (Bowen, 2009). This process begins with a 'first-pass' document review, and this entails identifying relevant passages of text and separating them from that which is non-pertinent to the research problem (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Strauss & Corbin, 1988). The next stage involves a closer reading of the selected data, and it is at this juncture that coding begins to be applied to identify categories and themes (Bowen, 2009). These categories and themes can then be used in a comparative manner with those extracted from other forms of data collection, such as semi-structured interviews.

Specific to the role of document analysis in elucidating aspects of the context in which participants operate, it is able to provide a background context to the specific phenomenon being explored and this can help shape the wording of questions in surveys and interviews with participants (Bowen, 2009). Another purpose is that document analysis can generate some questions that need to be asked or a line of inquiry to be followed in order to more fully explore the phenomenon being investigated. Thirdly, document analysis can provide

supplementary data, which adds to the research base (Bowen, 2009). A further purpose is that document analysis can be used as a means of tracking change and development within a context over time (Bowen, 2009). Verification of findings is another purpose for utilising document analysis in research (Bowen, 2009). If research findings and documentary evidence are contradictory, this can lead to areas for further investigation.

Document analysis typically occurs in qualitative research in conjunction with other methods as a means of triangulation (Bowen, 2009; Denzin, 1970). Triangulation is employed in order to reduce the impact of potential personal biases (Bowen, 2009). Triangulation is a process that aims "to seek convergence and corroboration through the use of different data sources and methods" (Bowen, 2009, p. 28). Additional sources of data collection typically include interviews, observation, surveys, and physical artefacts (Yin, 1994). Triangulating data provides "a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility" (Eisner, 1991, p. 110). When there is convergence of data from a number of sources, the trustworthiness of the findings is enhanced (Bowen, 2009).

For this research, document analysis was used at the Exploration Stage. During this stage, a preliminary understanding of the school and its social dynamics were obtained through analysis of school-produced documents relating to the school context, the principal's chosen approach to professional development for teachers, and the expected pedagogical practice for guided reading. Documents examined included: Community Profile (Emmanuel College, 2005a), Shared Vision of Beliefs and Understandings about Reading (Emmanuel College, 2005b), School Reading Policy (Emmanuel College, 2006a), Reading at Emmanuel College DVD (Emmanuel College, 2006b), Staff Handbook (Emmanuel College, 2009), the School Professional Development Statement (Emmanuel College, 2010), Annual Strategic Renewal Plan (Emmanuel College, 2011), and Community Beliefs about Learners, Learning and Learning Communities (Emmanuel College, 2011).

A 'first-pass' reading of these documents involved key words and phrases being highlighted that related to the research purpose. The next step involved a closer reading of the highlighted sections of these texts and preliminary coding occurred. For example, preliminary codes included *school culture, expectations of teachers, how to teach guided reading, process of professional development,* and *beliefs about learners.* The researcher grouped together sections of text that shared similar coding, and basic notes, in the form of 'dot points', were made regarding preliminary findings from document analyses. These

category codes were used as tentative headings when the questions were being developed for use with participants during the semi-structured interviews (used during the Inspection Stage). The wording of questions was also informed by highlighted phrases contained in the school documents that were analysed at this Exploration Stage of the research.

4.7.1.2 Teacher Survey

A survey is a widely used data collection strategy, and it enables data to be collected from a number of individuals within or across contexts in a time efficient manner (Neuman, 2006). This method of data collection has both inherent advantages and limitations, and these need to be considered when ascertaining its relevance for inclusion in any research project. Distribution of surveys can occur in a cost-effective manner, and can be organised by a single researcher (Neuman, 2006). A further advantage is that surveys provide uniformity in data collection, as all respondents receive the same questions presented in a consistent manner (Neuman, 2006). Surveys can eliminate the risk of researcher bias as they are typically completed independent of the researcher (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Neuman, 2006). Using an electronic format for surveys is advantageous as they are often more attractive than paper-based surveys, can be completed and returned in a much quicker timeframe, and it reduces the potential impact of human error for entering and processing data (Cohen et al. 2011).

In this research, in particular, the surveys enabled the teachers to provide responses that were non-identifiable, and it afforded them the freedom to honestly express their perceptions regarding the phenomenon being explored without fear of reprimand or negative consequences from their involvement. Also, the survey data collection strategy foregrounded the collective voice of the teachers and enabled their pertinent context-related issues to be identified. Employing the survey as an initial data collection strategy enabled the participants' attention to be focused on the phenomenon being explored and activated their processes of self-reflection and consideration (Neuman, 2006). Following completion of the survey, those teachers who had volunteered to be interviewed had time to consider further their perception of the phenomenon being explored, and this positioned them to respond in a more insightful and thoughtful manner when responding to questions during their individual semi-structured interview.

There are, however, limitations to utilising surveys as a data collection strategy. As completion of surveys are left to an individual's own discretion, a researcher is unable to

control the conditions under which it is completed, and this can lead to the possibility of low response rates for completion (Neuman, 2006; Sarantakos, 1998). A further limitation of this strategy is that a researcher is often not present when the survey is being completed, and they are, therefore, unable to clarify questions, which participants may raise during completion of the survey (Sarantakos, 1998). This can lead to variation in participants' interpretation of questions, or can result in incomplete or abandoned surveys (Sarantakos, 1998).

All teacher participants were informed of the purpose of the research during a staff meeting in the week prior to the administration of the survey. Once teachers consented to participate in the research, they received an email containing a link that activated the teacher survey, and this was constructed and administered using an electronic survey administration program (Survey Monkey, 1999). For this research, the teacher survey was administered with all teachers at Emmanuel College (n=28). Participants were provided with the opportunity to receive clarification regarding aspects of the survey, and this was offered in person or by email. However, no teacher requested further explanation of questions on the survey. The survey took approximately 20 minutes to complete. All teacher surveys were completed electronically and returned to the researcher within 48 hours of receiving the email to commence the teacher survey.

The teacher survey used for this research was titled the Professional Development, School Environment and Reading Survey [PDSER Survey]. This singular survey contained three parts as it was developed from three existing instruments. An overview of the focus of the three parts of the PDSER teacher survey used for this research is presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5

Overview of the PDSER Teacher Survey

Part	Instrument this Part was Developed From	This Part Focuses on
A	Teacher Perceptions of Professional Learning Survey [TPPLS] By Yates & Harris (2003)	How teachers perceive their participation in opportunities for learning.
B	School Level Environment Questionnaire [SLEQ] By Rentoul & Fraser (1983)	Teachers' perceptions of the characteristics of their school context.
C	National Survey of Guided Reading Practices By Ford & Opitz (2008)	Teachers' pedagogical practices for guided reading.

The PDSER teacher survey was not piloted as it was based on three existing surveys which each had reported appropriate levels of reliability (Ford & Opitz, 2008; Rentoul & Fraser, 1983; Yates & Harris, 2003). Questions comprising each part of the PDSER teacher survey are included as Appendices H, I and J, and each part of this singular survey instrument is now explained.

Part A: PDSER Teacher Survey

The Teacher Perceptions of Professional Learning Survey [TPPLS] (Yates & Harris, 2003) was originally administered to 395 primary and secondary teachers following participation in professional development activities (e.g. seminars, workshops, extended courses). The TPPLS contains 21 statements and teachers' response is recorded using a four-point Likert scale (from 4 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree). Principal Component Analysis yielded a three-factor solution with loadings between .51 and .80 and factors are titled: Teacher Professional Renewal, School Level Collegiality, and Applicability of the Professional Learning Model (Yates & Harris, 2003). Validation of each scale's internal consistency occurred through computation of Cronbach Alpha coefficients and scores for the three scales are .90, .65, and .74 respectively. This instrument is deemed reliable for reporting teacher perceptions of professional development (Yates, 2007).

A modified version of the TPPLS was used for this research. The number of items was expanded to 32, with the additional statements focusing more specifically on teacher perceptions of a school-based approach to professional development. In keeping with Yates and Harris' (2003) format, a four-point Likert scale was utilised (with 4 being strongly agree to 1 being strongly disagree). Wording of some questions was adjusted: for example, the term *'professional development'* was replaced with *'school-based professional development'* and the term *'change facilitator'* was used instead of *'presenter'*. Modification of terminology ensured statements directly focused on teacher perceptions of their experience of the principal's change initiative at Emmanuel College, as distinct from any other opportunities for teacher learning they may have experienced prior to the change initiative being introduced or from other places of previous employment. Questions for Part A of the PDSER Teacher Survey are included as Appendix H.

Part B: PDSER Teacher Survey

The School Level Environment Questionnaire [SLEQ] (Rentoul & Fraser, 1983) consists of 56 items sorted into eight scales based on the work of Moos (1987), and these scales are

titled: Student Support, Affiliation, Professional Interest, Staff Freedom, Participatory Decision Making, Innovation, Resource Adequacy, and Work Pressure. A five-point Likert scale (with 5 being strongly agree, through to 1 being strongly disagree) is used to score responses, and validation of each scale's internal consistency occurred by computation of Cronbach alpha coefficients from three participant samples and these ranged from .70 to .91; .68 to .91; and .64 to .85 (Fisher & Fraser, 1990). Internal consistency of the eight scales is deemed satisfactory (Fisher & Fraser, 1990). Further studies (Johnson & Stevens, 2001; Johnson, Stevens & Zvoch, 2007) were conducted using the SLEQ and these indicated the validity of using a shorter version of the instrument as reliability coefficients align with those originally reported by Fisher and Fraser (1990).

A modified version of the SLEQ was used for this research. A reduction in the number of items occurred (from 56 to 43) because statements that did not relate to the change initiative at the research school were removed. For example, questions relating to the preparation of students for external examinations and those relating to print and technological resources were removed. A four-point Likert scale was used (with anchors of strongly agree and strongly disagree). Each of the seven scales consisted of six statements, except for the innovation scale, which had seven statements. Questions for Part B of the PDSER Teacher Survey are included as Appendix I.

Part C: PDSER Teacher Survey

Ford and Opitz (2008) synthesised nine guidelines for successful implementation of guided reading programs (Kane, 1995), seven essential elements of guided reading (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006), and five critical components for planning a guided reading lesson (Ford & Opitz, 2008). From this synthesis, Ford and Opitz (2008) identified five key areas and these formed the structure for their national survey and these were: purposes for using guided reading groups; grouping techniques; texts used; planning instruction with and away from the teacher; and assessment tools and techniques. A team of experts in the field of literacy reviewed the survey, and following feedback an instrument with 28 multiple-choice items was developed.

A modified version of the National Survey of Guided Reading Practices (Ford & Opitz, 2008) was used for this research. The five key organising areas underscoring the National Survey of Guided Reading Practices (Ford & Opitz, 2008) were retained. For this research six questions (Q21, 22, 25, 26, 27, and 28) were removed because they did not directly relate

to the focus of this research. Questions were added and these focused on teacher perceptions of their knowledge and confidence for teaching guided reading. In keeping with the original survey, a multiple-choice format was retained. Also, an adjustment was made to the wording of some questions to ensure terminology was relevant to teachers at the research school. For example, *'reading program'* was replaced with *'guided reading'*, and *'inventory'* was changed to *'benchmarking'*. Teacher participants in the original research (Ford & Optiz, 2008) were kindergarten to second grade teachers. However, all teachers at the research school (from the Preparatory year to Year 7) were expected to teach guided reading and were involved in this study. Questions for Part C of the PDSER Teacher Survey are included as Appendix J.

4.7.2 Data Collection: Inspection Stage

4.7.2.1 Semi-structured Interviews

Interviewing participants is a frequently employed method of data collection for interpretive research that adopts a constructionist epistemology and a theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism. This data collection strategy is intended to establish "a human-to-human relation" with the participant and it is premised on a "desire to understand rather than explain" (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 654). The interviewer seeks to enter the other person's perspective, and this occurs in a quest to understand how their perspective is constructed and in what ways this influences their patterns of thinking and behaviour in a social situation (Patton, 1990).

During semi-structured interviews, researchers enable participants to share their narratives and "interpretations of the world in which they live" (Cohen et al. 2011, p. 409). This method of data collection provides a more in-depth exploration of the participants' point of view, through discovering "the content of their minds – their beliefs, wishes, feelings, desires, fears, and intentions" (Merriam, 1998, p. 72). Interviews are regarded as "interactional encounters" and it is acknowledged that, "the nature of the social dynamic of the interview can shape the nature of the knowledge generated" (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 699). Cohen et al. (2011) explain that, "an interview is not an ordinary, everyday conversation, as it has a specific planned purpose and direction so that the content focuses on the issues being explored" (p. 409).

The interviewer asks questions and uses strategic pausing, and this allows the participant time to reflect and to share their personal constructed meanings regarding the phenomenon

being explored. The interviewer establishes a "balanced rapport" (Fontana & Frey, 2000, p. 650) with each participant. Not only do they listen to responses, but they also have the freedom to ask additional questions that probe participants to provide further clarity on certain issues, experiences, or perceptions. Thus, interviews are a product of their context and generate co-constructed 'stories' about a particular phenomenon.

Critics of the interpretivist approach to interviewing participants argue that an interviewer has the potential to taint the data because they are involved in facilitating the participant's disclosure of their perceptions and experiences of a phenomenon. However, the counterargument to this is that knowledge is not developed in isolation, but rather through interaction with others (Hannan, 2007). Thus, the interview process reflects how people typically construct knowledge through social interaction with members of their context (Hannan, 2007).

For this research, a semi-structured interview was chosen as a data collection strategy as it aligns with the purpose. As this research seeks to explore teachers' phenomenological subjective responses to a change initiative within a single-school context, open and honest experiences of educators are required in order for a comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon to be presented. As each participant has differing personal perceptions shaped by their past experiences and current situation, the interviewer is required to encourage the participants to describe and explain their underlying reasons, motives, and experiences that have lead them to perceiving their current situation in a particular way. This provides depth and richness to the data collected, and enables the intricacies and nuances of the phenomenon being investigated to be elucidated.

For this research, semi-structured interviews were conducted individually with the principal, the change facilitator, and then with each of the 16 teachers who volunteered their involvement. The intent of utilising semi-structured interviews with each participant was to enable the researcher to access what is "inside a person's head" (Cohen et al. 2011, p. 411) and to elicit their personal knowledge, values, attitudes, and beliefs (Cohen et al. 2011) about the phenomenon being explored in the research. Semi-structured interviews were conducted individually with each teacher participant and the change facilitator in the parish office meeting room, which is in the building adjacent to the research school. The principal's semi-structured interview was conducted in his office at Emmanuel College. Semi-structured

interview questions for participants are presented as Appendix G & K. Each semi-structured interview was of approximately one-hour duration and they were audio-recorded.

When developing the questions to be used with participants during the semi-structured interviews, it was decided that they should be used fairly consistently with all participants. The rationale for this was that it may more easily allow the researcher to elucidate areas of convergence and divergence in participants' perceptions and subjectivity related to the change initiative at Emmanuel College. Following an analysis of key school-based policies, practice and a number of information documents, questions were generated under sub-headings.

The first set of questions clustered around exploring participants' objective perceptions of the school-based approach to professional development that was implemented at Emmanuel College. The next two sets of questions were generated with the intent of enabling participants the opportunity to express more openly their subjectivity towards school-based professional development. The questions at this point in the semi-structured interviews were designed to allow participants to discuss their perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of school-based learning, and to explain how they perceived this compared to other styles of professional development used within education today. The next sub-heading of questions was intended to allow participants to reflect on the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College. These questions were designed to encourage participants to discuss their perceptions surrounding the impetus for change at Emmanuel College, and to identify those who were instrumental in the introduction and sustainability of the school-based change initiative. As the change initiative at Emmanuel College was based within a single-school context, it was considered important to probe participants' perceptions of the dimensions of this particular school learning environment. The rationale for this was that participants' experiences and interactions can considerably shape the lens through which they view a particular phenomenon. Thus, the next set of questions sought to elucidate participants' subjective perceptions of change and also their feelings relating to their sense of teacher voice, collegiality, and work pressure at Emmanuel College. The final set of questions provided participants with the opportunity to objectively reflect on how the school-based style of professional development at Emmanuel College could be improved or adjusted to further enhance participants' experience of professional development.

Following the conduct of the semi-structured interviews, transcripts were completed and returned to each participant to enable them to review the responses given during their interview. Participants were offered the opportunity to advise whether their responses had been authentically recorded in their transcript and they could clarify responses to interview questions if desired. Clarification could be provided in either writing or by requesting a further interview. For this research, there were no participants who requested the opportunity to make clarifications to their transcript or to participate in a follow-up semi-structured interview.

4.8 The Researcher

The primary instrument of data collection and analysis in qualitative interpretive research is the researcher (Merriam, 1998) and, hence, this places considerable responsibility upon them to ensure proper research procedures are followed. Since the researcher brings their own attributes, biases, assumptions, expectations, and personal history to their role this can shape the way they view and interpret the data (Denzin, 1989). During semi-structured interviews, participants share their personal stories about a particular phenomenon, and for this research these stories related to their perceptions of a change initiative at Emmanuel College. However, the way that the participant stories were brought to light was shaped by the lens of the researcher.

Here it is noted that researchers do not approach data analysis with a blank mind and as such, analysis cannot be considered a completely neutral process (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Charmaz, 2005). Data analysis occurs simultaneously with data collection, data interpretation, and report writing (Creswell, 1994), and at the centre of this process is the researcher. While he/she must endeavour to maintain "procedural objectivity" to minimise their influence on the analysis of data (Creswell, 2002), the process can be open to the potential for researcher bias. Each person is "intimately a part of any understanding [they] have of what counts as knowledge or of any claim [they] make to knowledge" (Smith & Deemer, 2000, p. 877) and this insight. Also, during the coding of data, the researcher plays an active role as it is he/she who makes "the decisions to include or exclude, to intervene, manipulate, act on, conceptualise, and use specific techniques to generate or discover theory" (Walker & Myrick, 2006, p. 550). Thus, participants' stories are, therefore, interpreted through the lens of the researchers' perspective.

As the researcher for this study, it is, therefore, necessary to clarify and explain my history with the research school and the extent of my professional relationships with the staff. As previously stated in Chapter One, I have been employed by the Catholic Education Office for 19 years, 15 of which have been spent as a teacher at the research school, Emmanuel College. This duration of time at the research school has afforded me a sense of "cultural intuition" (Dance, Gutierrez, & Hermes, 2010, p. 332). This enables me to have a greater understanding of what it is like to be in the participant's shoes, given my close association with them and my sense of shared experience with the change initiative (Dance et al. 2010).

I began at the research school as a classroom teacher in 2004, and this was the same year that the principal commenced his leadership role as Assistant to the Principal (Administration). Prior to this point in time at Emmanuel College, previous Assistant to the Principal (Administration) personnel had been responsible for guiding curriculum initiatives rather than the principal. Their perspective on curriculum change had involved co-ordinating teachers' attendance at professional development (located external to the school), and then affording them freedom to implement pedagogical practice that they felt met the needs of the learners in their class contexts.

On the first teacher professional development day of 2004, the Assistant to the Principal (Administration) [who later became the principal of Emmanuel College], addressed the staff at the research school and articulated his future-focused vision. I found this address to be very impressive and motivating. His forthright nature and his keen interest in the teaching of guided reading appealed to me. In my first four years of teaching, in the early primary year levels, I had developed a strong passion for the teaching of reading. In addition, at this time I was half-way through completing a Masters of Education (Research) degree, focusing on the reading attitudes of primary-aged students. I wholeheartedly embraced the introduction of the principal's change initiative as it was on a topic of professional interest to me. At this point in time, my interpretation of the situation at Emmanuel College was that the Assistant to the Principal (Administration) was genuine in wanting to provide teachers with personalised and contextualised support to improve the quality of their pedagogical practice. This vision resonated positively with me and I felt that it would support me to continue building the quality of my professional knowledge and practice.

I also embraced each opportunity I had to work with the change facilitator at Emmanuel College as the Assistant to the Principal (Administration) at the time promoted her as 'the

expert' in guided reading, and I had no reason to doubt his claims. I also willingly volunteered to have my teaching of guided reading filmed to be included on the 'Reading at Emmanuel College' DVD professional development resource that was being developed by the then Assistant to the Principal (Administration) and change facilitator. Thus, I began the change initiative at Emmanuel College by having a positive professional relationship with both the Assistant to the Principal (Administration) and the change facilitator.

My sense of positivity towards the principal's change initiative had shifted to some degree by 2006. In the first two years of the change initiative I had been receptive to all feedback given to me about my pedagogical practice, and I had made every effort to shape my pedagogical practice into the style modelled by the change facilitator. I felt a growing sense of frustration as I was being told on the one hand by the change facilitator that my pedagogical practice was in alignment with the 'standard-style' expected of teachers at Emmanuel College. However, on the other hand, the now principal of Emmanuel College, was telling teachers at staff meetings and in email correspondence that there needed to be further improvement in the quality of their pedagogical practice in order to yield an increasing elevation in student performance on state-wide tests of reading achievement. I was extremely eager to be a high-quality educator and had a strong desire for my students to achieve well in reading, yet I felt constrained by the expectation for compliance with the pedagogical practice modelled by the change facilitator. This sense of professional tension that I was experiencing, sparked my curiosity about how other teachers were feeling towards the principal's change initiative. I wondered if I was alone in feeling the way that I did, or whether it was related to the stage of career I was in, or whether is was in fact more of a generalised experience of the teachers at Emmanuel College. I returned to post-graduate study once more in order to explore the experiences of the teachers at Emmanuel College regarding the principal's change initiative regarding the teaching of guided reading.

As I have not pursued formal opportunities for leadership roles at the research school, my colleagues have not afforded me any perception of authority. Had this happened, it might have been problematic in conducting this study because the participants may have felt compelled to respond with responses that they thought were appropriate or expected rather than responses that reflected their personal perceptions of their experiences of the change initiative at Emmanuel College. Instead, it is likely that the participants afforded me the role of 'trusted insider' (Smith, 1999) as their subjective responses provided during data collection at the Exploration and Inspection Stages reflected a spirit of openness, honesty,

passion, and frankness. Processes that were put in place to legitimate this research, and the ethical considerations that were made to support participants, are elaborated later in this chapter.

In an attempt "to treat the evidence fairly" and to limit, as much as possible, the influence of researcher bias, an inductive process of data analysis was employed for this research (Yin, 1989, p. 106). Thus, data were not analysed according to predetermined categories, but rather themes were developed as each participant's story was coded and compared against the emerging themes from other participant stories. This process involves "categorizing, coding, delineating categories and connecting them" (Boeije, 2002, p. 393) in order to elucidate the patterns of congruence and divergence in participants' constructed and socially developed perceptions about a phenomenon in a particular context. This method of analysing data enables the voice of the participants to shape the process, rather than being influenced by the possibility of a predetermined agenda or the perceptions of the researcher. This method of data analysis is referred to as Constant Comparative Analysis [CCA].

4.9 Analysis of Data

Interpretative data analysis involves making meaning from participants' stories in order to "describe and explain social phenomena" (Pope, Ziebland & Mays, 2000, p. 114). Data analysis is

> …a complex process that involves moving back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts, between inductive and deductive reasoning, between description and interpretation (Merriam, 1998, p. 178).

Data analysis involves a researcher working with stories that reveal participants' sacred and often secretly covered perceptions of an experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998). An aim of data analysis is to elucidate areas of convergence and divergence in perceptions in order to provide an in-depth insight into a phenomenon occurring within a particular social context. At Emmanuel College, data analysis occurred at both the Exploration and Inspection Stages. A summary of the process of data analysis is presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

Process of Data Analysis

Stage	Data Collection Strategy	Process of Data Analysis
Exploration	Document Analysis	Manual Colour Coding and Handwritten Annotations
	Teacher Survey	PASW Statistics Computer Software (SPSS Inc, 2009) – descriptive statistics
Inspection	Semi-structured Interviews • Principal • Change Facilitator • 16 Teachers	Constant Comparative Analysis Method [CCA]

4.9.1 Analysis of Data: Exploration Stage

4.9.1.1 School-generated Documents

As described previously, during the Exploration Stage, school-generated documents were analysed by the researcher and key words and phrases relevant to the research problem were highlighted. Tentative codes such as *school culture, expectations of teachers, how to teach guided reading, process of professional development,* and *beliefs about learners* were annotated onto hard-copies of the school-generated documents. Sections of text sharing similar coding were clustered together, and preliminary findings were noted. These tentative codes were used as a scaffold when beginning to develop the topics for the semi-structured interviews with participants. Document analyses also enabled the researcher to incorporate certain terminology and phraseology into the interview questions that related specifically to the change initiative at Emmanuel College

4.9.1.2 Teacher Survey

During the Exploration Stage, all teachers at Emmanuel College completed an electronic teacher survey titled The PDSER Teacher Survey. Completion of this survey was intended to provide a 'moment-in-time' snapshot of the perceptions of participants within the particular context. For this research, the survey data gathered focused on teachers' perceptions of their participation in school-located opportunities for teacher learning, their perceptions of the characteristics of the research school, as well as their pedagogical practices for guided reading. When the participants completed this survey and they had clicked 'done', data were available for analysis in non-identifiable numerical form. Responses were coded and analysed using PASW computer software [Version 18.0] (SPSS Inc, 2009). Due to the small sample size (n=28), it was decided that statistical analyses would not be calculated using the teachers' responses on the survey. Instead, descriptive data were

utilised and analyses were conducted for each part of the PDSER teacher survey, and an example is included as Appendix L. For each question, or cluster of similar questions, annotations were made on a hard-copy of the data and these highlighted generalised trends in participant responses. Areas of divergence in participants' perceptions as well as areas where participants shared commonality in their perceptions were noted, and these informed the development of certain questions for the semi-structured interviews. These questions enabled the researcher to delve further into the underlying feelings that had guided the responses of participants regarding their experience of the change initiative at Emmanuel College.

4.9.2 Analysis of Data: Inspection Stage

4.9.2.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Interpretative qualitative research employs data analysis techniques that are typically researcher-driven, as codes and themes are identified and interpreted by the researcher (Baskarada, 2013). Data are gathered and then "broken up into manageable pieces, which the researcher then reconstructs to reflect back a view of reality" (Baskarada, 2013, p. 12). Coding is an iterative and incremental process that can occur at different stages of data collection, and for this research it was utilised at the Inspection Stage. A Constant Comparative Analysis [CCA] Method was utilised when analysing data from the semi-structured interviews of the principal, change facilitator, and 16 teachers at Emmanuel College.

<u>*Constant Comparative Analysis [CCA] Method*</u>

Data analysis involves extracting themes so conceptual understandings about phenomena can be reported (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994). A Constant Comparative Analysis [CCA] method is widely used in qualitative research to consolidate, reduce, and interpret participants' responses about a phenomenon so a rich comprehensive understanding can be shared (Coombe, 1995; Merriam, 1998). This method of data analysis is used for "forming categories, establishing the boundaries of the categories, assigning the segments to categories, and summarising the content of each category" (Tesch, 1990, p. 96). Furthermore, this process of data analysis is considered inductive as the categories emerge from participants' reported constructions of their world, and some of these categories are retained for the duration of data analysis, yet some are subsumed to form new categories during the process (Mayring, 2000). A large body of narrative data is reduced into recurrent themes and this occurs by coding (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Open and axial coding is

employed as well as triangulation of data sources (Boeije, 2002; Corbin & Strauss, 1990; O'Donoghue, 2007), and these are summarised in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7

A Constant Comparative Analysis [CCA] Method

Type of Comparison	Analysis Activities	Aim
Comparison within a single interview	Open Coding: • Summarising core of the interview • Finding consensus on interpretation of fragments	Develop an understanding of categories
Comparison between interviews within the same group of people sharing the same experience/phenomenon	Axial Coding: • Formulating criteria for comparing interviews • Hypothesising about patterns and types	Conceptualisation of the subject Production of a typology
Comparison of interviews from groups with different perspectives but involved with the subject under study	Triangulation of data sources	Completion of the "bigger picture" of the phenomenon Enrich the information

(Boeije, 2002, p. 391)

Open coding first involves fracturing the data, so that a large quantity of narrative data is broken down into categories, and these are grouped together (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Walker & Myrick, 2006). Preliminary coding labels are assigned to understand the intent of participant responses. Axial coding then occurs, and this involves relating and integrating the data by exploring the relationships that exist between categories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Ongoing comparisons are made between the current transcript being read and previous ones examined, and category codes are continually reviewed and refined with each reading. Similar groups of coded text are subsumed to form larger categories referred to as themes (Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg & Coleman, 2000; O'Donoghue, 2007). This stage of the process involves "reduction and interpretation" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 114). Triangulation of data then occurs to make comparisons between emergent themes from different groups of participants within the same context. Triangulation enables patterns of convergence and divergence in perception to be elucidated. The Constant Comparative Analysis [CCA] method is summarised in Figure 4.1.
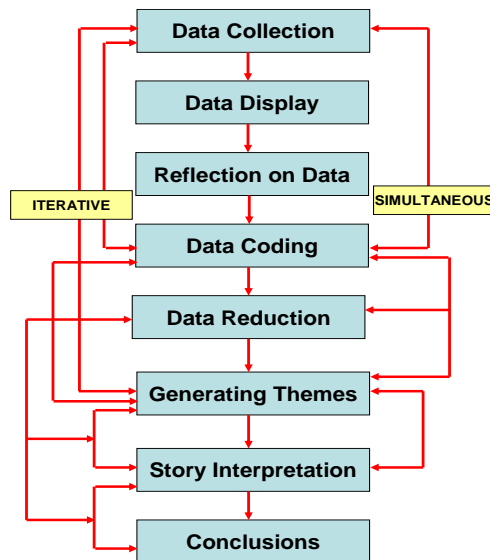
Figure 4.1. Process of data analysis: Constant comparative analysis [CCA] method.

For this research, the semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal, change facilitator and 16 classroom teachers, and these generated a large body of narrative data. To effectively organise the data for analysis, participant transcripts were accessed in electronic form. A word document was developed that contained a table for each of the 34 questions that comprised the semi-structured interviews for teacher participants. Each question was used as the heading for the tables, and the first column contained the alphanumeric code for each of the 16 teachers who participated in the semi-structured interviews. Responses from participants were then cut and pasted from each transcript into the corresponding row of each table. Organising data in this manner assisted in identifying the emerging responses to each question asked during the semi-structured interview regarding participants' experiences of the principal's change initiative.

Open coding was first used to fracture the participants' responses. To do this, transcript responses were read, and key words/phrases used by participants were initially underlined on the transcripts. A second reading of data then occurred, and this process involved making a notation of preliminary codes beside the participants' underlined comments to identify the intent of each key word or phrase. An example of the coding process used with the semi-structured interview transcripts is included as Appendix M.

The next stage of data analysis involved axial coding. Coloured highlighters were used to cluster together "repeated words, strong emotions, metaphors, images, emphasised items, key phrases, or significant concepts" (Mutch, 2005, p. 177). Words or phrases for each question that were colour-coded the same were then typed into another table in a word

document. The phrases from participant responses in each colour-coded group were then identified and recorded in a second column of an 'Axial Coding Table'. This process occurred for all 34 questions that were used in the semi-structured interviews with teacher participants. As each question was analysed and axial codes were generated, they were recorded in an 'Axial Coding Summary' document. Triangulation of data then occurred as the process of data coding and reduction was then repeated for the transcripts of the principal and change facilitator at Emmanuel College.

After each transcript from participants had been read and analysed, the large quantity of narrative data had been reduced to 27 codes. The wording of axial codes was then critiqued in an effort to further reduce the number of codes and eliminate any instance of repetition. This process resulted in 17 codes remaining as the categories that explained teachers' experiences of the principal's change initiative at Emmanuel College. The 17 categories that were identified were once more sorted, and similar codes were clustered together. This resulted in five distinct clusters of categories, referred to as themes, emerging from the data analysis process. The codes and themes are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8

Codes and Themes from the Analysis of Semi-Structured Interview Data

An Example of the Underlined Words and Phrases stated in Semi-Structured Interviews – Open Coding	Axial Coding	Categories	Themes
Like getting support Welcome new learning Open to Sharing Ideas Don't like being told what to do Blamed for not doing pedagogy correctly	* Embrace new learning * Lack of autonomy * Feeling of inadequacy * Resist change	* Predisposition to Change	Predispositions
Supportive teaching partners Shared experiences On the same page Good teaching relationships Very approachable – daily chats Openly have discussions with colleagues Share what they've done Great students – get along well	* Collegiality - teamwork * Willingness to share and learn from others * Able to positively interact with students	* Collegial Affiliation * Collegial Sharing of Knowledge and Practice * Interaction with Students	Engagement
Expected to constantly develop and improve Never stop learning at this place Told us the language to use in guided reading Ask personalised questions See someone in action in your classroom – watching someone else teaching.	* Benefit of professional development (Renewal) * Lifelong learning * Support to improve -contextualised and personalised support	* Renewal of Professional Knowledge * Personalised Support for Learning * Contextualised Focus on Learning	Teacher Learning
They say they are open to hearing people's opinions, but they are not. The dream comes from the leadership team. I expect them to respond to the expert. Rules and regulations Happy to take a hard stand and pull some teachers into line. We do what they want us to do. Forced to do policies and practices. A lot of pressure here, clear guidelines and due dates If everyone was on board we wouldn't be in this situation. Frustrating – the change facilitator goes off on a tangent. You feel like you dodged a bullet. I find her frustrating – out of her depth. Shown only one way – struggled to put a square peg in a round hole.	* Lack of teacher voice * Desire for autonomy * Lack of staff freedom to innovate * Observation of practice * Accountability * Compliance - clear expectations * Exercise authority/control * Assessment of practice from an authority figure * Pressure to perform to expectations * Student achievement – NAPLAN testing * Disposition and capability of change facilitator * Disconnection between modelled practice and class-based needs.	* Compliance with Expectations * Teacher Voice * Innovation with Pedagogical Practice * Pressure to Meet Expectations * Focus on Student Achievement Outcomes * Interactions with the Change Facilitator * Modelling of Pedagogical Practice * Personalised Observation and Feedback	Leadership • By the Principal Leadership • By the Change Facilitator
Forced me to change how I teach Comply with a standard style of practice Very narrow in scope Little mental stimulation Limited authentic opportunities to learn and grow professionally	* Change practice * One style only * Doesn't suit all teachers/students * Limits professional growth * Lack of clarity with learning goals	* Change to Teachers' Pedagogical Practice * Perception of Teacher Quality	Experiences

The first theme explores teachers' *predispositions* to change. The next theme is titled *Engagement,* as it examines the way that teachers engage in social and professional interaction with their colleagues and their students within a school context. The principal's change initiative at Emmanuel College required teachers to embrace an approach to teacher learning that contrasted a traditional dissemination style of professional development. Thus, the third theme explores teachers' experiences of renewing their professional knowledge by participating in a personalised and contextualised approach to *teacher learning*. The next theme explores teachers' perceptions of the *leadership* of the change initiative at Emmanuel College. This involves both the leadership of the principal of the school as well as the facilitator who was afforded the responsibility of leading the principal's change initiative with all 28 teachers at Emmanuel College. Teachers share their experiences of having to comply with the imposed expectations for teaching and learning, and they express their feelings about forgoing their autonomy and ability to voice an opinion regarding the teaching and learning of guided reading. Further to this, teachers explain their perceptions of their interactions with the change facilitator as she conducted periodic cycles of teacher learning that involved modelling of pedagogical practice for guided reading, observation of their implementation of this pedagogy, followed by the provision of personalised feedback on the standard of their practice. The final theme explores the value that teachers place on their experiences of the approach to teacher learning that was facilitated for them at Emmanuel College. They reflect on the contribution that this style of learning has made to shaping the quality of their professional practice for guided reading. In Chapter Five, data will be presented using the five themes that emerged from data analysis, and the 17 categories will form the subheadings under these themes.

4.10 Legitimation

In an interpretivist paradigm, trustworthiness is a key factor in determining the legitimation of findings from research (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Being able to trust findings "is especially important to professionals in applied fields, such as education, in which practitioners intervene in people's lives" (Merriam, 1998, p. 198). The trustworthiness of data collected is enhanced by applying criteria such as credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). These criteria are applied at the data collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation stages of the research. While these criteria for trustworthiness are key aspects of a research process, "they do not in themselves *ensure rigor*" (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2002, p. 9) as the way that any research

process is enacted is influenced by the researcher's own perceptions. Thus, it is a researcher's "creativity, sensitivity, flexibility, and skill in using the verification strategies that determine the reliability and validity" of the findings from a research project (Morse et al. 2002, p. 10).

4.10.1 Credibility

Triangulation of data sources is one means of verification that can enhance the legitimacy of research. For this research, data were collected from educators at different hierarchical levels within the one context as this provided more compelling support for the interpretation of the phenomenon being explored (Yin, 1989). The principal of the research school (Emmanuel College) was involved in this research. His experience as a leader in both education and business shaped his perception, and this influenced his style of leadership, shaped how he fostered the culture of the school context, and also informed his expectations regarding how teaching and learning should occur. The change facilitator was employed by the principal to enact the change initiative at Emmanuel College, and she was answerable to the principal while also having to provide professional support targeting improvement of each teacher's quality of practice. The change facilitator's experience as both a teacher and consultant in education contributed to defining how she approached her role at Emmanuel College. Teachers at this school spanned the first four of Huberman's (1989) career stages. Typically, teachers at each of these stages presented with differing perceptions based on their own personal and professional journey in education. The variation in experiences can lead to teachers having multiple constructed views of what constitutes effective teaching and learning. The trustworthiness of findings was enhanced as this research explicated the voice of each participant within this context, and it used these to illuminate the areas of convergence and divergence in perception regarding the implementation of the change initiative at Emmanuel College. Use of a Constant Comparative Analysis [CCA] method foregrounded participants' voice and this enhanced the legitimacy of findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Persistent and prolonged engagement involves the researcher being connected with, or based in, the context of the research for a period of time and this enables participant perceptions to be adequately uncovered. A level of rapport and trust can be fostered between the researcher and participants, and this seeks to remedy the "front" which is often presented by participants when engaging in interviews with unknown interviewers (Guba, 1989, p. 237). When this occurs, the depth of participant responses can be affected and this can lead

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to the provision of surface-level responses. This runs contrary to the purpose of research employing a constructionist epistemology, as this seeks to explore the depth of individual's constructed perceptions of their world.

As the researcher had a pre-existing relationship with the principal, change facilitator, and the teachers at Emmanuel College, a level of personal and professional rapport was already established. While it is acknowledged that this level of familiarity with participants can pose some ethical considerations, it is also advantageous as it provided participants with a level of collegial comfort and support while they shared their perceptions and experiences of the phenomenon being explored.

In order to legitimate the data collected, participants were provided with the opportunity to review the transcripts of their semi-structured interviews. This process is referred to as *member checking*. This process enabled participants the opportunity to provide confirmation that interview data accurately and authentically represented their perception of a particular phenomenon (Anfara, Brown & Mangoine, 2002). Alternatively, each participant had the opportunity to amend or add to the information provided in their interview in order to provide a clearer or more comprehensive description of their constructed perceptions regarding the phenomenon being explored (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each participant at the research school was provided with the opportunity to engage in the process of member checking. However, no amendments were requested to transcript data or requests made for additional information to be included. This supports the legitimacy of the transcript data gathered, and also reflects the spirit of openness and frankness with which participants shared their perceptions about the change initiative implemented at their school.

4.10.2 Dependability

Dependability is a criterion that can support the trustworthiness of data collected during a research project. Employing the use of *independent audits* enables a review of the data collection processes and explores any prevalence of researcher bias (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Creswell, 1998). For this research, external reviewers were involved at periodic junctures throughout the data collection and analysis stages, and for this research the reviewers were the research supervisors. These supervisors engaged the researcher in a process of self-reflection, and this was intended to extrapolate the values and assumptions that underpinned the researcher's perspective of the phenomenon being explored (Cohen et al. 2007). The research supervisors worked collaboratively with the researcher to identify

any areas where their perceptions may have influenced the analysis of findings (Guba, 1989). This process sought to legitimise the findings, so they reflected as closely as possible, the perspectives of the educators within the context where the research was conducted.

4.10.3 Confirmability

Confirmability is another criterion for trustworthiness, and it involves establishing an *audit trail* through data (Guba, 1989). This process enables a researcher the ability to trace findings back to participants' raw interview data (Cohen et al. 2007). This enhances the trustworthiness of research as it can show how findings are grounded in, and arise from, the perceptions of participants within a research context (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Confirmability processes seek to minimise the influence of researcher bias, and foreground the voice of participants. For this research, participants were provided with an alphanumeric code, and this enabled the findings to be presented with reference to the participant/s who expressed particular perspectives regarding the implementation of the change initiative at Emmanuel College.

4.10.4 Transferability

With research that gathers quantitative data, generalisability of findings is the responsibility of the researcher, yet with qualitative research, transferability of findings *rests at the individual reader level* (Guba, 1985). Case study methodology presents a context-bounded exploration of a particular phenomenon, and this is presented from the perspective of the individuals involved. This methodology is typically premised on a constructionist epistemology, and so it does not seek to enforce law-like generalisations about a particular phenomenon that can be applicable across contexts. Rather, its purpose is to give "deeper, more extensive and more systematic representation of events from the point of view of the actors involved" (Candy, 1989, p. 5). From this, readers may create their own context-relative schemas, as they engage in a "matter of fit between the situation being studied and others to which one might be interested in applying concepts and conclusions" (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995, p. 326). The presentation of rich and thick descriptions enables a reader of the research the potential to individually vicariously generalise from findings (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995; Stake, 2005).

4.11 Ethical Issues

For this research, ethical approval was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee (Australian Catholic University) and the Executive Director of Catholic

Education. Ethical guidelines are outlined in order to protect participants from harm (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998) as the "first and foremost…..obligation [a researcher has is] to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of the informant(s)" (Creswell, 1994, p. 145). This is particularly of paramount importance when conducting research within an interpretive paradigm as it involves disclosure of participants' often highly sensitive and guarded perceptions of a phenomenon.

Hence, respecting the rights of participants is a key ethical issue (Bassey, 1999; Johnson & Christensen, 2000; Merriam, 1998). For research involving interviews with participants, the key ethical considerations relate to informed consent, right to privacy, and protection from harm (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Disclosure about the purpose of the research and the role of the researcher are also key considerations for participants to be aware of when deciding whether to consent to involvement in a research project (Schram, 2003). Moreover, an essential ethical consideration for the researcher is the safe and secure storage of data in order to maintain confidentiality of participant responses. A number of processes were put in place for this research in order to address these ethical considerations, and these are now discussed.

Prior to the conduct of research, participants at Emmanuel College were provided with an Information Letter (Appendices C & E) and this outlined the purpose of the research, processes involved in the research, and how data were intended to be used. Informed consent was provided in writing on the Consent Form (Appendices D & F). All participants were made aware that their involvement in this research was completely voluntary, and that they had every right to decline involvement from the outset or at any stage during the process (Glesne, 2006). It is acknowledged that, because the researcher was known to the teachers at Emmanuel College, this may have placed some element of pressure on them to consent to their involvement in this research. This might explain why all teachers at the research school (n=28) consented to complete the teacher survey which gathered non-identifiable data regarding the phenomenon being explored.

Teachers were, however, confident to decline involvement in the semi-structured interviews as only 16 teachers volunteered to continue to the semi-structured interview stage of the research. In an attempt to reduce the possible effect of researcher positionality, and in an effort to complete the semi-structured interviews in a timely manner, teacher participants were asked to nominate on a slip attached to their consent form whether their preference was

to be interviewed by the researcher or by an external research assistant. All participants, however, were comfortable disclosing to the researcher their responses regarding their experience of the change initiative that was implemented at Emmanuel College, and so an external researcher assistant was not involved in the collection of data from participants.

Participants' confidentiality is a key consideration for researchers (Fontana & Frey, 2000), and to address this, de-identification processes were put in place for the collection and analysis of data, and for reporting of findings. While the principal consented to teachers being released from class to participate in semi-structured interviews, he was not informed which teachers were involved. The relief teacher was organised by the researcher, and she was not familiar with the school or staff composition as she had not been involved at this school in a relief-capacity prior to this visit. In keeping with the school policy, relief teachers were not intentionally informed of the reason why teachers were being released from class.

Interviews were conducted over a two-day period and these were scheduled to coincide with the principal and Leadership team's attendance at a Catholic Education Forum. Therefore, they were absent from the school context when the semi-structured interviews with teachers were conducted, and this enhanced participants' confidentiality. For the analysis and reporting of data, alphanumeric codes and pseudonyms were provided for teacher participants in an attempt to de-identify their responses, and a pseudonym was also generated and used for the research school.

Case study methodology involves sharing the perceptions that individuals have regarding a phenomenon that occurs within a bounded context. While a researcher makes every effort to maintain the confidentiality of participants, it is not completely possible to control every variable when conducting interpretive research with human participants. For example, the relief teacher, who released teachers to attend their interview, had 'insider knowledge' of who the participants were for this research, and without any intention or agenda, they could inadvertently disclose this information in social interaction with others within the school context. Furthermore, participants could also provide a comment in conversation with colleagues that could suggest their involvement in this research. These types of situations are beyond the researcher's scope of control.

Another ethical consideration relates to the sample size for this research. As this research involved participants from a single-school context, there was the possibility that members of the staff community could identify participant responses based on their knowledge of

their colleague's perceptions of the change initiative that was implemented at Emmanuel College. In an effort to address this ethical issue, the researcher sought to remove from transcripts any identifiable references, phraseology, or colloquial terms that could potentially identify particular individuals. When engaging in 'member checking', participants were also given the opportunity to remove any aspect of their transcript that they felt might potentially identify them to their colleagues.

A further ethical consideration relating to sample size, pertains to the identity of participants at the research school and in particular, the principal and change facilitator. At the time of this research, Emmanuel College was the only school within the particular Queensland Catholic Education diocese that had implemented a change initiative in this manner, and involving this particular principal and change facilitator. While the distinctive characteristic is what calls for further research, it is also what makes it potentially identifiable within a Catholic school community. While the researcher was able to assign codes and pseudonyms in an effort to minimise the potential for teachers to be personally identified, this was not practically possible for the principal and change facilitator. In the reporting of data, these participants are referred to as 'the principal' and 'the change facilitator', and despite the school being provided a pseudonym, there was no way the researcher could ensure complete confidentiality of responses for these two participants. Prior to these participants providing consent to be involved in this research, the issue of identifiability was discussed at length to ensure both participants fully understood the implications for participating in this research. The final decision regarding anonymity rests with the individual (Creswell, 1994), and it was the decision of the both the principal and change facilitator to provide informed consent to participate in this research.

In addition, it is noted that a social researcher seeks to illuminate a phenomenon that occurs within a specific context, and this is achieved by gaining an understanding of the underlying processes and the perceptions and behaviours of the individuals involved. Thus, an ethical consideration with this type of research centres on the collection and management of the large body of narrative data that are gathered. These narratives reflect on an experience that participants have already lived through and as such contain personal perceptions and often sensitive reflections about the phenomenon (Mattingly, 1991). To maintain the confidentiality of participant confidences, safe and secure storage of narrative data are required. For this research, hard copies of data were securely kept in the researcher's locked filing cabinet. Data collected in electronic form for analysis were contained in a secured

(password protected) file on a USB and this was also secured in the researcher's filing cabinet. The principal supervisor also holds copies of data and these are secured in the same manner.

As previously mentioned in this chapter, the researcher has a professional relationship with the participants at the research school. It is acknowledged that this relationship had the potential to be an ethical issue as it may have shaped the way participants shared their stories about their participation in school-based professional development. As it is the nature of human interaction to reveal one's personal perspectives during communication with others (Charon, 1998), there was the possibility that data collected from semi-structured interviews was influenced inadvertently by the social interaction between the researcher and participant. In an effort to minimise this effect, the researcher consciously sought to assume the position of interviewer and interested listener, and this involved the use of questioning, strategic pausing, and probing for further clarity. This relationship may also contribute to the presence of researcher bias during the analysis of data. However, a number of processes were implemented in this research to legitimise the findings and to minimise the influence that researcher positionality had on the collection and analysis of data, and these had been discussed throughout this chapter.

4.12 Limitations of the Research

Some would argue that a limitation of this research is its use of a case study methodology, and it is often criticised on the grounds that one cannot generalise from a single case. However, the purpose of research that employs an interpretive paradigm is not to present theory in the way a researcher would present scientific findings. Not all phenomena can be explained using scientific rules and theories, as research involving human participants cannot control variables in the way they are managed in a scientific experimental approach to research. The fact that case study methodology does not afford generalisation of findings "does not mean that it cannot enter into the collective process of knowledge accumulation" in a particular area (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 227). Beveridge (1951) argues that a greater understanding of a phenomenon is gained by exploring people's construction of their world and their perception within a context, than from statistics yielded from a large group of individuals with no recognition for the context in which data are gathered. Researchers employing an interpretive paradigm explore individual cases "not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something" (Eysenck, 1976, p. 9).

The intent of this research is not to provide a generalised explanation of the implementation of a change initiative in a single-school context, but rather to elucidate teachers' subjective responses to a change initiative at Emmanuel College. The perspective of symbolic interactionism reinforces the context-dependent nature of meaning-making. At Emmanuel College, the change initiative was implemented in an effort to improve the quality of teachers' pedagogical practice for guided reading. Each educator at this school approached the change initiative with a particular mindset, and the way they viewed their world was shaped by their past and present experiences. The way that each educator had constructed their meaning shaped the way they behaved and interacted with others within this school context. The researcher's role was to gather rich, thick narrative data in order to illuminate the personal 'story' of each participant within this context (Boeije, 2002). Furthermore, the staff composition of this school comprised teachers from four different career stages. Their perception of the change initiative was likely to be varied as they presented with differing personal and professional needs. Thus, this research did not seek to control these variables, but rather to explore them. While this research did not provide objective generalisable findings, readers can, however, expand their awareness of the variation in subjective responses that educators may experience when engaging in educational change initiatives. Furthermore, they can make their own decisions regarding the transferability of findings from the research context to their own situation and experience.

A further limitation that may be cited about this research relates to the subjective nature of a case study approach, as it provides scope for the possibility of the researcher's own personal interpretations to emerge. This has led to case study methodology being considered by some researchers as being of 'doubtful scientific value' (Diamond, 1996). The lack of scientific rigor in this methodology is argued by some to be a "crippling drawback" as it enables a researcher the opportunity "to stamp one's pre-existing interpretations on data as they accumulate" (Diamond, 1996, p. 6). Researchers employing case study methodology argue against this critique and report that often the data collected contradicts their preconceived views and assumptions about a phenomenon resulting in revisions to their hypotheses (Campbell, 1975; Flyvbjerg, 1998, 2001; Geertz, 1995; Ragin, 1992; Wieviorka, 1992). Researchers employing an interpretive paradigm utilise a number of verifications at the data collection and analysis stages in order to legitimise the findings from case study research, and these verifications relate to credibility, dependability, and confirmability

(Guba, 1989; Trochim, 2006). These processes of legitimation were discussed, in relation to this research, earlier in this chapter.

Researcher positionality can also be regarded as a limitation by some researchers. Human behaviour is influenced by a myriad of context-related factors and these must be considered when collecting data or in presenting findings from a case study. When conducting research within an interpretive paradigm, a researcher must "systematically reflect on who he or she is in the enquiry and be sensitive to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study" (Creswell, 2003, p. 182). With regard to researcher positionality, researchers consider it is crucial to get as close as possible to the participants within a real-life context in order to explore the nuanced view that each participant has about their world and their place in it (Flyvbjerg, 2006). It is argued that "the most advanced form of understanding is achieved when researchers place themselves within the context being studied", and in doing this, the researcher comes to have some appreciation for the diversity in the viewpoints and the behaviour demonstrated by participants (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 236). Case study methodology is not intended to be an approach to research that serves the agenda of a researcher, but rather an approach that enables a story to be shared that illustrates the diversity, complexity, and sometimes conflicting perceptions of participants within a context (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

This research was conducted at Emmanuel College, and the researcher had a professional relationship with the educators at this school. It was acknowledged that a pre-existing relationship might be a limitation insofar as participants may have felt obligated to respond in a particular way or may avoid disclosing particular perceptions or behaviour for fear of jeopardising their relationship with the researcher and/or colleagues. However, the researcher's continued proximity with participants supports Flyvbjerg's (2006) position that a researcher should get as close to the research context as possible, and this often involves placing themselves within that context. Being a 'trusted insider' (Smith, 1999) affords the researcher with a personal awareness of not only the phenomenon being explored, but also the interpersonal characteristics of each participant.

Human beings reveal themselves through social interaction (Charon, 1998). Thus, it is important for participants to perceive an interview relationship is premised on rapport, empathy, and equality so it reflects a natural-style of social interaction (Hannan, 2007; Hawley, 2008; Partington, 2001). When commencing this research, the researcher did not begin with a 'blank slate' as their own constructed view of participants' perception of the

phenomenon being explored informs the data collection process (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Charmaz, 2005). This contextually-enriched knowledge enabled the researcher to skilfully employ variation in their questioning and probing interview techniques, and in doing this they elicited a deeper and richer insight into the phenomenon being explored.

The current political climate in education is premised on the need to introduce and sustain educational change reforms that target improvements in the quality of teachers in schools as well as seek to realise an elevation in student achievement outcomes, as measured by NAPLAN testing (MCEETYA, 2008b). These government-level expectations for educational change have a direct impact at the system-level, and in turn, these expectations for increased performativity of staff and students are placed onto principals. Not only are principals expected to continue to manage the business and managerial demands of their role, they are now being called to develop a culture of increasing performance and development within their school context (Education Services Australia, 2012b). The increasing demands placed on principals, in recent times, has compounded the complexity of their professional role. Principals can be intentionally subjected to feelings of pressure when being expected to meet systemic-level performance targets, and also the publication of school performance on NAPLAN testing on the MySchool website (ACARA, 2010) can inadvertently elevate the pressure experienced by principals. The increasing complexity of a principal's role and the pressure that they experience in meeting the demands and expectations placed on them can affect the way that they enact their leadership role within a school. For this research, the affect that the current political climate had on influencing the subjectivity of the principal has not been explored. Instead, this research was limited to exploring the subjective experiences of teachers within the single-school context regarding the principal's change initiative.

4.13 Summary of the Research Design

This research seeks to contribute to "the collective process of knowledge accumulation" relating to the implementation of a change initiative involving teachers (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 227). As the purpose of this research is to explore teachers' experiences of a change initiative implemented in a single-school context, perceptions of this phenomenon were elucidated from various educators at this school. Each educator approaches teaching and learning with a differing mindset, and this variation can be shaped by their career stage, their personal and

professional needs, their past experiences, and the expectations of the context in which they are presently situated.

At Emmanuel College, teachers' learning was positioned within a social context and enabled individuals to construct meaning through personalised interaction with a change facilitator over a period of time (Cornett & Knight, 2009). Thus, the design of this research was premised on a constructionist epistemology and the theoretical perspective of symbolic interactionism. Each educator was provided with the opportunity to share their individualised constructions of their world by participating in a semi-structured interview, and teachers also had a teacher survey to complete. The research design for this particular study is presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9

Research Design

Epistemology	Constructionism
Research Paradigm	Interpretivism
Theoretical perspective	Symbolic interactionism
Methodology	Case study
Data Collection Strategies	Document analysis
	Semi-structured interviews
	Survey

In the next chapter, the teachers' phenomenological experiences of the principal's change initiative are explored. The principal and change facilitator's perceptions are also included to highlight areas of convergence and divergence in perspective about the implementation of the change initiative at Emmanuel College.

CHAPTER FIVE
PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the data from this research that explores teachers' phenomenological experiences of the implementation of a principal's change initiative at a single-school context. The change initiative at Emmanuel College centred on targeting improvement in the quality of teachers' pedagogical practice for the teaching of guided reading. Based on the work of Huberman (1989), an assumption can be made that teachers from different career stages may differ in their phenomenological response to a change initiative. In order to explore the possibility of such variation, this research gathered the perspectives of teachers from four career stages. Thus, teacher participants were drawn from the first four of Huberman's (1989) career stages, and these are termed: *Discovery/Survival* [Years 1 to 3]*; Stabilisation* [Years 4 to 7]; *Experimentation/Change or Stocktaking/Interrogation* [Years 7 to 18]*; and lastly, the *Serenity/Conservatism or Affective Distance* [Years 19 -30] stage. Data were also collected from the principal and change facilitator at Emmanuel College. The data collection strategies used at each of the stages of this research are summarised in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1

Summary of the Data Collection Strategies

Stage	Data Collection Strategy	Participants Involved
Exploration	Document Analysis Teacher Survey	Teachers (n=28) Principal
Inspection	Semi-structured Interviews	Change Facilitator Teachers (n=16)

Data were analysed from the information gathered during semi-structured interviews with the principal, change facilitator, and 16 teachers from Emmanuel College, and this occurred using a Constant Comparative Analysis [CCA] method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This process of data analysis resulted in 17 categories being identified and these were clustered into five themes. These themes are titled: Predispositions, Engagement, Teacher Learning, Leadership, and Experiences. Subheadings are also used in this research to assist in the effective presentation of data, and these are the 17 categories that emerged during data analysis.

The *Predispositions* section of this chapter highlights the existence of contrasting teacher perspectives between the perceived benefits of the change initiative and their engagement with this particular change, and also a lack of common insight amongst the teachers interviewed as to why this is the case. Many teachers at this school acknowledged the benefits of the change while simultaneously believing that many of the teachers would not want to be involved in the proposed change. However, there was no commonly held position as to why this conflicting perspective existed. Thus, the remainder of this chapter seeks to explore this conflicting perspective by first discussing the issue of the teachers' attitude towards both their *Engagement* within the school and the nature of *Teacher Learning* so as to illustrate the influence of any pre-existing beliefs or practices amongst the teachers that could affect their attitude and involvement in this particular change initiative. Next, the important place of the *Leadership* of the desired change is examined both from that provided by the principal as well as that provided by the change facilitator. Here the respective influences upon the teachers of these two leaders, as associated with both their actions and their mannerisms, is described and discussed. The final section explores the reflections of the teachers from their *Experiences* of being involved in the desired change.

5.2 Predispositions

This section begins by highlighting the teachers' attitudinal discrepancy between their professional acceptances of the likely benefits of the change initiative with that of their confidence in their colleagues to commit to the required demands of the proposed change. As Table 5.2 illustrates, when asked the question, *Most teachers like the idea of a change initiative*, 13 teachers believed that most of their teacher colleagues at Emmanuel generally do not like such changes while 15 believed that most of their colleagues generally do like changes. In the opinion of these teachers, a small majority are at least open to consider proposed changes. Arguably, there does not seem to be a unified antagonistic staff culture when it comes to considering proposed changes. However, when specifically directed to acknowledge their personal belief about the commitment of their colleagues to the proposed change at the heart of this study through the question, *There is a great deal of resistance to the principal's proposal for a change initiative*, 24 of the 28 teachers felt that there was a great deal of resistance.

Table 5.2
Predisposition to Change

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 26B: Most teachers like the idea of a change initiative.	1	12	14	1
Item 19B: There is a great deal of resistance to the principal's proposal for a change initiative.	1	3	21	3

These data provide an early insight into the phenomenological influence upon the teachers since it illustrates that these teachers have both an objective and subjective predisposition shaping their view of their world. Having an objective mindset enables the teachers to process a phenomenon in a logical and rational manner utilising facts and evidence. These teachers have generated an opinion, quite possibly founded on past observations and discussion, about whether or not their colleagues like a change initiative. However, from a subjective perspective, teachers were guided by their emotions. As such, this perspective was being influenced by their feelings, sensitivities, concerns, sympathies and attachments associated with their experience of past changes. Moreover, this informed their more specific perceptions of a particular experience or phenomenon. This more subjective view was evidenced by the far more strongly held belief that the majority of their colleagues were reluctant to be involved in the proposed change. There were perceived aspects of this particular change, which were interpreted by the teachers as being unacceptable to their colleagues and perhaps their self. The teachers were applying a subjective lens to what was being proposed and, consequently, formed the opinion that it was unlikely to gain much support amongst the teaching staff.

The interview data provide further insight into the possible nature of this pre-dispositional phenomenological influence in relation to the proposed change. Teachers at Emmanuel College indicated that the timing of a change initiative contributed to their reactions as does their level of involvement in shaping the process. Kate (4C) argued that "depending on the time of year and what else was going on in the school, teachers will give a different response". She explained that responses vary and range from teachers "saying nothing but their faces saying a million stories" through to people declaring "not now" and "enough is enough". Bonnie's (1A) view was that "teachers would react fine to [a change initiative] if they were consulted…or included in some way". If it was imposed on teachers, Paula (3E) explained that this makes them feel "daunted" and "apprehensive to the fact that something has changed or is new". From Molly's (3A) perspective, teachers responded better to a change initiative:

> …if it was something manageable and teachers could see the benefit of it and see that it fitted into what they were already doing and felt it was worthwhile, then everyone would get on board. If it felt like another task and it felt like there was no purpose to it, everyone was questioning 'why are we doing this?' saying 'this is a time waster' and then people get grumpy.

There was a perception amongst those interviewed that not all teachers embrace change at the same time. Leila (3D) considered that "probably two thirds of teachers got on board" with the change initiative at Emmanuel College "within the first six months", but she maintained that there were some teachers who "baulked a little" and "needed to take time to settle down to the idea" but they "eventually came on board". Tina's (4D) perspective aligned with Leila's (3D) view as she explained that when it came to embracing change at Emmanuel College:

> …there were three groups of teacher types. You've got your group that are always on board and the personalities that love the concept of something new happening. It might be about a third or a bit less that would jump on board and say 'yep that is great'. You've got the majority then that might sit back and just see. They are not going to say 'yes' and they won't shoot it down, but they are not completely convinced about the change. Once they see things happening they will start to join that first group. Then you have that other group that have done things the same way they have always done things. They are the ones that are resistant and would want to see it proven before they are fully on board. While they might not openly go 'no we are not doing that' – they are the passive resisters. That group has shrunk in our school because there is no room for them here. They have to change whether they like it or not.

The change initiative at Emmanuel College was imposed onto teachers and they had to be implementers of the principal's expectations for the teaching of guided reading. When implementing the change initiative at this school, there was no recognition for teachers' personality type or their career stage. This resulted in most teachers from all career stages feeling an internal sense of frustration and resistance to the change initiative, and this was particularly evident during the interviews with those in their second career stage.

From Monica's (2A) perspective, teachers at Emmanuel College shouldn't be "forced to change" immediately, but rather should be given "time to get used to the change". Having "change pushed on teachers" can be "hard for a lot of people to deal with [as they] need to mentally decide that change is their idea and then they are ok with it" (2A: Monica). Graham (2B) added that "not all teachers bring the same amount of professional and life experience

to teaching" and because of this "it is easier for some people to change direction more quickly than others". Rose (1B) agreed as she explained that "new and innovative teachers" such as herself "don't mind change as much because they are still exploring their teaching". However, she indicated it may be confronting for "people who have been teaching for a long time and might be stuck in their own ways" (1B: Rose). Mary (3B) agreed that change was difficult for adults "especially as you get older". From Abby's (4B) experience in various schools, she realised that "there were people who like to live in their own box" and do things "a particular way". She added that there was no recognition of individuality at this school because "you certainly can't live in your own box here". All teachers were expected to change their teaching of guided reading so that it complied with the consistent school-wide approach to guided reading modelled by the change facilitator.

The principal's perception of teachers' reactions to change reflects the sentiments expressed by the teachers at Emmanuel College. He maintained that their phenomenological response varied, and this was based on their personality, and "what day it was and what time of year it was". His opinion was that "probably two thirds of teachers [at Emmanuel College] were on board straight away" and responded with comments such as "that sounds great, I can't wait that will be helpful". His experience was that there were teachers, however, whose personality led them to respond to the change initiative by stating "oh no not again, we have already done something like that but it's just got a new name". These data support the view that the principal was at the very least cognisant of the subjective, phenomenological influence upon the teachers' individual commitment to his proposed change initiative.

Irrespective of the principal's recognition that a teacher's "personality determines their default position" about change, he still expected teachers to respond to the change initiative immediately and without opposition. His perspective was that "some personality types aren't that keen on being told what to do", however, at this school "all teachers do [guided reading], but to varying degrees of satisfaction". Whilst the principal acknowledged that some teachers do not like the change initiative, he explained "they have no choice other than to embrace change because [his] way was how guided reading was to be taught at Emmanuel College".

Moreover, the change facilitator shared the same opinion about the likely attitudinal or phenomenological influence upon the teachers by explaining that those teachers who were reluctant participants probably responded this way from a feeling of fear. She indicated that:

> …new teachers are pretty open to change but if [they] have been teaching for a long time and someone all of a sudden says 'we are going to try it this way', it is pretty scary giving up everything [they] have ever done.

5.2.1 Summary: Predisposition to Change

Both the principal and the change facilitator acknowledged the influence that teachers' pre-dispositional phenomenological responses have on their willingness to embrace change, yet together they continued to stand steadfast in their expectation and implementation of a school-wide consistent approach to the teaching of guided reading. While teachers were divided in their objective opinion regarding the idea of change, there was far greater commonality in their phenomenological resistance to the principal's change initiative. Furthermore, there was not a common understanding for the existence of this phenomenological influence. In order to add support to their personal belief that some teachers would choose to resist the proposed change, reasons such as timing, lack of input, progressive engagement, time to adapt, personality, and length of professional experience were proffered by the participants. This finding warranted further exploration in order to elucidate the underpinning factors that guided teachers' subjective responses to participating in professional development at Emmanuel College. The first area to be explored is teachers' openness to being engaged in professional development.

5.3 Engagement

This section explores the issues around the willingness of the Emmanuel College teachers to be generally professionally engaged in their school. In so doing, this discussion seeks to explicate some of the views of the teachers about their school that could be prevailing subjective determinants about whether or not they should become involved in the change initiative. Specifically, this section will discuss teacher data aligned with the three topics of *Collegial Affiliation*, *Collegial Sharing*, and *Interactions with Students*. Together these three topics acknowledge the context-dependent nature of personal meaning-making by the teachers when faced with the opportunities and challenges they see inherent within a change initiative. *Collegial Affiliation* looks at data aligned with the teachers' perceptions of the professional acceptance, support, and encouragement they gain from their teacher colleagues. Arguably, the more teachers feel supported by their peers, the more likely they are to engage with a proposed change initiative. *Collegial Sharing* presents data with respect to the willingness of the teachers to share professional knowledge and experiences with

teacher colleagues. Most professional development programs are founded upon an expectation that the teachers are willing to share their professional experiences with their colleagues. Finally, *Interactions with Students* provides data about the teachers' attitudes and beliefs about the students as a means of interpreting the teachers' openness towards enhancing their capacity to improve student learning. It is proposed that teachers who feel closeness, a keen professional interest, with their students are perhaps more inclined to want to be involved in changes that may lead to improved professional practices.

5.3.1 Collegial Affiliation

Within a particular school context, teachers have opportunities to engage in social and professional interaction with their colleagues and the students. Teachers' learning can be enriched by these opportunities, as social interaction has a powerful effect on shaping the quality of an individual's knowledge and practice (Gherardi, 2009). People learn through interaction with others within their work context, and this occurs prior to knowledge becoming internalised at an individual level (Kozulin, Gindis, Ageyev & Miller, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978, 1981). Thus, teachers' collegial affiliation with their colleagues within a school context is likely to be an important subjective determinant of a teacher's outlook on change. Moreover, opportunities for teacher learning happen more richly and readily in a community where professionals work together to further develop their skills and knowledge. For members of a community to work together effectively, there needs to be a culture of acceptance and belonging (Maslow, 1971). When an individual's sense of self-worth is affirmed, they may be more willing contributors to opportunities for social interaction with colleagues. Thus, it is in the light of these understandings that the teachers' sense of collegial affiliation at Emmanuel College is presented in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3
Collegial Affiliation

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 1B: I seldom receive encouragement from colleagues.	11	14	3	0
Item 8B: I feel accepted by others.	0	0	14	14
Item 15B: I am ignored by other teachers.	16	11	1	0
Item 22B: I feel that I could rely on my colleagues for assistance if I should need it.	0	0	14	14
Item 29A: I feel that I have many friends among my colleagues at this school.	0	2	16	10
Item 36B: I often feel lonely and left out of things in the staffroom.	8	18	2	0

By and large the teachers perceive that there was an inclusive and supportive culture at Emmanuel College. On the one hand, only three teachers felt that they did not receive

encouragement from colleagues, two teachers felt that they did not have many friends on staff, and one was feeling that they were ignored. Quite possibly, these data might be inclusive of the same individuals. On the other hand, it was unanimous amongst the teachers that they felt accepted by their colleagues and could rely on them for assistance when needed. This augurs well for proposing that the culture amongst the staff was conducive towards producing successful changes. For most of the teachers, their beliefs, attitude, and disposition towards any proposed change was less likely to be affected by their sense of collegial affiliation than by other factors although this might be so for a very small minority.

Furthermore, this perspective was also noted by the principal. In email correspondence, the principal acknowledged the existence of a "supportive community" at this school (August 2006; June 2008; December 2010; December 2014). He indicated his admiration for the way that "people band together to offer each other support and encouragement" (February 2012; September 2013). When appointed as principal of Emmanuel College, he expressed his eagerness "to lead such a positive group of educators" and he felt "there was a good collegial dynamic amongst staff" at this school (November 2006; December 2006).

Whether or not this sense of collegial affiliation extended to include the sharing of professional knowledge, practice and experiences, or simply just social activities, is now interrogated.

5.3.2 Collegial Sharing of Knowledge and Practice

It is acknowledged that interacting with others within an environment significantly enhances people's learning processes (Vygotsky, 1978, 1981). Thus, learning is embedded in, and mediated by, the relationships people have with others within a community of learners (Kozulin et al. 2003). Furthermore, the concept of a professional learning community [PLC] has come to the fore within academic understandings of how best to enhance the professional practice of teachers (DuFour, 2004; Hord, 2009; Vescio, Ross & Adams, 2008). As defined, a PLC is "a professional community of learners in which the teachers and its administrators continuously seek and share learning, and act on their learning. The goal of their actions is to enhance their effectiveness as professionals for the students' benefit; thus, this arrangement may also be termed *communities of continuous inquiry and improvement*" (Hord, 1997, p.1, italics in original citation). It is now expected that quality professional development involves teachers being willing to share their classroom experiences. However, this may not be a comfortable expectation for some teachers and, if so, this expectation is a

potential source of negative subjectivity. The extent to which teachers at the research school engage in collegial sharing of knowledge and practice is presented in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4
Collegial Sharing of Knowledge and Practice

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 2B: Teachers frequently discuss teaching methods and strategies with each other.	1	3	11	13
Item 8A: Teachers in my school share ideas, knowledge and skills gained from participating in professional development within a school context.	1	3	20	4
Item 15A: Participating in professional development within a school context encourages teachers to share what they have learned with their colleagues.	0	3	14	11
Item 18A: Adequate support is available to teachers at my school to share information gained from participating in professional development within a school context.	1	3	21	3
Item 22A: I feel confident to share my knowledge with others.	0	3	22	3
Item 28A: I learn from observing other people when they are teaching.	0	2	19	7
Item 30B: Teachers are keen to learn from their colleagues.	0	3	16	9
Item 37B: Teachers show considerable interest in the professional activities of their colleagues.	1	3	22	2

All 28 teachers at Emmanuel College indicated positively, although to varying degrees, that the professional development at the research school involved some form of professional sharing with their colleagues. Thus, this expectation was not a surprise to them. However, in order to determine the possibility of some form of subjective reaction that this accepted expectation conveyed, additional data analysis was required.

For the majority of teachers at Emmanuel College, the data suggest that they were positively positioned with respect to having to share their professional knowledge, practice and experiences with their colleagues. This understanding was founded on the awareness that 24 of the teachers indicated that they were already sharing teaching ideas, methods and strategies including those gained from professional development with the change facilitator. Indeed, 25 of the teachers claimed that they were personally confident to share their professional knowledge with others and 26 stated that they learn from observing other teachers. These teachers felt confident to share their knowledge and practice with their colleagues and they showed a considerable interest in also learning from their professional wisdom and experience. In contrast though, the data raised the possibility that a small number of around four teachers do have concerns and reservations with having to personally meet this generally accepted professional sharing expectation.

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These sentiments were also reflected in the teachers' responses during semi-structured interviews. Having "really good teaching relationships" afforded teachers the "confidence to ask anyone" on staff questions regarding their pedagogical practice (1B: Rose). This was of particular benefit for graduate teachers as it enabled them to "feel supported as they entered their career" (1B: Rose). Teachers felt "everyone was very approachable and open to sharing their knowledge and practice" (2B: Graham) and "ideas and resources" (2C: Sally). They "were more than happy to talk" (2A: Monica) and "bounce ideas off each other about pedagogy and share what's happening in their classroom" (2B: Graham). Rose (1B) added:

> Teachers talk to each other about anything to do with guided reading.
> [They] often have daily chats about what [they] are doing and this helps
> to make sure everyone is on the same page.

Experienced teachers also acknowledged "the supportive environment for learning that existed amongst colleagues" (4D: Tina), and they reported that they felt "100% confident" (4E: Diane) and "wouldn't bat an eye lid" (3E: Paula) engaging in conversation about their practice with any of their colleagues at Emmanuel College. These teachers indicated they "could learn a lot from their peers" (4C: Kate) as "teachers were the best teachers of teachers" (4E: Diane).

There was a clear willingness amongst most of the teachers at Emmanuel College to share knowledge and practice and there was a spirit of collective camaraderie centred on collegial support, and this extended beyond a surface-level of interaction. The teachers have a genuine sense of care and concern for their colleagues and acknowledged that collegial conversation was important as it enabled everyone "to see what everyone else was doing" (3C: Jenny) and this "lets you make sure they are on the same page" (2B: Graham) and meeting the "strict demands of this school" (3A: Molly). Collegial conversation gave teachers a "pretty good idea about how the other teachers were coping with the principal's expectations, or what they needed help with, or what they were doing well" (3C: Jenny). Teachers had no "major worries or inhibitions talking about their pedagogical practice and how they were going with certain areas of guided reading" (4A: Bert). Teachers regarded their colleagues to be extremely supportive "if they had a problem or if something wasn't working" (3B: Mary). They perceived "they were not on their own" (3C: Jenny) as "pedagogical problems could be worked out as a team" (3F: Penny). Teachers at this school were very good at getting "on board and supporting one another to move forward" (3E: Paula) and "meet the

expectations of this particular context" (4A: Bert). These sentiments were reflected in Penny's (3F) comment:

> Teachers are always looking to better themselves. You can hear the professional discussions in the staffroom where teachers are asking their co-workers what they have done in literacy groups that has worked well. Or how to tap into a learner who may be having trouble decoding or comprehending.

In documents written by the principal, there was an acknowledgement that collegial sharing of knowledge and practice was a firmly embedded process at Emmanuel College (Emmanuel College, 2010, 2012). In the Staff Handbook, the Community Beliefs and Values about Learners, Learning and Learning Communities was presented (Emmanuel College, 2012). This document reflected the principal's beliefs and values about learning and he maintained that "learners benefit from effective collaboration and communication" and so he supported "members of this learning community engaging in processes where they could learn from each other, teach each other and provide feedback to each other on their practice" (p. 3). The reciprocal sharing of knowledge and practice with colleagues was referred to in the school's Teaching and Learning Newsletter (Emmanuel College, 2013) and it was also reiterated in one of the principal's feature articles published in an Australian educational journal. In his interview, the principal acknowledged the existence of collegial sharing of knowledge and practice at Emmanuel College. He explained:

> You can walk into the staffroom on any given day and find teachers having an informal conversation about their pedagogical practice. They openly share what is working well and also the things that are going wrong. Teachers freely give their advice and examples of how guided reading is going in their room. This type of learning is going on all the time at this school.

This perspective was reiterated by the change facilitator. Her opinion was that teachers "talked to each other all of the time" at this school, and "you were not here very long before you realised that you could have a conversation about guided reading with anyone at any time because everyone was on the same page as you" and "more than happy to share their ideas with you".

Together the collegial affiliation and the collegial sharing data provide the impression that a large majority of the Emmanuel College teachers were well positioned phenomenally to cope positively with the proposed change initiative. They had a very positive view of their colleagues and felt confident about sharing and learning from them. However, the proposed

change initiative was specifically chosen by the principal to target an acknowledged student learning weakness, and this essentially involved challenging the teachers' current professional knowledge and skills. Arguably, the willingness of the teachers to believe the principal's judgement in this regard could depend on their existing beliefs and feelings about the students, and how committed they were to learn new knowledge and skills for the benefit of the students. Thus, the next topic provides data pertaining to the teachers' propensity to interact with the students.

5.3.3 Interaction with Students

Within a school context, teachers interact with students and the way they do this can create either a culture of collaboration or dissonance, which explicitly affects the quality of the student learning (Fullan, 2014, 2016; Hattie, 2009, 2013; Leithwood, 2007, 2011; Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004; Robinson, 2007). Moreover, these authors highlight the essential place of the teacher's readiness to get to know the students and, thereby, be able to build a personal commitment towards enhancing the learning capacity of each student. Hence, reviewing the data in relation to teachers' perceptions and subjective impressions of the Emmanuel College students provides an important insight into their preparedness to engage in another comprehensive change initiative. To this end, Table 5.5 presents various data in relation to the teachers' level of interaction with students within the classroom context.

Table 5.5
Interaction with Students

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 7B: Most students are helpful and co-operative for teachers.	0	0	20	8
Item 14B: Most students are pleasant and friendly to teachers.	0	0	18	10
Item 21B: There are noisy, badly behaved students.	8	18	2	0
Item 28B: Students get along well with teachers.	0	0	18	10
Item 35B: Students are well-mannered and respectful to the school staff.	0	2	18	8
Item 38B: I have to use very strict control in the classroom with my students.	9	17	2	0
Item 42B: Very strict discipline is needed to control the students.	6	20	1	1

The 28 teachers who were surveyed reported that the students at Emmanuel College were helpful and friendly. Thus, teachers perceived the students were able to get along well with them in class. Teachers' strong sense of positivity regarding their perceptions of the students at this school positioned them well to be receptive and willing implementers of a change

initiative. It is argued that when teachers are positive about their students' level of co-operation and proclivity for engaging in learning, they will be more likely to embrace a change initiative that is premised on class-based professional development.

Teachers' subjective response to change can, however, be influenced by the particular students that they have in their class. At Emmanuel College, there were two teachers who perceived they had some noisy, badly-behaved students in their class. They reported having to use strict discipline measures to control the behaviour of certain students in their class. The Detention Room Register (Emmanuel College, 2008) supported the assertion of these two teachers. There were a small number of students at this school (less than 2% of the student population) who demonstrated inappropriate disruptive class behaviour and required 'time-out' from the classroom. The dynamics of a classroom context can be considerably affected by the implementation of a change initiative and the periodic presence of the change facilitator. This change can affect students with challenging behavioural needs, and in turn, compound teachers' sense of anxiety and apprehension towards opportunities for class-based professional development. Thus, while teachers reported a sense of openness to enhance their professional capacity to improve student learning, their subjective experience had the potential to influence their inclination to fully commit to the change initiative.

5.3.4 Summary: Engagement

Teachers at Emmanuel College felt a strong sense of acceptance, support, and encouragement from their interactions with their colleagues. This sense of collegial affiliation extended beyond a social level of interaction and demonstrated teachers' willingness to share their professional knowledge, practice, and experiences. Furthermore, teachers' interactions with students were also typically positive, with the exception of a small number of teachers who had students with challenging behavioural needs. Thus, teachers at Emmanuel College were keen to be an active contributing member of a community of professional learners. This posits that teachers at this school were open to opportunities for professional engagement within a school context, and thus, well positioned phenomenally to embrace the principal's proposed change initiative. This contrasts to the teachers' reported pre-dispositional phenomenological response to the proposed change. In an effort to elucidate factors that contributed to teachers' sense of resistance to the principal's change initiative, their understandings about professional development provided in a school context are now explored under the heading of Teacher Learning.

5.4 Teacher Learning

Teachers at Emmanuel College participated in school-based professional development, and this contrasted with the traditional 'dissemination' style of learning that has been the preferred approach to teacher professional development for more than half a century (Day & Gu, 2010; Hargreaves, 2000). The discussion in this section of the chapter seeks to elucidate the views of teachers with regards to their participation in school-based professional development. Teacher data are presented that aligns with the three topics of *Renewal of Professional Knowledge, Personalised Support for Learning,* and *Contextualised Focus on Learning.*

Professional Knowledge explores the perceptions that teachers have regarding whether school-based professional development provides them with opportunities to renew their knowledge about the teaching of guided reading. Arguably, the more teachers perceive they are provided with opportunities to enhance their own professional knowledge, the more committed they are to engage with a proposed change initiative. *Personalised Support for Learning* presents data that highlights teachers' perspective regarding their level of involvement with the change facilitator. When teachers feel a sense that professional development is of personal relevance, their willingness to commit to further opportunities for learning can be enhanced. Traditionally professional development has occurred external to a school context. However, a school-based approach occurs within a particular context and is intended to specifically address school-level goals and priorities. *Contextualised Focus on Learning* provides data about teachers' perceptions of having to engage in professional development that targets a school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading. The extent to which teachers commit to a particular change initiative can be influenced by their perceived views of its applicability to their school and class context.

5.4.1 Renewal of Professional Knowledge

The purpose of engaging in professional development is to extend teachers' professional knowledge in order to realise improvement in the quality of their pedagogical practice. When teachers have a positive response to professional development their willingness to engage in further opportunities for learning can be enhanced. Yet when teachers perceive professional development is of limited value to shaping their professional knowledge, they can present as being disinterested and/or resistant learners (Hargreaves, 1998). At Emmanuel College, teachers have previously engaged in school-based professional development, and this has

been intended to improve their professional knowledge about the teaching of guided reading. The extent to which the teachers perceived this approach to professional development improved the quality of their professional knowledge is presented in Table 5.6.

Table 5.6
Renewal of Professional Knowledge

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 1A: Participating in professional development within a school context updates my professional knowledge.	1	3	19	5
Item 4A: Participating in professional development within a school context increases my knowledge of what can be done in the classroom.	1	3	18	6
Item 13A: Knowledge gained from participating in professional development within a school context will improve my teaching.	1	3	20	4
Item 16A: I learn new and different ideas from participating in professional development within a school context.	1	3	19	5

There were 24 teachers at Emmanuel College who indicated that being provided with professional development within a school context gave them opportunities to renew their professional knowledge. They maintained that this approach to professional development enabled them to learn new ideas and it enhanced their awareness of the type of practices that can be implemented within their classroom. These teachers considered that the knowledge they gained from participation in this type of professional development had the potential to improve their teaching. Thus, the majority of teachers at Emmanuel College had a positive subjective mindset regarding opportunities to renew their professional knowledge.

For four teachers though, professional development provided in a school context was not viewed as being a particularly beneficial means of renewing their professional knowledge. This was reflected in a comment from Bert (4A). He stated that "teachers are expected to copy the change facilitator, and copying doesn't constitute real learning". Sally (2C) also elaborated on this point. She stated that "anyone can 'parrot' someone else, but it takes proper knowledge to know how to craft your practice to meet students' actual learning needs". These four teachers considered such change initiatives were unlikely to provide them with the opportunity to learn new and different ideas. Their subjective perspective was that participation in professional development provided in a school context did not give them genuine opportunities to renew their professional knowledge about guided reading. Such a mindset would most likely manifest an immediate pessimistic outlook towards the professional development program proposed by the principal. This was in fact apparent and reflected in a comment made by Monica (2A). She explained that she "doesn't look forward

to working with the change facilitator", as she feels that she gets "no sense of professional benefit out of the experience". When teachers such as Monica (2A) believed that the program had little or no professional benefit for them, then they felt some sense of frustration and powerlessness in having to commit to something that they were disinclined to do.

Despite teachers' subjective feelings, the survey data suggests that the majority of the teachers were positively committed to seeking ways to enhance their professional knowledge through school-based opportunities. This understanding was supported by the interview data where there was consensus amongst teachers from all career stages regarding the importance of engaging in ongoing opportunities for learning. Teachers entering the profession "responded positively" (1A: Bonnie) to the idea of learning in a school context as they acknowledged they were "still exploring their teaching" (1B: Rose) and seeking to learn new knowledge (1A: Bonnie). By their second career stage, teachers had an appreciation for the fluidity and the dynamic nature of schools. Graham (2B) explained his understanding of the changing nature of education, and the need for ongoing learning to enhance his knowledge of how best to meet the principal's expectations. He stated:

> I realise now that teaching is a profession where we are constantly expected to develop and improve our knowledge. I realise that I will never have all the answers because a school is a changing place, so I have to keep learning and changing.

The notion that "it was an ever-changing world" (4B: Abby) and that "things changed and progressed" in education and caused "constant change" to teachers' practice (3E: Paula), was a frequently shared perspective of those teachers at Emmanuel College with more than ten years of experience. These teachers appreciated that they needed to continually acquire new knowledge in order to meet the expectations placed on them by the principal. These teachers realised that they "can't just say they know it all" (4C: Kate), but instead have to "be open to new ideas" (4B: Abby). This required them to be "forever learning" (4B: Abby) and constantly "redefining things and further developing their knowledge about pedagogy" (3E: Paula).

Given this widespread positivity amongst the teachers towards the benefits of accessing professional development in a school context, it would seem unlikely that they would have been surprised or disconcerted by the principal's proclamations to the same effect. The teacher interview data supports this assumption. In their interviews, teachers at Emmanuel College acknowledged that the principal "expected teachers to better themselves" (3F: Penny) and "be professionally competent and confident in what they do" (3E: Paula).

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Teachers explained that the principal "promoted lifelong learning" (3F: Penny) as he considered that "everyone had pedagogical areas to develop" (3D: Leila). There was an expectation at the research school that all teachers "needed to be learning and continually improving" (3E: Paula) and "growing professionally" (3D: Leila). Teachers' perceptions aligned with those of the change facilitator who commented:

> Unlike at some other schools, the principal here wants everyone to get better at knowing how to teach guided reading well - that's why everyone has to work with me.

The change facilitator added that "there was a clear culture of learning at this school" as everyone "got on board" and "embraced what [she was] showing them".

The principal outlined, in the Emmanuel College Staff Handbook, his firm opinion regarding the critical importance of lifelong learning as he regarded it was a key factor in fostering an effective and high-quality learning community (Emmanuel College, 2009). In the Teaching and Learning Newsletter (Emmanuel College, 2013), the principal again highlighted this point. He explained the importance of "all teachers continuing to improve their individual capacity" and he indicated this had been a key element of the change initiative implemented at this school. In staff meeting conversations, the principal often referred to the idea that "schools cannot continue to improve by simply doing more of what brought them past success" (Mourshed, Chijioke & Barber, 2010, p. 3). He used this idea to emphasise the importance of teachers committing to ongoing learning throughout their career stages.

5.4.2 Personalised Support for Learning

With a traditional 'dissemination' style of professional development, professional knowledge was typically imparted *to* teachers. However, they were left to independently translate this knowledge into practice (Kennedy, 2014). Criticism of this style of learning centres on the premise that teachers do not receive support to translate the newly acquired theory into their everyday professional practice. In contrast to this style of learning, professional development facilitated in a school context provides teachers with personalised support from a change facilitator, and this support is provided for an extended period of time. It can be argued that providing a high level of personalised and scaffolded support to teachers can positively influence their practical and subjective response towards engaging in professional development. If teachers feel that they are supported during a change initiative, they may be more willing to embrace the proposed changes to their pedagogical practice. Thus, the teachers' perceptions of the value they place on personalised learning are

presented in Table 5.7 as a means of surfacing their pre-existing beliefs about the benefits or constraints of participating in the more supported, intensive, and personalised form of professional development that is provided by an approach facilitated in a school context.

Table 5.7
Personalised Support for Learning

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 3A: Participating in professional development within a school context encourages me to reflect on aspects of my teaching.	1	2	19	6
Item 9A: I think the approach to professional development at this school helps me feel supported when implementing new pedagogical practices.	1	2	5	20

Of the 28 teachers at Emmanuel College, 25 of these teachers felt favourably about the prospect of being involved in professional development located in their school context. The data illustrate that these teachers felt supported by such a process even though it encouraged them to reflect on their teaching practices in a far more comprehensive, intensive, personal, and transparent way. It seems that the thought of someone coming into their room to observe, critique, and encourage personalised learning and development in their manner of teaching was acceptable to all but three of the teachers. Past experiences of professional development had left a positive impression in the minds of most of the teachers at Emmanuel College.

This understanding is supported by the interview data pertaining specifically to the teachers' views of the particular professional development process explored in this research in which the teachers received personalised support from the change facilitator when attempting to implement the expected practice for guided reading. These teachers reported that the change facilitator encouraged them to self-reflect on their implementation of guided reading, and they expressed confidence to seek clarification from her regarding aspects of their practice. Indeed, teachers from all career stages reported that they were provided with scheduled opportunities to work with the facilitator on a personalised level. Typically, this occurred in "the context of a teacher's classroom" (4A: Bert). However, it could involve teachers being released from class to work "one-on-one with [the facilitator] to learn extra information that they may specifically need" to enhance their practice (3D: Leila). Tina (4D) indicated this was particularly useful for new experienced teachers to the school because when they commenced at Emmanuel College they "were behind where everyone else was with regards to the expected practice" for guided reading. Graham (2B) agreed and he explained:

> Last year I was involved in a sit-down time with the facilitator in the
> staffroom. The facilitator went through the processes I am expected to

follow here at this school. She gave us a few resources that we are expected to use or have displayed in our room. She told us the type of language we have to use in guided reading. Then we went to the classroom for a demonstration lesson. From then on, the majority of time I now see her is in the classroom.

Penny (3F) explained "personalised learning gave teachers a chance to ask their questions about what it was they were unsure of" and then "the facilitator can help teachers know how to do guided reading correctly with their students".

From the change facilitator's perspective, this approach to professional development should be advantageous for teachers as it enabled them to receive support and clarification on an individual level. This contrasted what typically happened at a "workshop or lecture-style approach to professional development". In this type of setting, the change facilitator explained that "there could be 30, 50 or 100 people there and somebody might be able to sneak one question or two in but that was it". With an approach to professional development located in a school context, teachers can "catch" the change facilitator at any point during the day for a conversation. The facilitator considered this personalised approach to learning removed teachers' fear of "looking silly" or conveying a "lack of competence" in front of their colleagues. She perceived that all teachers had a desire to "maintain their professional image and credibility". The change facilitator reflected on her experience at Emmanuel College and she explained that teachers often informally:

> …grab me and say, "I know this is a silly question, but I was just wondering…." I get a lot of that. Teachers don't like asking questions in small or big groups. They won't say what they know or don't know unless it is just the two of us and then they open up. At this school, I often have teachers coming up to me and saying, "I'm not comfortable with my pedagogy in this particular area" and they ask me questions about their practice.

While all teachers participated in periodic sessions of professional development with the change facilitator, some teachers experienced additional opportunities to work with her. From the principal's perspective, this personalised approach to professional development enabled him to direct additional support to individual teachers to assist them in effectively implementing the expected practice for guided reading. This may be "by request if teachers say I'm not comfortable in this particular area can the facilitator come and have a look and tell me more about that?", or alternatively the principal may be "concerned that a person hasn't quite got it and they need more time with the facilitator". The principal indicated:

> …sometimes if a teacher is quite competent and there are greater needs with other teachers' standard of practice [he] can redirect the facilitator to work a bit more with that teacher instead. That doesn't mean that the good teacher isn't involved in professional development, it just means that they require less support than some others to implement guided reading how [he] expects it done.

The change facilitator explained she can also indicate to the principal if she noticed "a teacher not doing anything that looked like what they were meant to be doing" for guided reading. In this instance, she "would go and say to the principal 'I need more time with this person'…to try and get a shift in behaviour". She agreed that "not every teacher gets the same amount of time" with her each year, as it is "flexible based on the needs of teachers" or "the demands of the principal".

While this section has provided an insight into the Emmanuel College teachers' general views and feelings about professional development located in a school context, it is possible that these may vary depending on the specific personal implications inherent within a particular experience. That is to say, a teacher's view and feelings about a given professional development experience may vary depending on the focus of the experience and the perceived amount of professional change it might require of the teacher. This possibility is explored in the next section, which gains importance given that the professional development process that underpinned the principal's proposed change initiative occurred within the school context of Emmanuel College.

5.4.3 Contextualised Focus on Learning

As has been previously described, professional development was typically provided to teachers in a "one-size-fits-all" 'dissemination' approach to learning (Mayer & Lloyd, 2011). However, this approach requires teachers to independently establish the degree to which their new knowledge is applicable to their school and class context. In contrast, an approach to professional development that is located in a school context strives to provide teachers with learning that is related to, and arises from, the specific demands of the school and classroom context in which they teach. This approach enables teachers to see the relevance of particular professional learning for their context, and this can lead to teachers not only valuing their engagement in professional development, but also being able to persevere with learning how to adopt any required new teaching practices. As a means of exploring this matter within the context of this research, the teachers' perceptions of having a contextualised focus on learning at Emmanuel College is presented in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8
Contextualised Focus on Learning

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 5A: Information presented in professional development sessions at this school is directly relevant to teaching and learning in my school.	1	1	20	6
Item 11A: Information presented in professional development sessions at this school is directly applicable to teachers' work in this school	1	1	22	4
Item 16B: Many teachers attend external in-service and other professional development courses/sessions.	8	17	1	2
Item 17A: I think the ideas presented in professional development sessions at this school are too difficult to put into practice.	3	22	2	1
Item 23A: I learn more from attending external professional development compared to professional development within a school context.	17	8	3	0
Item 23B: Teachers show little interest in what is happening in other schools.	1	0	21	6
Item 26A: External professional development helps me know how to apply pedagogical practices with students in my class.	4	21	3	0

Twenty-five of the teachers at Emmanuel College indicated that they did not typically attend in-service opportunities that were external to their school context. These teachers' objective perception was that the tenets of an approach to professional development that was located in a school context are more advantageous to supporting teachers' learning when compared to the alternative option of an externally located professional development session delivered in a 'dissemination' style. Moreover, of specific relevance to this research, twenty-five teachers argued that their previous experience of externally located professional development in guided reading had provided them with very general information. However, mostly the ideas and practices that this had provided did not specifically align with the teaching of their particular students. In contrast, they believed that the professional development process explored in this research had the potential to provide them with the learning of pedagogical practices that were relevant for implementing guided reading at Emmanuel College. This awareness initially provided the teachers with a sense of comfort and reassurance that the change process that they were being asked by the principal to engage with was relevant and important for their teaching in the context of their classroom. Thus, the majority of the teachers perceived that the information provided to them during the initial phases of the professional development sessions at Emmanuel College was directly applicable to their teaching practice within this particular school context.

Once again, there were three teachers at Emmanuel College who indicated a negative subjective perspective regarding the contextualised nature of the professional development

process at the research school in general and specific to the proposed guided reading change initiative. For these teachers, they reported a preference to access externally located professional development in their own time rather than solely depending on the knowledge they had acquired from the change facilitator during the professional development provided to them at Emmanuel College. These teachers believed that this style of learning extended their repertoire of practice beyond what the change facilitator modelled for them at school. For these teachers, they maintained that their access to externally located professional development helped them to acquire knowledge that was relevant for use with particular students in their class. While these teachers presented with what seemed to be a negative perspective towards the contextualised nature of professional development facilitated in a school context, their motives were premised on a desire to meet the learning needs of *all* students in their class. Thus, these teachers were not intentionally being active resisters of professional development, but rather maintained they were being quality teachers as they continually strove to acquire knowledge that enabled them to address the learning needs of the students within their class context.

More specifically, data gathered from semi-structured interviews indicated that during the period of time the change facilitator conducted modelling of the expected practice for guided reading within the context of each teacher's classroom, the teachers from various career stages reported a strong positive perception of the benefit this had on their learning. Having the change facilitator model effective professional practice in the context of their classroom was regarded as a positive form of professional development as it enabled them "to see the expected pedagogical practice in action" (3B: Mary). Jenny (3C) elaborated:

> It is a great chance to learn new skills by seeing someone in action who we are told is very experienced, knows what they are doing, has a good grasp on the structure to follow, and the questions to ask the students.

Teachers admitted that they "loved to watch someone else teaching as they learnt a lot" and found it "so stimulating" being exposed to "another approach" as it encouraged them "to reflect on what they were currently doing" (4C: Kate). Watching "somebody with supposed expertise imparting knowledge to others" (4A: Bert) helped the teachers "feel competent and confident as a professional" (1B: Rose). The contextualised nature of the professional development approach at Emmanuel College was particularly useful for graduate teachers as it enabled them "to see what they were meant to be doing" rather than "being left to work it out for themselves and hope for the best" (1A: Bonnie). Rose (1B) explained that

externally located professional development often provided "very broad information that didn't always relate" to what she was expected to do at Emmanuel College.

Similarly, the principal considered that contextualised learning was of benefit to the teachers as the knowledge they gained was relevant to the school's goals and priorities. The principal's opinion was that "sending people away in large groups to join other large groups to listen to a lecturer or participate in a workshop lacked results" despite a "large financial commitment". His business mindset led him to experience frustration with the fact that, prior to his employment as principal of Emmanuel College, "millions of dollars over the years were being wasted with no measurable improvement to student achievement outcomes". In his journal feature article, the principal stated:

> At Emmanuel College, examination of 126 days of in-service for staff in one year, at a cost of over $50 000, revealed either 'no' or 'an insignificant' impact occurred on teacher practice and there was no obvious impact on student achievement outcomes.

He also explained that his perception was that, "teachers used to be picking things that were of interest to them rather than what aligned with school priorities" and this focus on self-interest led to "money being wasted rather than being used to benefit the school". In his feature article, the principal argued that for professional development to be effective it needed to be "deeply embedded in teachers' classroom work and specific to their grade level and particular area of focus" (p. 30). The change facilitator agreed with the principal that "professional development located in a school context was a very expensive model of professional development" and so "you want people to get value for money". She maintained that showing teachers what to do in the context of their classroom "bridged the gap between theory and practice" and made sure what teachers learnt was embedded in their classroom practice.

What this discussion of the views held by the teachers, the principal, and the change facilitator in regard to the high importance of contextualised focus in any professional development process shows is that they were largely uniform and positive. Most teachers were not adversely affected by the prospect or experience of being involved in a professional development process in which their personal practice was exposed in order to be improved. Indeed, all but three teachers welcomed the idea of an external change facilitator actually coming into their classroom to first model effective teaching and then to observe, critique, and guide pedagogical practice. This aspect of the principal's desired change initiative seemed to present little or no phenomenological concern to most of the teachers.

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5.4.4 Summary: Teacher Learning

Professional development located in a school context is a new addition to the landscape of teacher engagement in Australia (van Leent & Exley, 2013). It has been premised in literature and various educational documents as being an approach to renewing teachers' professional knowledge that is both personalised and contextualised to the learning needs of each teacher. At Emmanuel College, there was consensus from the principal, the change facilitator, and teachers regarding the importance of engaging in lifelong learning to ensure continued renewal of professional knowledge. Having the opportunity to participate in personalised and contextualised learning was regarded by the majority of teachers as being an advantageous and supportive aspect of professional development located in a school context. This suggests that the implementation of the particular school-based professional development process being explored in this research was not, of itself, a source of negative, but rather positive, phenomenological reactions. There were, however, a minority of teachers for whom this approach to learning did engender some reticent if not negative feelings. For these few teachers, having professional development located in a school context was regarded as non-beneficial. For these teachers, their previous engagement in opportunities for professional development influenced their beliefs and opinions so that they did not feel that such a process was capable of renewing their professional knowledge. They regarded the personalised and contextualised nature of this approach as a limitation rather than a benefit to extending the quality of their practice.

To date, the data that have been presented illustrate that the research school was a context whereby teachers actively sought to foster a community of lifelong learners, they valued professional renewal, and most supported the personalised and contextualised aspects of professional development located in a school context. On the basis of this foundation, it could be assumed that Emmanuel College provided a fertile ground for a change initiative to flourish. However, teachers' phenomenological resistance to the principal's proposed change initiative and also NAPLAN data for reading throughout the years contradicted this assumption. This perplexing situation warrants further exploration in order to elucidate influences that underpin this contradiction. The next section of this chapter will explore the influence that the leadership of the principal and change facilitator had on shaping teachers' subjective view of their particular change experience.

5.5 Leadership

In this section of the chapter, the essential role that leadership plays in creating effective change is explored. The leader within a school, the principal, has the primary role in shaping how change occurs within a particular context. Typically, it is the principal who develops and articulates a vision for change, and he/she determines, to a considerable extent, the parameters that underpin the implementation of a change initiative within a school context (Engels, Hotton, Devos, Bouckenooghe & Aelterman, 2008; Fullan, 2001, 2016; Sergiovanni, 2000). Having a skilful school leader who is cognisant of the need to consider the influence that various social, personal, political, and contextual factors have on change initiatives, can make all the difference between whether or not a change initiative is sustained within a school (Fullan, 2001, 2016). Furthermore, the principal has a pivotal role to play in shaping teachers' sense of ownership and purpose with regards to a change initiative. It can be argued that when teachers feel that their principal encourages them to be an active contributing member of their school community, they are more likely to feel valued, and this in turn can lead them to more enthusiastically embrace a change initiative (Fullan, 2001, 2016).

For this research, there are two key leaders that influenced the implementation and sustainability of the change initiative at Emmanuel College. In this section, the leadership of the principal and change facilitator are explored, and this seeks to elucidate the influence they had on shaping the change initiative that was implemented at the research school. The leadership of the principal and change facilitator had a considerable impact on the way teaching and learning occurred at Emmanuel College during this time. To highlight the teachers' subjective responses to their style of leadership, the views and perspectives of the teachers are presented below.

5.5.1 Leadership by the Principal

A principal is afforded the responsibility of leading a school towards a preferred future vision (Engels et al. 2008; Fullan, 2001, 2016; Sergiovanni, 2000). The way that principals enact this process is influenced by an amalgam of a number of factors, including their personality style, their level of motivation, and their drive to achieve success (Johnson, 2014; Pearce, Sims, Cox, Ball, Schnell, Smith & Trevino, 2002). In this section of the chapter, the principal's style of leadership is explored as this illustrates the influence he had on the introduction and sustainability of the approach to professional development at Emmanuel

College. In this section, data are presented in five areas, and these are titled: *Compliance with Expectations, Teacher Voice, Innovation with Pedagogical Practice, Pressure to Meet Expectations,* and *Focus on Student Achievement Outcomes.*

In the area of *Compliance with Expectations*, perceptions are presented regarding the degree to which the teachers were expected to conform to the principal's vision for teaching and learning. Then the extent to which teachers at Emmanuel College perceived that the principal afforded them opportunities to shape their involvement in professional development is explored in the *Teacher Voice* part of this chapter. If teachers feel they are included in shaping the direction of a change initiative, the likelihood of them investing time and effort can be enhanced. The principal's change initiative targeted the way teachers implemented guided reading in their classrooms, and the impact that this change initiative had on the teachers' ability to innovate is discussed in the area titled *Innovation with Pedagogical Practice*. When teachers feel restricted in the way they are expected to teach, they can express negative subjective feelings towards a proposed change initiative, and this too can result from a perceived sense of pressure. The introduction of a change initiative involves an element of pressure, and the level of pressure experienced by the teachers at Emmanuel College is highlighted in the section titled *Pressure to Meet Expectations*. The final area discussed in this section of the chapter is titled *Focus on Student Achievement Outcomes*. Data relating to student achievement for reading influenced the principal's perception of the impact that his change initiative was having on student achievement outcomes, and this in turn, had an influence on the phenomenological response to his proposed change initiative.

5.5.1.1 Compliance with Expectations

All organisations are underpinned by hierarchical expectations that provide a framework in which employees are expected to work (Senge, 1990). Education is no different to other organisations in business and industry, as teachers operate within a context underpinned by various expectations that govern their professional conduct. At Emmanuel College, the principal articulated his expectations to teachers regarding their involvement in professional development. The extent to which the teachers perceived they were required to comply with the principal's expectations is presented in Table 5.9.

Table 5.9
Compliance with Expectations

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 3B: I am often supervised to ensure that I follow directions correctly.	1	1	22	4
Item 10B: It is considered very important that I closely follow curriculum documents.	1	1	10	16
Item 17B: There are many rules and regulations that I am expected to follow.	0	2	13	13
Item 24B: I am allowed to do almost as I please in the classroom.	5	21	2	0

At Emmanuel College, 26 teachers considered there to be a strong culture of compliance with regards to the principal's expectations for teaching and learning. Teachers acknowledged that there was little scope for them 'to do as they pleased' as the principal had a firm vision for how teaching and learning was to occur at Emmanuel College. Adherence to the principal's 'rules and regulations' was expected, and the majority of the teachers reported feeling that they were being supervised to ensure that they followed the principal's expectations. There were, however, two teachers at Emmanuel College who considered they were permitted to 'do as they pleased' and they reported feeling that their practice was not being supervised. However, the majority of the teachers at Emmanuel College perceived an ongoing sense of compliance and supervision, and this can have a considerable influence on shaping the teachers' phenomenological response to a particular change initiative.

When the principal introduced a change to how teachers experienced professional development, a similar directive style of leadership was apparent. From the outset, his interactions with the teachers at staff meetings sought to convey his firm expectation that they were to comply with his self-determined rules and regulations about the teaching of guided reading and adhere to the facilitator's modelling of this practice. He explained his perspective:

> I expect them to respond to the expert….to her expertise. She is the authoritative source. I would expect that if she says, 'this is what is required' or 'you should do this'…. I would expect them to do that. Otherwise, there is no learning and this is the point of having the expert. I would expect to see teachers doing what the facilitator says.

In his journal feature article, the principal expressed his view that when introducing a change initiative, a leader must adopt a direct approach and utilise assertiveness in order "to get something moving".

Furthermore, the principal employed a similarly directed style in his practical involvement with the introduction of the program by solely working in collaboration with the change facilitator to write the Emmanuel College Reading Policy (Emmanuel College, 2005a). The intention of this document was to define for teachers the principal's expectations for the teaching of guided reading. This document indicated:

> …that it is an expectation that guided reading occurs at Emmanuel College four days a week, with students of levelled reading ability, using the consistent pedagogy and meta-language modelled by the facilitator. Teachers will have their practice periodically observed by the facilitator and will be given feedback so they know what areas of their practice need further improvement to meet the expectations for the teaching of guided reading (p. 2).

During this policy development period, the change facilitator viewed the principal as a "highly intelligent person who really knew exactly what he wanted and how he was going to get it".

The principal was steadfast in his commitment to enact a school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading and he was very firm about the teachers complying with his "clearly articulated expectations". He made it clear to the teachers that at Emmanuel College there was no scope for them to have a "take it or leave it attitude" or express an intention "to do things their own way". In an email communication to teachers (September 2013) he stated:

> The days of teachers choosing to do what they have always done and operating as isolated independent operators in their classroom are over at this school.

As the principal had a confident personality, he was happy to "take a hard stand" and "pull some teachers into line" should they present with oppositional behaviour towards participation in professional development. At staff meetings, the principal made public expressions of his intolerance regarding teachers who may seek to "high-jack" his change initiative by expressing their own personal opinions about it. He explained:

> As a professional community, you don't want to waste each other's time with trivial matters or personal agendas. So I don't encourage, in fact I would actively discourage those sorts of conversations. When we are together as a staff our job is about our professional development and organisational things that are going to help us do a better job at improving our teaching and the achievement outcomes of students.

All teachers at Emmanuel College perceived that they were to comply with the principal's expectations for the teaching of guided reading. Teachers considered that the principal had no qualms in "telling them this was what they needed to do" (3D: Leila) because "he had a very firm idea about what he wanted to see happening" (4B: Abby) in teachers' classrooms. He was "very upfront, obvious and forward about his expectations" for teachers' pedagogy (2B: Graham).

Initially, teachers responded positively "to being told how to do guided reading" (3D: Leila) as it was "sold to them by the principal as being practical" (4D: Tina), "as a way that worked and was easy to manage" (3A: Molly), and something they could "implement immediately" (4D: Tina) in their own classrooms to "get results in student achievement" (4B: Abby). However, within a short period of time, teachers came to realise that what they were given "was a very good and convincing sales-pitch" (2C: Sally). They felt that the approach to professional development being implemented at Emmanuel College was being used by the principal as a means for promulgating a culture of compliance and enforcing practice *onto* teachers.

Data from Part C of the Teacher Survey elucidates details regarding teachers' pedagogical practice (see Appendix N). Importantly, the survey data identify that all teachers at Emmanuel College utilised a consistent approach to the teaching of guided reading, thus aligning with the principal's expectations. All teachers reported implementing guided reading as a small group instructional practice for more than two hours per week. Students were grouped according to their level of reading ability. This was measured using a specific diagnostic assessment tool chosen by the principal of Emmanuel College. Most teachers reported that they made adjustments to guided reading group compositions typically once per term, and this was in accordance with the expectations stated in the Emmanuel College Reading Policy (2006a) and Staff Handbook (2009). The majority of the teachers at Emmanuel College indicated that they complied with the expectation to differentiate their teaching focus for each guided reading group, and this involved having different texts for each group. These texts were typically levelled and were a narrative text type. When teachers at Emmanuel College were implementing small group guided reading lessons they reported that the remainder of their class were usually working independently with the supervision of a teacher aide or independently completing literacy-related small group tasks. Again, this reflected the principal's expectations documented in the Emmanuel College Reading Policy (2006a) and Staff Handbook (2009). The data reported from Part C of the Teacher Survey

suggest that the teachers at Emmanuel College taught guided reading in accordance with the expectations that the principal placed on them.

5.5.1.2 Teacher Voice

A principal's style of leadership has a considerable influence on the culture of a school context (Johnson, 2014; Pearce et al. 2002; Sergiovanni, 2000). In some schools, principals foster an open collaborative culture whereby decision-making is viewed as a consultative process. Conversely, in other schools, principals may choose to employ an authoritative directive style of leadership and this leads to decisions being made in the absence of the teachers' input or voice. The extent to which the teachers feel involved in shaping their teaching and learning can influence their level of motivation and willingness to engage in a change initiative. Hence, this understanding is initially explored by means of the survey data in relation to the teachers' perceptions of their level of involvement in decision-making at Emmanuel College and is presented in Table 5.10.

Table 5.10
Teacher Voice

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 4B: Decisions about the running of the school are made by the principal without consulting teachers.	0	3	20	5
Item 5B: It is very difficult to change anything in this school.	0	3	20	5
Item 9B: Professional matters about guided reading can be raised by teachers during staff meetings.	10	16	1	1
Item 11B: I have to refer even small matters to the principal for a final answer.	0	3	20	5
Item 18B: My ideas can be put into action without gaining the approval of the principal.	5	20	3	0
Item 25B: Teachers are frequently asked to participate in decisions concerning administrative policies and procedures.	5	20	3	0
Item 32B: I am encouraged to make decisions without running them past the principal.	5	20	3	0
Item 39B: I have very little say in the running of the school.	0	3	11	14

Data highlight that there were three teachers at Emmanuel College who perceived they could voice an opinion and participate in decision-making processes at the school and class level. There were, however, 25 teachers at Emmanuel College who perceived that decisions concerning administrative policies and procedures were made by the principal without any form of consultation with them, and presented *to* them at staff meetings. Six teachers felt they could not raise for discussion, at staff meetings, any questions or concerns they had about teaching guided reading at Emmanuel College. The teachers felt that they were given little opportunity to question or respond to imposed expectations for the teaching of guided reading. At a classroom level, these teachers also felt a sense of disempowerment as they

considered the principal did not permit them to make decisions regarding the teaching of guided reading without first seeking his approval. Being positioned as a passive member of staff can elicit a phenomenological response from some teachers, and it can be particularly evident from those teachers who have a proclivity for creative expression or those who have an extraverted personality. The principal's style of leadership can lead to teachers perceiving a sense of disempowerment, suppression, or restriction, and this can foster feelings of frustration and, in turn, shape their subjective views.

During their interviews, the teachers from all career stages reported that they were not permitted to have a voice towards contributing an opinion regarding how they engaged in the teaching and learning of reading at Emmanuel College. Monica (2A) explained that at this school:

> …teachers don't have much input at all into the vision as the dream comes from the principal. He has the dream and vision and he shares this dream and vision with us, we put the dream and vision into action through whatever means he tells us to. We are expected to implement his vision whether our dreams are slightly different or not.

In email communications (July 2007; December 2008; December 2009), the principal often commented that his "door was always open" and he was willing to meet with teachers to "give them a forum to share their thoughts and ideas". The change facilitator also expressed her perception on this, saying that she considered the principal's "door to always be open" and she perceived his "mind was very open" to hearing from the teachers at his school. Her experience with the principal was that she "could just go into [his] office and have a bit of a chat anytime". The change facilitator did, however, indicate that:

> …if somebody came and said 'I have a better idea than guided reading', well they would be told they can't work here anymore I am sure!

The teachers' perspectives reflected that of the change facilitator's comment with regards to the principal's willingness to give them a voice. There was agreement amongst teachers from all career stages that the principal was available "for teachers to drop in and have a chat" (4D: Tina) as he was "always willing to listen to an idea that [they] would like to try" (4A: Bert). Graham (2B) explained that he felt "more than comfortable to be upfront and honest and share ideas [with the principal] without any worries at all". Paula's (3E) experience was that the principal "would sit and listen to [teachers] but that didn't mean to say that he would let [them] act upon [their] ideas".

While the principal listened to teachers' voice when expressing their ideas and opinions, "there was a definite way he liked things done" at this school (3B: Mary). Molly (3A) explained that if she expressed an opinion:

> …about how [teachers] should do something, [her] current expectation is that it would be shot down. If a teacher wanted to teach reading in a different way (hypothetically) and [they] went and said 'this is how I want to do it' then [they] would be listened to but would then be talked back into how it must be done here – how the principal sees fit.

Further to this, Molly (3A) added that teachers' opinions were "accepted or not accepted based on its alignment with the principal's original idea". Rose (1B) had not taught at Emmanuel College for very long. However, her perception was "that there was no point bothering to talk to the principal about her ideas because nothing useful would come of it". While the principal claimed that he was "open to other people's opinions, he was not" (2A: Monica). At this school, the principal employed "more of a top-down process rather than a consultative process where staff were invited to give their opinion to genuinely inform decision-making processes" (4A: Bert). Molly (3A) explained that:

> …over the years teachers have become afraid and hesitant to say what they think because it will be shot down, and this makes them feel worse than if they just shut up and said nothing and did what they are told.

As the principal was the overarching authority figure at Emmanuel College, he felt this afforded him the 'final say' in decision-making situations and this perspective led him to control the teachers' pedagogical practice for guided reading. The principal indicated that he "expect[ed] all teachers to follow [his] vision" as "this was how guided reading was to be taught at this school – this was the only way". In a staff meeting in 2008, the principal reiterated his firm opinion on this matter by stating to teachers:

> …there is a clear set way you are expected to teach guided reading. The process is not changing. If you don't like it then perhaps this is not the right place for you.

The change facilitator and teachers at Emmanuel College agreed that the principal's open-door policy did not mean that there was scope for teachers to genuinely express an opinion about the implementation of pedagogical practice that ran contrary to his firm and clearly articulated vision for the teaching of guided reading. It could be interpreted that, although the teachers' voice was heard, it was mostly not listened to. Thus, this practice was a prime source of negative phenomenological responses to the proposed guided reading change initiative amongst the teachers.

5.5.1.3 Innovation with Pedagogical Practice

In recent times, there is a growing acknowledgement in documents produced by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership [AITSL] of the importance of involving teachers in shaping the direction of their learning (Education Services Australia, 2011a, 2012a, 2012b, 2013). This has foregrounded the importance of goal-directed learning in schools and has also enabled collaborative inquiry-based approaches to make inroads into the Australian educational landscape. These approaches are premised on a belief that teachers should be regarded as autonomous professionals who can be responsible for selecting, implementing, reflecting on, and modifying pedagogical practice in a continued effort to raise the quality of their teaching. At Emmanuel College, there is a strong sense of collegial sharing amongst teachers and a willingness to establish a professional learning community. This proffers an ideal context whereby teachers could be afforded autonomy to engage in goal-directed or collaborative inquiry-based learning. However, these approaches are premised on a style of curriculum innovation that is in direct contrast to the principal's proposed change initiative. Thus, the teachers experienced a discrepancy between what was espoused in various educational documents and what was permitted to happen at Emmanuel College. This had an influence on shaping the teachers' subjective views with regards to the principal's change initiative. This issue is first presented in Table 5.11, which records the survey data related to the teachers' perception of their ability to be innovative regarding the teaching of guided reading.

Table 5.11
Innovation

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 12B: Teachers are encouraged to be innovative at this school.	7	20	0	1
Item 19A: I look forward to trying out new things in my teaching.	0	0	24	4
Item 33B: New courses or curriculum materials are seldom implemented at this school.	1	0	15	12
Item 40B: There is a lot of experimentation with different teaching approaches.	12	15	1	0
Item 43B: New and different ideas are always being tried out in this school.	11	16	1	0

All of the teachers at Emmanuel College reported an eagerness to be permitted to innovate regarding their teaching of guided reading. However, 27 of these teachers were of the opinion that the principal did not permit experimentation with different teaching approaches nor provided scope for new courses or curriculum materials to be tried out at this school.

They maintained that the teachers were not encouraged to be innovative but rather must comply with the principal's expectations that underpinned his change initiative. Perceiving that they had limited autonomy can have a considerable impact on the way teachers feel towards committing to a change initiative. There was, however, one teacher at Emmanuel College who was of the opinion that they were permitted to be innovative and experiment with pedagogical practice in their classroom.

Teachers spanning all of the career stages nominated in this study expressed frustration with their inability to be innovative at Emmanuel College as it limited their ability to put their "individual stamp" on their practice (3F: Penny). Teachers in their first career stage acknowledged that there was some merit in being shown an approach to reading as they were "still exploring their teaching" (1A: Bonnie) and gathering a repertoire of skills. However, their contention was that being "told by the facilitator *exactly* how to do guided reading" (1B: Rose) prevented them from experimenting and developing a personal style of teaching. They felt they were expected to "become replicas of each other" (1B: Rose). This paralleled Sally's (2C) sentiment that teachers were all expected to be "very similar" and Monica's (2A) comment that the principal expected all teachers "to robot each other" (2A: Monica). Bert's (4A) perception was that the principal wanted all teachers to comply with a "uniformed approach" as "he may be concerned with the variety of practices that might occur in some classrooms" at this school if teachers were "left to their own devices". Furthermore, if teachers were permitted to be innovative, Diane (4E) argued that this enabled some teachers "to shine while others come across as ordinary". By "forcing all teachers to be the same" (2C: Sally), the principal "removed parents' opportunity to make comparisons about teacher quality" (4D: Tina). Although some teachers could see some administrative benefits associated with a unified approach to the teaching of guided reading at Emmanuel College, it was the inherent professional constraints that influenced the dominant views of most of the teachers.

The principal's expectations for consistency with the approach to teaching guided reading removed teachers' ability to innovate with pedagogical practice. Prior to the principal implementing his change initiative at the research school, he explained that a 2004 school-based survey "clearly stated there was no continuity about how reading was taught" at Emmanuel College. This contradicted the principal's vision for how teaching and learning should occur. His expectation was that all teachers should "teach in exactly the same way". For more than a decade, teachers have had to comply with the principal's expectations for

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consistency of practice with regards to the teaching of guided reading. Data from this current research highlights that the change initiative has resulted in the teaching of guided reading occurring in a consistent manner from the Preparatory year to Year 7 (see Appendix N). This was acknowledged in the Teaching and Learning Newsletter (2013) as it indicated there "was a well embedded school-wide approach to guided reading" at Emmanuel College (p. 1). The principal's expectation that teachers all "teach in exactly the same way", however, contradicted the beliefs about learners documented in the Emmanuel College (2012) Community Beliefs and Values about Learners, Learning and Learning Communities. In this document, the principal stated that "all learners have unique gifts and abilities" and they each seek to learn "through developing their natural curiosity and thirst for learning" (p. 3). Thus, there was incongruence between what the principal espoused in the Emmanuel College Staff Handbook with respect to what constitutes the best type of learning environment with that provided by him for the teachers at Emmanuel College.

5.5.1.4 Pressure to Meet Expectations

Across different school contexts there can be variations in the degree to which teachers are expected to comply with guidelines for teaching and learning. In some contexts, teachers are afforded autonomy to work independently towards the recognition of certain guidelines, whereas in other contexts, teachers are expected to adhere strictly to articulated school-specific expectations. Thus, depending on their context, teachers can operate along a continuum that spans from an awareness of expectations through to strict compliance with expectations as influenced by the level of pressure that the principal places on the teachers to conform. The degree of pressure from the principal that teachers experience in relation to their level of engagement in a change initiative can be a contributing factor in the formation of their phenomenological response. Hence, the Emmanuel College teachers' sense of pressure to meet the principal's expectations for teaching and learning are presented in Table 5.12.

Table 5.12
Pressure to Meet Expectations

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 6B: There is constant pressure to keep working at a high level at this school.	0	2	11	15
Item 13B: Teachers have to work long hours to complete all their work.	0	2	13	13
Item 20B: The requirements of this school give me no time to relax.	0	2	15	11
Item 27B: You can take it easy here and still get work done at this school.	12	14	2	0
Item 34B: There are a lot of deadlines to meet.	0	2	15	11
Item 41B: It is hard to keep up with your work load.	0	2	11	15

There were two teachers at Emmanuel College who perceived that they were able to cope with their workload, and their experience was that they were able to balance their school commitments and still have time for relaxation on their evenings and weekends. These two teachers did not present with a negative perception with regards to experiencing constant pressure to work at a high level. It could be argued that these teachers may be highly experienced educators, they may have a disposition that thrives on a high work ethic, or they may have less familial demands placed on them in their 'out of school' hours in comparison to the other teachers at this school.

There were, however, 26 teachers at Emmanuel College who perceived the level of pressure they experienced at this school, in regard to implementing the desired guided reading change initiative, to be challenging. These teachers indicated that they had to dedicate a considerable amount of their personal time in order to complete their work to the standard that was expected of them by the principal. They felt that they experienced constant pressure to keep working at a high standard of implementation along with their other professional responsibilities, and this involved having to meet a lot of deadlines imposed by the principal. Furthermore, these teachers considered that the principal's high expectations had an impact on their ability to relax in their 'out of school' hours. For the majority of teachers at Emmanuel College, having to continually strive to meet the principal's expectations was extremely draining on their time and energy. Over a period of time, this sense of imposition can contribute to a shift in teachers' sense of enthusiasm and affect their willingness to view their continued engagement in the principal's change initiative from a positive mindset.

During their semi-structured interviews, the participating teachers from all career stages reported that having to engage in professional development that was geared to the principal's vision for teaching and learning created a culture of heightened pressure "more than you'd

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find in any other school" (4A: Bert). This pressure was described by teachers as being "pretty high" (1A: Bonnie), "enormous" (2C: Sally), "massive -10 out of 10" (3D: Leila), and "more than you could imagine" (4C: Kate). Sally (2C) elaborated:

> When you compare with teachers from other schools and you are shown what they have to do, it's miniscule compared to what teachers at our school have to do. The stress level ….even when we tell other teachers what we do – they can't believe it. They don't have to do that level of work. It is way too much stress on the teachers here and there is not really a need for that much work and pressure.

Leila (3D) added:

> There are high expectations, and a lot of expectations on staff. I think as a teacher you want to be professional. You want to reach the standards that are set by the principal. So you push yourself that bit more than you would have to if the high expectations weren't there. This places you under pressure and it is ongoing.

These teachers explained that their sense of pressure came from not only "the principal's high expectations placed on teachers" (1A: Bonnie), but also the fact that the principal and the change facilitator "constantly push [them] to build their professional practice" (4E: Diane). Having to always "take on so much, creates pressure" (4B: Abby) and teachers felt that "they have no time to stop and take a breath" (4C: Kate). While the teachers acknowledged it was important that the principal had a vision and was passionate about it coming to fruition, they felt that "sometimes he was not aware of the practicalities of what's involved" in enacting this vision (3C: Jenny). Teachers reported that they felt "constantly tired" (1B: Rose) and sometimes admitted that they considered the demands of this school "were just too much to cope with" (4B: Abby). At times, Kate (4C) admitted that the pressure "can make you feel like screaming – enough is enough!" Despite feeling this way, teachers considered they cannot tell the principal or change facilitator "how much pressure they were under because there was also that pressure to not say that you can't handle it" (3C: Jenny). There was a perception amongst teachers that the principal's attitude would be "just toughen up, just do it!" (3A: Molly).

The principal had a directive style of leadership and this was evident in his interview when commenting that "pressure was necessary as it was what made people do things". He argued that without placing teachers under pressure, his vision for how guided reading should be taught would not be realised. He explained that at Emmanuel College, teachers were

expected to "put in hard work, effort and energy" to comply with his expectations and this "obviously created pressure". He added:

> …that no-one waves a magic wand and teachers suddenly get good at guided reading. They have to work hard, they have to see someone model, be observed, and get feedback. All of this takes effort and energy. Obviously, it creates pressure. Teachers tell me they feel pressured and tell me that more is expected of them here than at other schools.

The principal was cognisant of the effect that his expectations had on teachers' subjectivity and this was reflected not only during his semi-structured interview, but also in his journal feature article. In this document, he stated that the teachers reported to him a "perceived excessive workload" at this school.

From the change facilitator's perspective, she agreed that teachers at Emmanuel College were placed under "so much pressure" compared to teachers in other schools where she works. She commented that when she arrived at Emmanuel College, the planning program that teachers were expected to use "was horrendous" and she indicated in her interview that she "couldn't believe what they were expected to do with this program". Her perception at that time was that "everyone seemed to be learning so much" and she marvelled at "how they seemed to be doing it". She came to realise that teachers at Emmanuel College "were very good at doing what they were told" despite "how challenging it was for many whose skills weren't up to it". This gave the change facilitator the idea that she could "ask almost anything of the teachers at this school and they would do it". Furthermore, she realised that the principal would be "fully supportive of her placing pressure on teachers" to conform to the school-wide approach for the teaching of guided reading. The change facilitator acknowledged that over the years teachers "have worked very hard" and "put much more effort and time into things like planning, preparing, and teaching" than she "sees in other schools". Her current perspective was that the teachers "worked very hard…but almost within reason".

Undoubtedly, the perceived level of pressure from the principal, placed upon the teachers to meet his high-level of expectation not only as professional teachers but also as change agents, was a prime source of phenomenological responses to the desired change being studied in this research. One of these sources of pressures, albeit somewhat indirect but nevertheless very important, was in relation to the anticipated benefit of the guided reading change initiative towards improving student achievement outcomes. Arguably, striving to improve student achievement outcomes is a universal professional aspiration of each and

every teacher. However, this aspiration can become a source of phenomenological contestation if the means to its achievement is perceived by teachers to be incommensurate with the benefit that is to be gained. Hence, the following section investigates this potential issue.

5.5.1.5 Focus on Student Achievement Outcomes

Raising the quality of teachers in Australian schools has formed a key aspect of the education reform agendas of successive governments in this nation (Gillard, 2008, 2009; Rudd, 2011; Rudd & Gillard, 2008; Rudd & Smith, 2007). Introducing greater accountability and standardisation of practice and assessment has occurred in recent times with the introduction of the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012) and also NAPLAN testing (MCEETYA, 2008b). These initiatives have heralded a culture of comparability within education, and this has been particularly compounded by the mandatory introduction of the MySchool website (ACARA, 2010) that is required to present all of the school's curriculum and student achievement data as a means of providing enrolment choices for prospective parents. Hence, in some schools, principals strive for high NAPLAN scores as they eagerly wish for their school to be positively presented to prospective families, employees, and their systemic hierarchy personnel. While some principals acknowledge that NAPLAN testing represents a 'moment in time' snapshot of student achievement, other principals view these scores as proxy measures of teacher quality. These contrasting ways of viewing student achievement data can elucidate variations in teachers' phenomenological responses. Thus, the way a principal views student achievement data can have a considerable influence on their communication and interactions with teachers. For some principals, data are viewed transparently and used collaboratively to set school-specific goals and priorities to inform change initiatives. In contrast, other principals can use data as a performance indicator and hold teachers to account for the perceived standard of their practice.

At Emmanuel College, the principal placed a strong emphasis on being data-informed, and NAPLAN testing data were highly valued by the principal and used by him as a measure of the teachers' performances. The principal's opinion was that the teachers' participation in his guided reading change initiative actually targeted continued improvement in student achievement outcomes. This placed the teachers in the position whereby they felt an ongoing sense of pressure to perform, and they perceived data was being used as a measurement of their practice rather than as a means of informing their practice. This perspective can considerably shape the teachers' subjective response towards engaging in the principal's

change initiative. Therefore, the teachers' perception of the extent to which their engagement in professional development located in their school context was truly supporting them to achieve the actual student achievement intention is presented in Table 5.13.

Table 5.13
Focus on Student Achievement Outcomes

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 2A: Participating in professional development about guided reading within a school context will improve student learning opportunities in the classroom.	0	3	18	7
Item 7A: Participating in professional development about guided reading within a school context gives me some useful ideas on how to improve student achievement outcomes.	1	2	17	8
Item 20A: I plan to use the knowledge gained from participating in professional development about guided reading at this school in my work with students.	0	3	23	2
Item 21A: Participating in professional development about guided reading within a school context provided me with an opportunity to focus on improving student achievement outcomes.	0	3	21	4

There were 25 teachers at Emmanuel College who considered that their participation in the particular professional development project at Emmanuel College was actually intended to realise an improvement in student achievement outcomes. These teachers acknowledged that the change facilitator provided them with a standard-level of professional knowledge and practice, and they regarded this had positioned them well to implement pedagogical practice that they were told would improve student achievement outcomes for reading. There were three teachers at Emmanuel College who were doubtful that their participation in this type of professional development would yield the principal's desired elevation in student achievement outcomes for reading, as measured by NAPLAN testing. These teachers reported that they felt the specific approach to professional development at Emmanuel College did not provide them with an adequate level of knowledge and practice to meet the needs of the learners in their classrooms. Without this grounding, this group of teachers perceived that they were unable to affect any genuine improvement in student achievement outcomes. This sense of dismay could lead to feelings of frustration as these teachers were expected to target improvement in student achievement outcomes, yet they felt constrained by the professional development structure that they were expected to work within.

Targeting improvement in student achievement outcomes was considered of high importance to the principal of Emmanuel College. While he was cognisant of the fact that an approach to professional development that was located in a school context was

"expensive", he argued it was "money well spent" if it generated improvement in student achievement outcomes. It was his intention that "100% of the information that teachers were given had the ultimate outcome of benefiting the students in their class". The principal's background in business prior to entering education led him to have a proclivity for performance data. In the first few years following the implementation of the change initiative, the principal proudly boasted in school newsletters and staff emails (November 2006; November 2007; November 2008) that this approach to professional development had yielded positive effects on students' performance on state-wide testing for reading. The principal indicated that the school "results had really improved and were going above the State and national averages" after two years of having an approach to professional development located within the school context. When Graham (2B) arrived at Emmanuel College, this type of professional development had occurred for a number of years. Graham (2B) explained that when he "first met with the principal he was shown how the school results for student achievement had improved over the years and [he] saw they were quite good for the area – higher than any of the other schools".

Given the principal's emphasis on student achievement outcomes for initiating and sustaining the change, it is important to be aware of the general trends of this data during the research period. Data from state-wide and then NAPLAN testing showed an initial increase in student achievement outcomes for the first few years following the introduction of the change initiative, but the data then plateaued for several years after this. However, since 2010, student achievement outcomes on NAPLAN tests for reading have shown a downward trajectory. This was despite the teachers continued participation in professional development located within the school context and the involvement of the same change facilitator.

In light of the more recent deteriorating student achievement test data, the principal's tone shifted considerably with the teachers, and this was apparent in his conversations with the teachers at staff meetings and in his email communication to teachers following the release of the 2013 NAPLAN data (September 2013). At this point, the principal expressed his "extreme disappointment" about what he perceived to be "a sub-standard result" in student achievement for reading, and his fear that "results were continuing to slide". He argued that "the results did not appear to reflect the effort and money" that had been "put in to reading in this school". His attribution of blame for the deterioration in the student achievement performance was directed towards the teachers, and he suggested it was their "lack of

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compliance with his expectations for reading that had caused this result". The principal stated that it "was puzzling to understand how the results could decline when there had been a considerable effort made to develop teacher capacity". He stated:

> We have spent a long time and millions of dollars (yes millions! 1.4M in the last five years) on developing teacher capacity and designing curriculum and school-wide pedagogy strategies. I thought we were all on board with this, or have I been kidding myself? Do we only perform as expected when the expert facilitator is in the room? If everyone was doing what they were supposed to do then we wouldn't be in this situation.

His closing comment to teachers in his email communication (September 2013) suggested that to improve student achievement outcomes, "teachers needed to help [him] out with this dilemma". He considered teachers could do this by "dedicating greater effort to comply with the school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading" and by "more fully engaging in future opportunities to work with the facilitator". The implication made in the principal's perspective was that student achievement outcomes were a reflection of a lowering in the quality of the teachers' practice. Hence, the data clearly indicated an important difference between the views of the teachers with respect to the workload demands of their involvement in the professional development project (as previously discussed) and this view now held by the principal. Their key leader, the principal, was blaming rather than affirming their high level of commitment. This created a distinct source of emotional tension for the teachers who sincerely believed they were working extremely hard towards trying to achieve the desired goals.

5.5.2 Leadership by the Change Facilitator

This section explores the teachers' perceptions relating to their involvement with the leadership practices of the change facilitator, as she was employed by the principal of Emmanuel College and has provided professional development to all teachers at the school since 2005. The change facilitator worked with the teachers in the context of their classroom in order to effect a change to each teacher's pedagogical practice. At Emmanuel College, the change facilitator was instructed by the principal to ensure that each teacher's pedagogical practice for guided reading adhered to a school-wide consistent approach. Thus, this section will discuss the teacher data relating to three topics, and these are *Interactions with the Change Facilitator, Modelling of Pedagogical Practice, and Personalised Observation and Feedback.*

Professional development that is located in a school context is intended to be premised on the provision of a high-level of personalised and contextualised support for teachers as they extend their professional knowledge and practice. Thus, the extent to which the teachers felt that they were able to ask the change facilitator questions, and their confidence in her standard of knowledge about guided reading, is explored in the first section titled *Interactions with the Change Facilitator*. The change facilitator adopted a cyclical approach to the provision of professional development, and this began with her modelling the expected practice for guided reading. Having the change facilitator model this pedagogical practice for each teacher in the context of their own classroom contrasted how they had typically engaged in professional development prior to the introduction of the principal's change initiative at Emmanuel College. Teachers have typically cited that the lack of contextualisation had been a perceived disadvantage of a traditional 'dissemination' style of learning. Thus, it can be argued that the teachers are more willing to embrace a change initiative if they are able to see the practices being modelled in the context of their own classroom. The value that teachers at Emmanuel College placed on being able to observe the change facilitator modelling pedagogical practice in their own classroom is presented in the section titled *Modelling of Pedagogical Practice*. Having their pedagogical practice observed by the facilitator and then receiving feedback regarding areas for improvement is also a departure from how teachers have typically engaged in professional development. The final section, *Personalised Observation and Feedback*, looks at data that elucidates teachers' phenomenological response to having their practice observed on a periodic basis, and receiving feedback from the change facilitator that indicated the areas for improvement in the quality of their practice.

5.5.2.1 Interactions with the Change Facilitator

Professional development that occurs in a school context requires a high degree of interaction between the change facilitator and teachers. This is attributed to the personalised nature of this style of learning. Therefore, it can be argued that a teacher's subjective response to their interactions with the change facilitator can have a considerable influence on shaping their attitude towards a change initiative. It has been previously reported in this chapter, that the teachers at Emmanuel College had a strong sense of collegial affiliation and reported positive interactions with students. In this section of the chapter, the teachers' perspective regarding their interactions with the change facilitator are explored. Data are presented in Table 5.14.

Table 5.14
Interactions with the Change Facilitator

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 25A: I feel confident to ask the facilitator of professional development at this school any questions I have about implementing pedagogical practices.	1	2	17	8
Item 29B: The facilitator of the professional development at this school is knowledgeable in her chosen area.	5	20	3	0
Item 30A: I enjoy being released from the class to work with the facilitator of the professional development at this school.	5	20	3	0

There were three teachers at Emmanuel College who enjoyed working with the facilitator and they considered that she was knowledgeable in the area of guided reading. Based on this mindset, these teachers felt confident to discuss with the change facilitator any questions they had about the teaching of guided reading. This subjective response contrasted the perspective indicated by the majority of teachers at Emmanuel College. For most teachers at this school, even though they felt confident to ask the change facilitator questions, they did not perceive that the facilitator had a strong level of professional knowledge about guided reading. Perceived incompetence and poor communication was the concern for most of the teachers. This perspective influenced their level of confidence to ask the change facilitator any specific questions they may have about the teaching of reading. For the majority of teachers, they reported that they did not enjoy being provided with periodic opportunities to work with the change facilitator.

Importantly, these same understandings were brought out in the interview data. During the semi-structured interviews, the participating teachers explained that the change facilitator was approachable, and they considered that they could go to her and ask any questions relating to guided reading. However, the majority of these teachers at Emmanuel College expressed an element of uncertainty regarding the change facilitator's standard of professional knowledge. For example, a teacher acknowledged that she was "always told by the principal that [the change facilitator] was the expert in guided reading" (3D: Leila). However, the contention was that "she never provided theory" (2A: Monica) or any "justification that her approach was research-based" (4A: Bert). Sally (2C) also explained that she had:

> …argued with [the change facilitator] in the past regarding certain aspects of pedagogy – when some new concepts have arisen in education. But when you try to speak to her about those things she just says 'no no this is the way we have always done it' or 'this is how you

are to do it'. There is no opportunity for arguments or experimentation or conversation about why this way is the best way.

Teachers maintained that the change facilitator seemed to have a "practical ability" (4E: Diane) but she didn't seem to "have any clue about the theory that her practice was based on" (4A: Bert). If teachers engaged the change facilitator in discussion she was "more than happy to talk about what it was they were supposed to do" (3C: Jenny) regarding "school-specific expectations for guided reading" (1A: Bonnie), but when they posed "why type of questions" they felt that they "could see a huge void in her knowledge base" (4A: Bert). This caused a sense of frustration for teachers from each career stage as they argued that they must accept the change facilitator's "supposed level of expertise" (1B: Rose). However, they felt it was "more of an illusion of competence than an actual reality" (2C: Sally).

This sense of frustration led these teachers to consider that working with the change facilitator was "not true learning" (2C: Sally), and this affected the attitude they had towards being released from the class to work with her. Rather than feeling enthused about working with the change facilitator, teachers had an "oh no why me?" (4C: Kate) response. When receiving emails that outlined the schedule for working with the change facilitator, Diane (4E) indicated that "you cross your fingers and hold your breath….and when you don't see your name you seriously feel like you dodged a bullet". The teachers' frustration was also couched in the way the change facilitator interacted with them during her sessions. A number of teachers used the phrase "goes off on a tangent" to describe the way the change facilitator engaged in conversation with them. Leila (3D) elaborated on her perspective about interactions with the change facilitator by stating:

> I find it frustrating sometimes in that when we're at a meeting with the facilitator and she is talking about things she is inclined to jump around a lot in what she says. Sometimes she says something and I think 'oh yer I'd like to know about that' but then within a minute she's jumped onto some other thing. The longer you listen to her the more it's like being on a merry-go-round. You go round and round for ages and you've got to grab bits and pieces of useful information here and there. I get frustrated that there is not enough time to really delve into anything because so much time is wasted on her rambling and jumping all over the place.

Diane (4E) agreed with Leila (3D) as she considered the change facilitator "was hard to follow because what she says goes here and there" and "thoughts jump in and out of her head all the time". Jenny (3C) indicated that "people typically only seem to be all over the

shop when they don't have a good depth of knowledge about what they are talking about".

Bert (4A) agreed with this as he suggested that:

> …perhaps the facilitator is out of her depth working in a school as after all she usually only does workshops and lectures, and anyone can stand up and look confident telling the same information over and over again to new audiences. When you've got to respond to so many different questions from teachers in a school, you actually need to know what you're talking about. You need a very good depth of knowledge on the topic – not just restating something you read once or heard someone else say at a conference.

The teachers regarded that their interactions with the change facilitator were of limited professional benefit to them. They argued that being "limited to one facilitator" (2A: Monica) was a barrier to them realising their full potential as teachers. These teachers reported that their "lacklustre personal interactions" (2C: Sally) with the change facilitator were a source of "great frustration" (2A: Monica). The teachers' experience was that their interactions with the change facilitator did not support the challenges they experienced when attempting to implement the "standard style" (2A: Monica) of practice modelled for them. Instead, their experience had been that the facilitator's responses to their questions centred on "reinforcing the party-line" (2C: Sally) rather than helping them to implement the pedagogical expectations "with the diversity of students in their classes" (2B: Graham).

During semi-structured interviews, the participating teachers' perception of working with the change facilitator contrasted with the perspective of the principal and the change facilitator. While 89% of teachers reported that they did not enjoy working with the change facilitator, the principal considered that "95% of the teachers responded very well to her" and "enjoyed the opportunity to work with her". He maintained that "it was surprising how many teachers received working with the facilitator so well". From the change facilitator's perspective, she stated:

> They love me here. I could be anywhere in the school and I could be walking across the under-covered area and someone will say to me 'oh you are here today', 'who are you working with?', 'how did they get to work with you?', and 'when do I have to see you again?'

The change facilitator similarly suggested that "95% of teachers were on board and liked working with [her]". Thus, there was a marked incongruence between how teachers felt about the change facilitator, and how the principal and change facilitator judged the teachers' feelings. The teachers' compliance with the principal's expectations for engagement in

professional development was incorrectly regarded as being synonymous with the teachers' enjoyment of working with the change facilitator.

Interestingly, the teachers reported frustration at the change facilitator's reluctance or inability to share professional knowledge with them about the teaching of guided reading might not have been a surprise to the principal if he had become aware of it. In his own words, it was the fact that "she wasn't that big on the theory of stuff" that attracted her to the principal in the first place. He preferred that "she was practical and that she had that classroom experience" instead. Another quality of the change facilitator that resonated with the principal was her forthright style of interaction and her confidence to share her opinion in a very "everyday kind of way". The principal explained that the change facilitator:

> …can be direct and firm and I think that is what I like about her. She says 'this is what works, this is how you do it'. She knows that pressure is important. You can't just say 'do this if you like'. You have to be able to say to teachers 'this is what the school expects'.

Whilst her assertiveness and ability to engage in conversation were of key appeal to the principal, they were two characteristics that teachers perceived detracted from their experience with the change facilitator. Teachers from all career stages found it challenging being told by the change facilitator how they must teach guided reading while they inwardly questioned her credibility, and they also found her highly casual style of interaction frustrating.

5.5.2.2 Modelling of Pedagogical Practice

During the participating teachers' semi-structured interviews, they shared their perceptions of having the change facilitator model pedagogical practice for guided reading in the context of their respective classrooms. These teachers acknowledged that the change facilitator was expected to embed a school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading, and this required her to model practice without being able to "consider the background of each class" (1B: Rose). As the change facilitator "doesn't know the children as well as the teacher does" (3E: Paula), teachers perceived she "just delivers a generic lesson" (4A: Bert) that presented "the mainstream skill specifics" (3A: Molly). When the change facilitator modelled practice, "she only ever takes the better group when she comes into a class" (4E: Diane), rather than showing the teachers how to "bring the low ones up or target the gifted kids in the class" (3A: Molly).

Most teachers strived "to make sure they are tapping into each student as a learner" (3C: Jenny) so that they were being "helped to learn to the best of their ability" (3F: Penny). From their perspective, the teachers considered that at times the change facilitator's "modelled practice does not actually really work in their specific classroom situation as she intended" (3B: Mary). A common view amongst the interviewed teachers was that they need to take the change facilitator's lesson and "tweak it a bit" (3D: Leila) to "make it relevant to their particular context" (4A: Bert). They admitted "it was not always easy taking a generic model or way of doing things and then applying it to the individual needs of their students" (4A: Bert). Monica (2A) explained that for her class, the change facilitator's modelled practice "did not meet the learning needs of her particular students at all". Monica (2A) argued that:

> …every class has a completely different group of learners and one generic pedagogical practice is not going to work across all classes! We need help knowing how to do it with *our* students.

This sentiment was also reiterated by Sally (2C) who stated:

> We are all told to do guided reading exactly one way, but all of the classes aren't the same! You can't teach the same strategy to higher level kids as a lower level child. The code-breaking has to be different, even the comprehension has to be different. It can't be exactly the same! There are benefits for when your class is what the facilitator thinks it is, but it is not always the case.

Monica (2A) argued that what makes the difference to their achievement outcomes was "what [she did] with the information [she was] given" by the change facilitator. She argued though that if she was "only shown the one way", then she wasn't taught how to differentiate her practice to meet the needs of her students. She felt this did not enable her to facilitate high-quality teaching, and this sentiment was reiterated by Paula (3E). In addition, Graham (2B) added that teachers "were intelligent people" and "get what the facilitator was saying", but at times they "struggled to put a square peg in a round hole". He maintained that they needed help in knowing how to "make [the change facilitator's] practice fit their learners", yet he argued this help was not there for them.

5.5.2.3 Personalised Observation and Feedback

Teaching has traditionally been a profession where teachers are positioned as 'masters of their own domain', and so teachers have operated as individual autonomous professionals in isolated classrooms. Professional development that occurs in school contexts runs contrary to this culture as it is premised on de-privatisation and it places the locus of learning at the classroom level. This paradigm shift can have a considerable influence on a teacher's

perspective of their experience, and this in turn, can shape their level of willingness to be involved in professional development. This section of the chapter presents data that explores the teachers' phenomenological response to having the change facilitator observe their teaching of guided reading, and then providing them with personalised feedback on areas where improvement in the quality of their practice is warranted. Data are presented in Table 5.15.

Table 5.15
Personalised Observation and Feedback

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 10A: Participating in professional development at this school is a waste of time.	9	12	6	1
Item 12A: I am comfortable with the facilitator of the professional development at this school observing me teach.	7	18	3	0
Item 14A: Participating in professional development sessions at this school is not useful.	3	18	6	1
Item 24A: Feedback from the facilitator of professional development at this school helps me to know how to improve my teaching.	0	7	15	6

Twenty-one of the teachers at Emmanuel College considered that being afforded personalised access to the change facilitator, during observation and feedback opportunities, had some degree of benefit to raising their professional practice. There were, however, seven teachers who viewed their personalised experience with the change facilitator as a 'waste of time'. It can be argued that for these teachers, their response may have reflected their contention with the provision of feedback being premised on improving their level of *compliance* with the principal's expectations for guided reading, rather than targeting improvement in the actual *quality* of their teaching. When it came to the teachers' response to having their practice observed by the change facilitator, there was far greater convergence of opinion. Twenty-five teachers reported a sense of discomfort at having the change facilitator observe their teaching of guided reading. Conversely, there were three teachers who were positive about having the change facilitator observe their practice.

Most teachers did not respond positively to having their pedagogical practice observed by the change facilitator as they felt it was more of a supervisory and accountability process than something that was "genuinely targeted at making [their] teaching better" (2C: Sally). This point was elaborated on further by Monica (2A). She explained that she was not comfortable having the change facilitator observe her pedagogical practice because:

> …the facilitator's purpose of making [her] do the same thing as every
> other teacher in the school is so comparisons can be made between her

and other teachers. It's [the principal and facilitator's] way of making sure teachers are doing what they've been told to do.

Bert (4A) agreed that it felt like the purpose of having his practice observed by the change facilitator was so "the principal could be provided with information about how well teachers were meeting his expectations". Teachers' perceptions were accurate as the change facilitator indicated that she "didn't *have* to give him feedback on teachers' practice" but she admitted she does. She indicated this was done "by just dialoguing with him and not giving him any written types of feedback". She claimed that this gave the principal "a good overall picture on how well everyone was doing" teaching guided reading.

Teachers from all career stages used the word "perform" to describe their experience with having the change facilitator observe their teaching of guided reading. "Having to perform" (3C: Jenny) for the change facilitator caused teachers "anxiety" and "stress" and gave them "the butterfly in the tummy feeling" (3A: Molly). This created a sense of fear because "someone in authority was watching their lessons" (3A: Molly, 3C: Jenny) and had the power to say to them that "they were doing it all wrong" (2A: Monica). They perceived they were "being assessed" (3C: Jenny) and were "being judged as teachers" (3B: Mary). Rose (1B) commented:

It is not very nice that feeling of being watched….the feeling of being marked. It feels more like an assessable performance than a learning experience.

Mary (3B) agreed that "having the facilitator watch you definitely felt like an assessment of your ability to teach guided reading". Bert (4A) explained that teachers "felt terrified" because they perceived the change facilitator was "judging their quality" on "how much [they] copied the practice, not from how well they facilitated learning that was relevant for the different learning needs of students" (4A: Bert). In each interview with teachers, every teacher used either the word "daunting" or "nerve-racking" to describe their perception of having the change facilitator observe their teaching of guided reading.

Teachers from all career stage indicated that feedback was an expected outcome of the change facilitator's 'assessment' of their performance. This enabled them "to get some fine tuning, tweaking or advice" (1A: Bonnie) on "so many little things" (3D: Leila) that they "hadn't realised [they] were doing or should be doing" (4E: Diane) regarding the teaching of guided reading. The change facilitator "tells teachers how well they have done copying her modelled practice" (2C: Sally). Molly (3A) explained that:

> …if the facilitator is someone you feel threatened by or you feel she isn't treating you as a professional, then her feedback is useless. You wouldn't value what she said and you would feel too flustered the whole way through. There are staff at this school that feel this way and you can hear in what they say that the facilitator's feedback is useless.

For teachers in their second career stage, feedback was viewed in the way that Molly (3A) explained. These teachers viewed the change facilitator's feedback as an attack on their quality as an educator. For these teachers, receiving feedback that was not "round about or whimsical" but rather "direct and straightforward" was "sometimes hard to swallow" (2B: Graham). Monica (2A) indicated it was very hard to be open to the change facilitator's advice after "she just sat there and told you that you were doing it all wrong". These teachers "really tried each time to get it right" but "it never seemed to come up to scratch no matter what [they] did" (2B: Graham). This notion was elaborated on by Sally (2C):

> When the facilitator comes into your room she always has to find something negative to say about what you have done because if she was to say 'no you are perfect' then we wouldn't need to hire her anymore. So she will never come in and say 'you have done a wonderful perfect job' cause then it is 'why are we still hiring you?' She is a salesman (sic). She is here to sell us a product. She's done that and now she should go away. She will always find something to nit-pick about and always find something to be negative about. If she knew she was only here for a year to improve practices, you'd find she would be a lot more objective in the quality of your practice.

Despite the teachers' negative perceptions towards the facilitator observing their practice, she "thought they wanted to see more of [her]" modelling guided reading in the context of their classrooms and then returning to observe their implementation of this practice.

The principal of Emmanuel College considered that being able to "access teachers' classrooms and see what was really going on" was an advantageous feature of professional development facilitated in a school context. He was fully supportive of the change facilitator's observations of teachers' practice and the provision of feedback targeting improvement in the quality of their teaching of guided reading. This was reflected in the change facilitator's comment:

> The principal gives me the power to ask for teachers to be released from class if I need to speak with them, I can go into any class and do a guided reading lesson at any time, and I can ask any teachers to teach for me whenever I want.

In his journal feature article, the principal explained that an approach to professional development that was facilitated in a school context involved the change facilitator

periodically going into teachers' classrooms and seeing what was going on in terms of teachers' quality of practice. This created a school culture where there was no opportunity for teachers to "opt out" from the principal's expectations as they had "no place to hide".

From her experience at Emmanuel College, the change facilitator acknowledged that teachers experienced a heightened level of stress and anxiety when having their pedagogical practice periodically observed. She described the teachers' response to these observations as:

> When teachers have to teach for me they are still a little bit 'sweaty palmed'. They are nervous. They are just beside themselves and say 'I feel like a student'. They aren't being cranky about it. They want to do the right thing. In a school when they have to teach for somebody like me, they are just panic stricken. Sometimes I have to think to myself that because I did lessons for them, they are worried they are not going to reach the standard I set.

The change facilitator acknowledged that despite the considerable impact her presence had on teachers, she nevertheless continued to observe teachers' practice and provided them with feedback since this "was how the principal wanted [her] to make teachers improve their practice".

As the principal was steadfast in his desire for teachers to implement high-quality practice, he fully supported the provision of personalised and specific feedback for teachers. The principal argued that:

> …all teachers with all degrees of experience from the beginning teachers to those with thirty years of experience benefit from this type of professional development. It is what professional educators do. [He] think[s] professional educators want feedback on how they can improve. [He] thinks professional educators like being told what they are doing is really good or that it could be improved by doing a particular thing.

The perspective held by the principal contrasted with how most teachers actually responded to the change facilitator's provision of feedback on their practice. Many teachers at Emmanuel College did not respond positively to the type of personalised feedback provided by this particular change facilitator, and this was particularly evident for those teachers in their second career stage.

5.5.3 Summary: Leadership

The principal of Emmanuel College had an authoritative and directive style of leadership, and he confidently articulated clear expectations regarding how teachers were to teach

guided reading. He expected the change facilitator to enforce these expectations with all teachers, and he maintained that the teachers needed pressure to ensure continued adherence to his expectations. The principal indicated he was willing to listen to teachers who wished to voice an opinion regarding teaching and learning. However, most teachers and the change facilitator perceived this to be a non-genuine offer as the principal was steadfast in realising his vision for a school-wide consistent approach to the teaching of guided reading. Instead of having active, contributing, and innovative teachers at Emmanuel College, the principal chose to position them as passive consumers of knowledge and compliant implementers of practice, and this had a considerable effect on their subjective response to his change initiative. Having no scope for innovation and experimentation with pedagogical practice was a source of considerable frustration for most teachers from all career stages.

All members of Emmanuel College agreed that this school context was premised on a culture of high expectation and ongoing pressure to conform. This led teachers to perceive a sense of distrust and trepidation towards the change facilitator's observations of their practice. The majority of teachers felt the intent of these observations was premised more on compliance and accountability rather than the provision of genuine professional support. With professional development that occurs in a school context, a change facilitator typically provides constructive feedback on teachers' implementation of pedagogical practice. However, most of the teachers at Emmanuel College were fearful that the change facilitator's critique of their practice would be shared with the principal who had a strong performance-orientated perspective. He operated from the misguided notion that student achievement test results correlated directly with teacher quality. Teachers feared he may use the change facilitator's critiques to judge their quality as a teacher and potentially enact disciplinary processes if their performance did not meet his approval.

As annual reporting of NAPLAN data for students at Emmanuel College showed a downward decline, the principal assumed a progressively more authoritative standpoint with the teachers during interactions at staff meetings and in his email correspondence with teachers. He sought to frequently convey his firm expectations for their compliance with the school-wide approach to guided reading. The principal's deficit mindset created a culture of blame at Emmanuel College and this was coupled with the teachers' already growing sense of distrust in the sincerity of the principal. Data have highlighted that teachers' subjective responses were influenced not only by the principal's direct and authoritative style of leadership, but also from their lacklustre professional and social interactions with the change

facilitator. For many Emmanuel College teachers, the perception was that the leadership of the change initiative was premised on a sense of fear and distrust. Thus, such teacher views can considerably shape their subjective responses and influence their sense of phenomenological resistance towards the value of their continued participation in, and experience of, the professional development approach facilitated at Emmanuel College. This chapter concludes with data that addresses this understanding.

5.6 Experiences

This section explores teachers' perceptions of the contribution that the approach to professional development facilitated at Emmanuel College made towards shaping the quality of their professional practice for guided reading. Raising the quality of teachers is a priority of the Australian government, and it is reflected in a number of different documents (ACARA, 2012; Council of Australian Governments, 2008a, 2008b; MCEETYA, 2008a, 2008b). In recent times, facilitating professional development within a school context is being championed as a way of raising the capacity of teachers. Furthermore, it is foregrounded in various AITSL publications as a valid means of supporting teachers to raise the quality of their professional knowledge, practice, and engagement (Education Services Australia, 2012a, 2012b, 2013). While this approach to professional development is being advocated for, it is despite there being limited empirical research to justify its benefit for inclusion in an Australian educational context. Emmanuel College provides a fertile context in which to explore teachers' perceptions of an approach to professional development that is facilitated in a school context. Specifically, this section will discuss teacher data that aligns with two topics, and these are *Change to Teachers' Pedagogical Practice* and *Perception of Teacher Quality*.

The change initiative that was implemented at Emmanuel College sought to embed a school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading from the Preparatory year to Year 7. In the section titled *Change to Teachers' Pedagogical Practice*, teachers reflect on the degree to which facilitating professional development in a school context influenced the way teachers specifically taught guided reading. Further to this, in the section *Perception of Teacher Quality*, teachers discuss the extent to which they considered their participation in professional development had elevated their quality of practice. It is argued that if teachers feel that their professional practice is being enhanced, then they will be more likely to view

the professional development with a spirit of commitment and enthusiasm regardless of any other influences.

5.6.1 Change to Teachers' Pedagogical Practice

The principal articulated his expectation that all teachers at Emmanuel College were to adhere to the school-wide approach for the teaching of guided reading. To do this, the teachers from all career stages were expected to abandon their own pedagogical practice and implement the particular practice modelled by the facilitator. Letting go of established professional routines and procedures could be an emotionally challenging task for some teachers, as their professional identity can be firmly entwined with their personal style of practice. Feelings of resistance can surface as teachers are presented with the idea of change, and this resistance can become firmly entrenched in a teacher's view as they experience ongoing pressure to conform. Hence, the perception that the teachers at Emmanuel College had regarding the impact that the principal's change initiative had on their teaching of guided reading is explored, and data are presented in Table 5.16.

Table 5.16

Change to Teachers' Pedagogical Practice

Item	Frequency of Response			
	SD	**D**	**A**	**SA**
Item 32A: Professional development within a school context has made me change the way I teach.	0	1	20	7

Twenty-seven teachers at Emmanuel College reported that their participation in professional development resulted in them being mandatorily forced to change the way they taught guided reading even if they considered the new way to be inferior to their current practice or deficient in being able to meet the learning needs of students in their classrooms. There was one teacher who indicated that his/her pedagogical practice had not changed despite his/her participation in the school-based professional development. This could indicate that there was one teacher who disregarded the expectation to conform to a school-wide approach to guided reading. However, due to each teacher's periodic involvement in cycles of 'modelling, observation, and feedback', and the principal's willingness to 'take a hard stand' and 'pull teachers into line', it is highly doubtful that this teacher continued to demonstrate resistance. Thus, it is a more likely presumption that this particular teacher may have already been teaching guided reading according to the approach that was modelled by the facilitator, thereby, negating the need to change his/her pedagogical practice. Be that as it may, the

more general participating teachers' subjective responses to having to change their pedagogical practice was explored further during semi-structured interviews.

These teachers discussed their thoughts regarding the way that having professional development facilitated in their school context had influenced their pedagogical practice for guided reading. They explained that teachers were expected to comply with the principal's vision for a school-wide approach to guided reading "whether they liked it or not" (2A: Monica). They "were not given a choice" about how they taught (2C: Sally), but rather "were told what was happening" and then "forced to do the practices" (2A: Monica) modelled by the change facilitator. Teachers had no choice other than to be "blind followers" (2A: Monica) of the imposed pedagogy. Bert (4A) found the prescriptive nature of this school challenging because his "researched best-practice didn't meet the school's practice, and so therefore [he] was obligated to forego that and comply with the school's practice". He found "it really frustrating" that he was expected to change his practice even though it was premised on a solid literature and empirical base. This was a point of contention also for Leila (3D) as she explained that "this practice was forced on [teachers] without giving [them] any evidence that this was actually researched best practice". Sally's (2C) experience was that "if you try to argue or try to talk about alternative ideas to do with guided reading you get into trouble because it was definitely a dictatorship where you have to do it according to the principal's idea and the facilitator's style".

The interviewed teachers maintained that the principal's expectations made it "extremely difficult catering to the needs of different children" in their class (2B: Graham) when "every person was supposed to robot each other" (2A: Monica). Their perspective was that teaching should be "a very fluid thing" that afforded teachers some "variability and flexibility" (2A: Monica) as "no two teachers were the same, nor were there two classes the same" (1B: Rose). Bert (4A) explained teachers would like to "be respected as professionals" and "not told *how* to do guided reading, but have it left to their professional judgement to work out how they *could best adopt* the facilitator's practice for their class and students". Thus, these teachers shared Penny's desire for the opportunity to be allowed to "take her practice and make it relevant for their particular learners" (3F: Penny). However, the teachers were "told repeatedly by the principal that the facilitator was the authority in this matter, and to do as she says" (2C: Sally). This left the teachers feeling that Emmanuel College "was [no longer] an open school community, but was rather a dictatorship as teachers were forced to do certain policies and practices" (2C: Sally).

5.6.2 Perception of Teacher Quality

The proclaimed intent of the principal's change initiative was to raise the quality of teachers' pedagogical practice for guided reading. In order to do this, the principal positioned teachers as passive and compliant implementers of his expectations for the teaching of guided reading. The participating teachers at Emmanuel College reflected on the extent to which their involvement in this particular approach to professional development had influenced their enthusiasm for teaching and had an effect on raising the quality of their practice. Data are presented in Table 5.17.

Table 5.17
Perception of Teacher Quality

Items	Frequency of Response			
	SD	D	A	SA
Item 6A: Participating in professional development within a school context renews my enthusiasm for teaching.	5	20	3	0
Item 27A: I feel that I am a better teacher when I engage in professional development within a school context.	5	20	3	6

Twenty-five teachers at Emmanuel College felt that their participation in professional development that was facilitated in their school context had little effect on renewing their enthusiasm for teaching. They also perceived that the specific style of learning provided by this particular experience did not enable them to feel that they were becoming a better teacher of guided reading. Conversely, for three teachers at Emmanuel College, participation in professional development contributed to a perceived elevation in their personal enthusiasm and quality of practice.

During their semi-structured interviews, the participating Emmanuel College teachers expressed a desire to implement high-quality practice, although their restriction to a "standard style" (2A: Monica) of pedagogical practice was perceived to be limiting. These teachers argued that they were eager to "develop and improve" their knowledge and practice (2B: Graham), yet because the change facilitator's practice was "very narrow in scope" (2A: Monica) they were provided with "little mental stimulation" (2C: Sally) and authentic opportunities to "learn and grow professionally" (2B: Graham). Being confined to the change facilitator's modelled practice and having a lack of opportunity to innovate made the teachers feel that they were "stuck in a rut" (2C: Sally). Leila (3D) described her perspective about having to comply with the principal's expectations to implement *only* the change facilitator's modelled practice for guided reading. She stated that teachers:

> …are like mice stuck in a wheel, [they] just keep going round and round, with no opportunity to stop what's going on.

While these teachers were positive about engaging in lifelong learning and "keen to become highly competent professionals" (3E: Paula), there was consensus amongst them that this was not possible as they were "restricted to the facilitator's practice which gets [them] to a proficient standard of competency only" (3C: Jenny).

The interviewed teachers recognised that at Emmanuel College they were to comply with the principal's expectations by participating in professional development facilitated in their school context. However, "they had a problem with it being the only professional development" they received about the teaching of reading (2A: Monica). The teachers eagerly sought the opportunity to be "exposed to a broader variety of experts and strategies" (2A: Monica) and to get "different perspectives on pedagogy" (2C: Sally). This point was further elaborated by Sally (2C):

> The facilitator is trying to turn every person in this school into her style. There needs to be a wide range of instructors coming through the school. It is important to be exposed to different people and different ideas and different styles. There should be a lot of different professional development opportunities so teachers see a lot of different presenters, not just the one person's style…..Sticking with one facilitator is a lazy option because teachers see only one style and one style doesn't suit every classroom, and one style doesn't suit every teacher.

Monica (2A) indicated that if teachers wanted additional professional development to enhance their knowledge and practice then they had "to go and do it themselves" (2A: Monica).

A common view amongst the interviewed teachers was the consideration that their involvement in professional development was "more than what was provided at any other school" (3B: Mary), although this did not lead them to perceive this had elevated the quality of their practice. Having the change facilitator always "giving them something new to do" (4A: Bert), expecting "practices to be implemented straight away" (2A: Monica), and periodically "finding something wrong with [their] practice" (2C: Sally) led the teachers to feel a sense of frustration and inadequacy. This particular ongoing process of having professional development provided for teachers in their school context was considered to be underscored by "criticism, expectation and pressure" (2C: Sally), and it resulted in teachers' learning:

> …feeling just like work, rather than something that was benefitting [them] professionally, enlivening [their] lives, and making [their] teaching career more exciting [4A: Bert].

The way that professional development was implemented at Emmanuel College "drained teachers' confidence rather than built it" (2C: Sally). This, in turn, affected the enthusiasm they had for teaching and for engaging in future opportunities for professional development.

The interviewed teachers perceived that high-quality educators implemented practice that aligned with the learning needs of students. However, these teachers at Emmanuel College maintained that a "standard style" of practice (2A: Monica) limited their ability to cater for the needs of those "below and above the expected standard for reading" (3B: Mary). Furthermore, the teachers indicated that the change facilitator failed to support them in "knowing how to differentiate their practice for these students" (3E: Paula). During the interviews, the teachers argued that they "cannot be considered high-quality educators" as their pedagogical practice for guided reading "was of benefit to only about half of their class" (4C: Kate). While the principal demanded teachers to be high-quality educators, the teachers considered "this was never going to happen with the structure they were forced to work within" at this school (4E: Diane). The view of the interviewed teachers was that they felt a sense of deflation as they came to realise that at Emmanuel College they were "forced to become the type of teacher that in [their] heart [they] knew didn't represent the teacher [they] dreamed of becoming" (2C: Sally).

5.6.3 Summary: Experiences

Most teachers at Emmanuel College considered that their experience with professional development facilitated in their school context changed the way they taught guided reading, yet they felt this had not enhanced the true quality of their pedagogical practice or fostered their enthusiasm towards teaching. Being positioned as passive and compliant implementers of an imposed 'standard' style of pedagogical practice for guided reading was regarded as limiting their professional growth. Having their competency capped at a proficient standard resulted in the teachers feeling they were doing a disservice to the students in their class. Thus, most of the teachers at Emmanuel College were caught in an emotional quandary as they had a strong drive to be high-quality educators and provide pedagogical practice that was differentiated for their students' level of need, yet they felt they were being constrained by the principal's expectation for compliance with a 'standard-style' of pedagogy for the teaching of guided reading. The teachers cited feelings of considerable frustration as they

were forced to abandon their drive to be high-quality educators, and instead settle on implementing pedagogical practice that they perceived to be misaligned to their classrooms and their vision for themselves as educators. Rather than the principal's change initiative being a means of raising teacher quality, it was perceived by teachers as being a structure that prevents this from being realised.

5.7 Chapter Review

Teachers at Emmanuel College were not permitted to view themselves as 'masters of their own domain', but rather the principal sought to de-privatise the classrooms and ensure a culture of transparency, accountability and conformity existed throughout the school. His selection of a very specific approach to professional development permitted a change facilitator to have frequent access to each teacher's classrooms to model, observe, and critique their pedagogical practice. This process was seen as being a means for breaking down the embedded culture of individualism and isolation that was thought to prevent the development of not only the best practice in the teaching of guided reading, but also of quality teaching in general.

Importantly, the teachers at Emmanuel College presented as having a very positive attitude towards interacting with colleagues and experienced positive relationships with their students. Indeed, they were eager learners and sought ways to extend their knowledge about guided reading by developing a community of learners. Also, from a general perspective, teachers regarded that it was beneficial having professional development located in a school context. Having opportunities for learning that are personalised and contextualised has the potential to assist teachers to understand how to align their practice with the principal's expectations for teaching and learning. Unfortunately, the particular version of professional development implemented at Emmanuel College failed to capture these pre-existing affordances amongst the teachers.

At Emmanuel College, the principal defined how the teachers were expected to engage in the desired teaching and learning. This positioned the teachers as passive and compliant implementers of the principal's vision for a consistent school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading. The teachers were not afforded autonomy to innovate on pedagogical practice nor to be involved in any decision-making process. Ongoing pressure was placed on the teachers by the principal and the change facilitator's periodic observations of their

practice in order to sustain their compliance with the principal's vision for a consistent school-wide approach to guided reading.

These teachers experienced an emotional response to their involvement in professional development that was located in their school context as highlighted by the contrasting perspective they held about this project to that of the principal and change facilitator. Many of the teachers from all career stages expressed feelings of frustration at having a change initiative imposed on them by the principal of Emmanuel College. This subjective feeling was expressed most prominently by teachers in their second career stage when discussing their experiences with the principal and change facilitator's leadership at Emmanuel College. These teachers felt a considerable disconnect between their perception of an effective high-quality teacher, and the role they were forced to play by the principal and change facilitator at Emmanuel College. These teachers felt that their quality of practice had been limited to a proficient standard as they had been confined to working with only one change facilitator since the change initiative was introduced in 2005 and forced to implement what they perceived to be a single generic 'standard style' of practice. Moreover, most teachers reported that the change facilitator's interpersonal skills were a cause of annoyance, and they expressed reservations regarding the depth of her professional knowledge as she presented pedagogical practice in the absence of theory.

Hence, the teachers' sense of being disempowered as educators elicited a negative subjective response to the principal's change initiative. This response was magnified by the culture of blame promulgated by the principal once the initial outcomes of the change initiative began to wane, and this heightened the teachers' sense of distrust with regard to the principal and the change facilitator. The change initiative at Emmanuel College was implemented in a directive and authoritative manner, and this had a deleterious effect on teachers' enthusiasm towards teaching reading and their perception of their quality as educators.

This exploration of the research data has provided insight into the many potential ways that the particular change initiative at Emmanuel College was likely to have caused important phenomenological responses within the teachers. The next chapter will discuss the resultant findings from this research in far more detail.

CHAPTER SIX
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings from this research that explores teachers' phenomenological experiences of a change initiative in a single-school context. Data were collected from participants during two stages. At the Exploration Stage, document analysis occurred and all 28 teachers at Emmanuel College completed an online teacher survey. At the Inspection Stage, the principal, change facilitator, and 16 teachers each participated in a semi-structured interview. Data were analysed, and data were presented in the previous chapter under the themes: Predispositions, Engagement, Teacher Learning, Leadership, and Experiences. In this chapter, the discussion of the findings occurs in relation to the four research questions that emerged from the literature review.

In order to present a coherent discussion, this chapter will begin by exploring the level of commonality that was apparent in the responses to change reported by most teachers at Emmanuel College. It is important to note that professionalism is not one and the same as professional identity. On the one hand, most of the teachers at Emmanuel College tried to be a professional and act on the expectations that were imposed on them by the principal and change facilitator. However, the majority of teachers at this school felt that in their quest to be seen as a professional, they had to surrender their individuality. These teachers felt that having to engage in teacher learning about guided reading within their school context led to them experiencing a sense of de-professionalisation. Their ability to exercise teacher voice and be autonomous was eroded by the principal's imposed expectations for the teaching of guided reading. This situation led to most teachers at Emmanuel College reporting feelings of frustration as their experiences juxtaposed their idealised perceptions of their role as a teacher of guided reading, and this had a deleterious effect on their professional identity. In this chapter, teacher responses to the change initiative at Emmanuel College are discussed in relation to the five dimensions of professional identity proposed by Crow and his colleagues (2016).

Also discussed in this chapter is the way that the change was enacted within the specific school context as influenced by those who were leading it, namely the principal and his nominated change facilitator. Their style of leadership can position teachers as active agents

of change or alternatively as passive recipients of imposed expectations. Hence, this chapter concludes by discussing the leadership styles of the principal and change facilitator at Emmanuel College, and the resultant effects that their styles had on the teachers' phenomenological responses to the principal's change initiative.

6.2 Research Question:

In what ways did the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College impact on the professional identity of the teachers?

A teacher's professional identity is the lens through which they view themselves, and it influences the extent to which they attach meaning to themselves and their experiences within a school context (Beijaard et al. 2004; Crow et al. 2016). Professional identity is regarded as a relational construct rather than a fixed phenomenon (Beijaard et al. 2004). The social interactions and communications that individuals have with others are pivotal factors that influence their formation and ongoing development of a professional identity (Beijaard et al. 2004; Day & Leithwood, 2007; O'Connor, 2008). At Emmanuel College, the principal's change initiative was intended to facilitate a high level of interaction between teachers and the change facilitator over an extended period of time. It could be presumed that this high level of interaction between the teachers and the change facilitator at Emmanuel College would have positively fostered each teacher's sense of professional identity as a teacher of guided reading. In order to explore the influence of the Emmanuel College educational change initiative on the teachers' sense of professional identity, Crow et al.'s framework (2016) is used. This framework proposes the existence of the following five dimensions of professional identity: political, historical/cultural, narrative, epistemic, and emotional. Each of these dimensions of professional identity is explored in relation to the teachers' perceptions of the change initiative introduced at Emmanuel College.

The political dimension is Crow et al.'s (2016) first dimension of professional identity. In this current era of education, the power structures that exist at a national and local context level seek to define what constitutes quality teaching, and this has an impact on how teachers engage in teaching and learning today. The Professional Standards for Teachers (Education Services Australia, 2011a) have been developed by AITSL and endorsed by the Australian Government. They define not only the level of Professional Knowledge and Practice that teachers at each career stage must have, but also the level of social interaction and engagement that is expected of teachers at each career stage. This document seeks to present

teaching as a quantifiable and measurable phenomenon, rather than acknowledging that there is a non-tangible and invisible component that influences teacher quality (Barr & Mellor, 2016). The political influence on education in the current era has led to a re-conceptualisation of the teaching profession. It has had an impact on the way teachers are encouraged to engage in professional development, the way they are expected to implement pedagogical practice, and the level of interaction they are to have with their colleagues and other community members. This shift can have an influence on a teacher's sense of professional identity.

It can be argued that the underlying principles of the national and state-level teacher quality reform agendas resonated with the perspective of the principal at Emmanuel College. The principal had a strong business-driven mindset, and this seemed to be underscored by a desire for control and performance. This mindset would have been influenced, to some extent, by the principal's business-management experience prior to entering the education profession as a mature-age person. Fullan (1991) argues that principals driven by a business-type of mindset seek value for money and expect a return on their financial investment. This perspective was evident in the Emmanuel College principal's comment regarding his perception of the effect that school-wide expenditure on professional development for teachers was having on students' standard of achievement in reading. During his semi-structured interview, the principal shared his frustration about the "millions of dollars" that he felt had "been wasted" over the years as he perceived there was "no measurable improvement evident in student achievement data for reading". The diversity with which teachers engaged in teaching and learning prior to the change initiative was a point of contention for the principal as his mindset was geared towards expecting employee consistency, organisational productivity, and value for money.

The principal introduced his change agenda at Emmanuel College with the intention of raising the quality of teaching at his school. His desire to target teacher quality aligns with the agenda pervading the political context of the mid-2000s. By 2008, the National Partnership Agreement for Improving Teacher Quality (Council of Australian Governments, 2008a) was developed and it was premised on the notion that teacher quality in Australian schools was deemed to be insufficient. The following year, Masters (2009) claimed that teacher quality was a key contributor to students' standard of achievement. The Emmanuel College principal felt the national and state-level teacher quality reform agendas validated his drive to promulgate a school-wide culture of centralised control and an expectation for

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increased performativity from all of his teachers. The culture of individualism, isolation, and professional autonomy that teachers had experienced at Emmanuel College was replaced by the principal's exercising of authoritative control in order to achieve teacher compliance with his school-wide expectations for teaching and learning. De-privatisation of classrooms became a key aspect of the principal's change initiative, as he desired transparency in teachers' pedagogical practice and accountability for their quality of teaching.

As a consequence of his vision, the principal fostered a school culture that was underscored by control, compliance, and accountability, and this had a detrimental impact on the professional identity of many of the Emmanuel College teachers. Although the proposed change initiative was compliant with the political agenda, it seemed to ignore or overlook the personal agenda of many of the teachers. The principal's approach to the change initiative at Emmanuel College left most of the teachers feeling that he regarded increased student performance (as measured on tests of reading achievement) to be of more importance than respecting their professionalism and sense of professional identity. This feeling was reinforced by teacher interactions with the principal during staff meetings, and also by some of the content expressed in staff emails. In both of these forums, teachers felt that the principal intentionally asserted his power and authority over them.

Although, the principal accepted the right of teachers to express an opinion, he was not afraid to adopt a direct manner in order to reinforce his non-negotiable expectations for compliance with the pedagogical practice modelled by the change facilitator. During his semi-structured interview, the principal reaffirmed the mindset that underscored his interactions with the teachers at Emmanuel College. Teachers were consistently told by the principal that their collective attempts at conforming to the school-wide approach to guided reading had "failed to meet his expectations". Continually being made to feel that they were the cause of students' poor standard of achievement in reading was a source of ongoing frustration for many of the teachers. These teachers felt they were giving it their all and yet they were consistently left feeling by the principal that they weren't good enough. The principal considered his 'blame the teachers' quality' approach would motivate them to strive to improve their teaching of guided reading. Instead, many of the teachers became demotivated towards embracing the change initiative.

Arguably, the political manner by which the principal introduced and implemented the educational change at Emmanuel College produced a detrimental impact on the professional

identity of most of the teachers. The external political agenda with respect to national concerns about teacher quality seemed to be used as a reason to universally question, in a somewhat 'Bully-boy' unsubstantiated fashion, the professional competency of each and every Emmanuel College teacher. Furthermore, his use of authoritative power to ignore contrary opinions raised by teachers, and to coerce uniform compliance with the proposed school-wide practices, reflect a predominantly politically-based leadership style, which diminished the professional identity of many of the teachers.

The second dimension of professional identity proposed by Crow et al. (2016) is the historical/cultural [situated] dimension. Teachers tend to define themselves in terms of the way they teach. As Barr and Mellor (2016) explained, teaching is not something that teachers '*do*', but rather it encapsulates their identity and is something that they '*are*'. It can be argued that the way that a teacher teaches a class is reflective of their personality, their values, and their philosophy on education. This dimension acknowledges that not only are teacher identities shaped by their individualised personal and professional characteristics, these are also continually being redefined and legitimated by the particular social context in which they are situated (Crow et al. 2016). Each social context has particularistic norms, values, historical practices, and expectations that shape the way each teacher 'crafts' their pedagogical practice (Nias, 1989). In some school contexts, teachers may be regarded as autonomous professionals and are permitted to 'craft' their practice in a way that reflects and strengthens their individualised professional identity (Beijaard et al. 2004). However, often teacher identities are "shaped by and constructed within potentially contradictory interests and ideologies, competing conceptions of rights and responsibilities of teachers, and differing ways of understanding success or effectiveness" (Robinson & McMillan, 2006, p. 33).

When the change initiative was initially introduced at Emmanuel College, teachers reported positive objective responses to having class-based opportunities for teacher learning. At this point in time, the teachers seemed to have strong professional identities and there was an initial sense of eagerness amongst the teachers about having the opportunity to experience further learning within their school context. Teachers were generally very positive towards the idea of the change initiative as they assumed that this style of learning would provide them with further support to learn new strategies that could support them to meet the learning needs of students in their classes. However, the principal did not introduce the change initiative with the intention of supporting further development of the teachers' personalised

repertoire of practices or strengthening their professional identities. Rather, it was introduced for the purpose of consistently promulgating throughout the whole school the principal's personally preferred style of pedagogical practice for the teaching of guided reading.

The situated context-based expectations for the teaching of guided reading at Emmanuel College were developed and made explicit by the principal. At this school, the change facilitator was given the authority by the principal to access teachers' classrooms in order to model the proposed preferred pedagogical practice. Teachers were expected to immediately comply with the change facilitator's modelled pedagogical practice. The change facilitator conducted class-based periodic observations of teachers' practice and this enabled her to provide teachers with personalised feedback relating to their degree of compliance with the expected practice for guided reading. Thus, the approach to teacher learning at Emmanuel College required teachers to abandon the repertoire of practices on which their professional identity had been based, and instead become compliant implementers of an imposed school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading. This expectation for compliance with the situated expectations of the principal at Emmanuel College strikes at the core of what nurtures a teacher's sense of professional identity. Teachers define themselves by their 'craft' and by having to forego this, they can perceive they are abandoning their true self (Nias, 1989; Turney, 1969).

At Emmanuel College, the professional identities of most of the teachers were considerably impacted by the principal's ideologies, rules, and expectations regarding how they were to engage in guided reading teaching and learning. The principal's primary emphasis was placed on what teachers *'do'* in terms of their teaching of guided reading rather than on who they *'are'* as an educator. By placing such a strong and continued emphasis on controlling teachers' pedagogical practice, the principal was, in turn, considerably affecting the professional identities of teachers at Emmanuel College because he was at the very least challenging, if not undermining, their previously constructed professional understandings of how they can best teach. It can be argued that the situated expectations of the principal eroded many teachers' sense of professional identity, rather than strengthened it.

Crow et al.'s (2016) third dimension of professional identity is the narrative [personal] dimension. It was the deliberate intention of the Emmanuel College principal to not only control the situated characteristics in which the teaching of guided reading occurred, but also

to eliminate the variation that existed due to a teacher's personalised styles of teaching. Teachers at Emmanuel College were not permitted by the principal to exercise autonomy and to make their own discretionary decisions regarding how they engaged in the teaching and learning of guided reading. Instead, these teachers were limited to having only class-based opportunities for teacher learning and were delivered by the same change facilitator during the entire duration of this research period. Lindeman (1926) argues that education should not involve vicarious substitution of someone else's experiences and knowledge, yet this was the expectation placed on teachers at Emmanuel College.

Having their personal style of teaching negated in lieu of promulgating the change facilitator's style of teaching was a significant point of contention for the teachers at the research school. Huberman (1989) explains that when teachers enter the profession, they begin to build their professional identity and they typically engage in experimentation with pedagogical practice in order to establish a 'personal style' of teaching. However, at Emmanuel College, the principal's expectation was that teachers only replicate the change facilitator's modelled practice. By doing this, the principal negated these teachers' ability to develop an authentic professional identity as they entered the profession. Even the teachers in their second, third, or fourth career stage had to forego their own 'personal style' of teaching when the change initiative was introduced or when they commenced employment at Emmanuel College. The 'personal style' of teaching that teachers construct during their career is connected to and is reflective of their professional identity (Barr & Mellor, 2016). Having to abandon their own choice of pedagogical practice and embrace an imposed 'standard style' of practice can be a very emotive experience for teachers.

The most vociferous responses about having to surrender their 'personal style' of teaching came from teachers at Emmanuel College who were in their second career stage. Huberman (1989) maintained that these teachers strive to stand out as being highly competent professionals and they seek to further define their professional identity by embracing opportunities to be autonomous. However, the experience of this group of teachers at Emmanuel College negated the opportunity for this to occur. Teachers in their second career stage considered that the principal's change initiative forced each Emmanuel College teacher to be "robots" of each other (2A: Monica) as they were required to teach guided reading according to the principal's idea and the facilitator's modelled style" (2C: Sally). Teachers argued that the purpose of forcing teachers to be consistent doing this was to enable comparisons to be made regarding the performance of staff.

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The principal's change initiative also posed a considerable challenge for teachers in their third and fourth career stage. Their sense of professional identity had been built on a personally constructed view of their professional experiences over the years of their employment (Beijaard et al. 2004; Crow et al. 2016), and this had suggested to them that they were competent and capable professionals. Yet, their experience at Emmanuel College was that the change facilitator was required to critique their performance, give them some negative feedback, and then provide the principal "with information about how well [they] were meeting his expectations" regarding the implementation of a "uniformed approach" to guided reading (4A: Bert).

While Newmann et al. (2000), Ingvarson et al. (2005) and Desimone (2009) argue that providing teachers with feedback is an element of effective professional development, many teachers at Emmanuel College reported that experiencing critiques of their performance was a confronting experience since it was essentially negative and conveyed little, if any, appreciation of personal strengths. Subjective responses can influence the way that people think about themselves and how they choose to act in future situations (Hargreaves, 1994, 1998, 2005; Nias, 1989, 1996; O'Connor, 2008; Zembylas, 2003). These feedback experiences had affected the way that most teachers at Emmanuel College viewed their competency as well as their perception of their professional identity.

The fourth dimension proposed by Crow et al. (2016) is the epistemic dimension of professional identity. This dimension is premised on recognising that professional identity is developed through an active process of meaning making (Crow et al. 2016). As the development of a professional identity is an active process of meaning making, it is considerably influenced by the specific demands of the context in which a teacher teaches. As teachers enter a school context or are presented with a change within that context, they initially establish a provisional identity of themselves as a teacher and/or learner at that moment in time (Ibarra, 1999). This identity is then shaped and refined over time by their social interactions and professional experiences within their context and this leads to a more fully established sense of professional identity (Crow et al. 2016). Teacher identities are, however, not fixed, but rather are in a constant state of accommodation and assimilation (Vygostky, 1978). Teachers continually and actively construct a personal sense of identity "in the learning process to construct their own knowledge, to make sense of the learning, and to apply what is learned" (Chan, 2010, p. 33). Learning is embedded in and evolves out

of the social interactions and active experiences that a teacher has within the sociocultural community of their school context (Ahedo, 2009; Webster-Wright, 2009).

Traditionally teaching was viewed as being a profession that comprised both a visible and invisible dimension (Barr & Mellor, 2016). High-quality teachers were often regarded as those who actively strove to 'bring the curriculum alive' for each student in an innovative and creative manner. Barr and Mellor (2016) explain that, traditionally, teachers' saw it as their professional role to be someone who inspired, motivated, and made a difference in the lives of students both academically and holistically. To realise this, teachers differentiated not only their delivery of class-based lessons, but they also made individual discretionary adjustments to the way they interacted and communicated with students in an effort to meet their social, emotional, physical, and academic needs. However, it can be argued that within the educational change context at Emmanuel College there was little place for teachers to actively demonstrate individual innovativeness and creativity. This aligns with Barr and Mellor's (2016) position as they maintain that an imposed teacher quality reform agenda provides little scope for individuality, flexibility, and variability. The educational climate at Emmanuel College presented a conundrum for teachers as they strove to foster their professional identity by balancing what they held to be key tenets of a quality teacher with that being defined by the principal of their school.

At the time that the principal introduced the change initiative at Emmanuel College, teacher responses suggested that they had a positive sense of professional identity and they were eager to engage in opportunities for teacher learning. This perception shaped their provisional identity when the change initiative was being first introduced. However, over time, most teachers' sense of professional identity shifted as it was influenced by the meaning that they attributed to each interaction with the principal and the change facilitator, to their class-based experiences of tightly controlled teacher learning, to the lack of professional appreciation from the principal or the change facilitator, and to the laying of blame upon them when presumed outcomes failed to eventuate. Over time, many Emmanuel College teachers came to realise that they were not permitted to be active learners, and that seeking to do so attracted 'contingent punishment' from the principal who exercised management-by-exception by allocating teachers additional remedial learning opportunities with the change facilitator (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Many Emmanuel College teachers perceived they had to forego being an active learner and instead become a passive and compliant implementer of the principal's vision for a school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading. Thus, these teachers deeply resented having to surrender their identity and comply with the imposed standard-style of practice modelled by the change facilitator. These teachers at Emmanuel College indicated that they found it frustrating being told what they had to do and forced by the principal and change facilitator to comply with the expectations for the teaching of guided reading. They felt powerless against the principal and change facilitator. For these teachers, the perception was that they were expected to either comply with the principal's demands or leave the school. Indeed, this perception was in alignment with the intentions of the principal. In his semi-structured interview, the principal explained that he tried to make it very clear to teachers during his interactions at staff meetings and in email communications that teachers could accept the tenets of his change initiative or seek employment elsewhere.

Knowles (1998) argued that when teachers are actively involved in their learning and they understand and value the purpose of learning new knowledge and practice for themselves and/or their students, they are more likely to be motivated to exert time and effort to embrace change to their pedagogical practice. However, Knowles (1998) adds that if teachers "feel that others are imposing their wills on them", they tend to "resent and resist [these] situations" (p. 65). Many of the Emmanuel College teachers felt very strongly about having a particular style of pedagogical practice imposed on them. They expressed a clear sense of de-motivation towards the change initiative, and they were fearful of the repercussions for demonstrating non-compliance with the principal's expectations. Simply, for these teachers the change initiative processes had adversely affected the epistemic dimension of their professional identity.

The fifth dimension of professional identity is the emotional dimension (Crow et al. 2016). Embracing change is an emotionally laden task (Kelchtermans, 2005). The level of emotion that is expressed by teachers highlights what is *at stake* for them when having to engage in change (Blumer, 1969; Handberg et al. 2015; Van Veen et al. 2005). Teachers are more likely to present with a positive sense of identity and express feelings of happiness and belonging within a particular context when they feel that their professional purpose is being fulfilled (Oatley, 1991). When teachers experience positive emotions, they demonstrate a greater commitment of time and effort to engage in opportunities for teacher learning and they more actively strive to deliver high-quality class-based pedagogical practice

(Hargreaves, 1998). Feelings of positivity and heightened levels of motivation can lead teachers to be more willingly open to the potential for stress in order to foster the level of knowledge, practice, and engagement that can be of benefit to student learning (Lasky, 2005). When teachers do this, they are demonstrating what Lasky (2005) referred to as willing vulnerability.

Conversely, when teachers feel their labour of love is being exploited, or their sense of purpose is being negated, or when they feel the demands placed on them within their school context are contrary to their vision for teaching and learning, they can experience a negative subjective response (Hargreaves, 1998). Moreover, Schmidt and Datnow (2005) indicate that change initiatives that occur at the classroom level typically elicit a more intense emotional response from teachers than the introduction of school-level initiatives. This is attributed to the fact that classroom level reforms directly affect the teacher's pedagogical practice and/or their relationships with students, which lie at the very heart of teaching (Kelchtermans, 2005). Having to adjust or abandon pedagogical practice that reflects a teacher's deeply held beliefs regarding what constitutes good teaching, can be perceived as an attack on their self-esteem and their professional identity (Kelchtermans, 2005). When this occurs, teachers can often demonstrate emotional resistance by displaying feelings of frustration, anger, or guilt (Hargreaves, 1998; Zembylas, 2003, 2005). When teachers are in situations where they feel professionally threatened, fearful, or highly anxious they can demonstrate protective vulnerability (Lasky, 2005). If this occurs, then teachers can be less inclined to be open to risk taking to build professional relationships, engage in opportunities for teacher learning, and extend students' learning (Lasky, 2005). Arguably, both of Lasky's (2005) types of vulnerability were demonstrated by the Emmanuel College teachers during the period of this research.

When the change initiative was introduced at Emmanuel College, the general response from the teachers to the change was positive. The teachers had a confident attitude towards professional learning and an eagerness to extend their repertoire of pedagogical practice. Most of the teachers embraced the idea learning in their school context as they felt it would support them to enhance the quality of their pedagogical practice for guided reading. They also considered the school-wide nature of the change initiative could provide them with authentic and contextually-relevant opportunities for professional conversations with their colleagues. Thus, it can be argued that at the introduction of the change initiative, the Emmanuel College teachers displayed what Lasky (2005) defined as willing vulnerability.

However, for many of these teachers, their willingness to remain vulnerable, and to be continually open to risk taking and critique was quickly diminished by the unexpected loss of control and limited involvement they had in shaping the change initiative (Reio, 2005).

The teachers' interactions with the change facilitator negatively influenced their professional identity from an emotional perspective. Rather than the teacher's social interactions with the change facilitator affirming and building their sense of professional identity, many of the teachers perceived that their interactions were premised on criticism, prescription, and pressure. There was the perception amongst many teachers that the change facilitator would "nit-pick" in order to find something to be negative about with regards to their pedagogical practice. Feedback was invariably negative giving the impression that there was nothing that was positive happening in the class. These teachers felt that the change facilitator consistently left them feeling emotionally deflated after giving them feedback about their implementation of guided reading. This process affected teachers' sense of self-worth and self-confidence as it continually undermined their feelings of adequacy as professionals and, thereby, produced a heightened emotional reaction. In order to preserve a teacher's sense of self-worth, Glickman (2002) argues that a change facilitator should begin a feedback process with a general discussion rather than by making negative judgements about a teacher's effectiveness or lack thereof. This method contrasted the way that the teachers at Emmanuel College perceived the change facilitator approached the provision of feedback about their pedagogical practice. Teachers at Emmanuel College began demonstrating protective vulnerability (Lasky, 2005). The more contact these teachers had with the change facilitator, the more they dreaded further such meetings since their sense of professionalism seemed to be diminished rather than enriched after each meeting.

In summary, it has been shown that the Emmanuel College change initiative described in this study detrimentally influenced all five of the professional identity dimensions posited by Crow and his colleagues (2016) thereby ultimately undermining any potential benefits of the process. When teachers feel that a change initiative is having a negative effect on their professional identity they can develop protective vulnerability coping strategies (Blase, 1988). As a consequence, teachers may withdraw their commitment to the proposed change, limit their desire to engage in future opportunities for teacher learning, and/or present with a spirit of disempowerment and demoralisation (Nias, 1991; Reio, 2005). It can be argued that at Emmanuel College, most teachers from each career stage demonstrated protective

vulnerability. The teachers' initial positive objective responses to the introduction of the change initiative at Emmanuel College dissipated over time. Although these teachers continued to demonstrate compliance for fear of reprimand, there was a clear lack of interest expressed by the teachers and a spirit of de-motivation from them with regard to engaging in opportunities to work with the change facilitator. At Emmanuel College, there was a generalised spirit of disenchantment towards teaching and learning that pervaded the perceptions of teachers at each career stage because their professional identities were under serious threat.

The principal of Emmanuel College intended for the change initiative to build teacher quality and to have a positive effect on student achievement outcomes. However, Lasky (2005) argues that protective vulnerability inhibits the development of quality teaching. It can be argued that the initial spike in student achievement in reading (as measured by state and then national testing) reflected a general sense of willing vulnerability amongst the teachers along with a strong positive emotional investment towards the proposed change. However, student achievement then plateaued before showing a generalised trend of decline in performance. According to Lasky's (2005) position, these data may be suggestive of the emergence and then the promulgation of a sense of protective vulnerability amongst the teachers.

Instead of the principal and change facilitator of Emmanuel College fostering a school culture whereby teachers experienced positive subjective responses to the change initiative, they continued to foster a school culture that elicited contrary teacher subjective responses. The principal of Emmanuel College continued to persist with his change initiative and the same facilitator, despite teachers reporting that their experience was not only frustrating and nerve-racking, it made them feel inadequate, and it deflated their confidence and sense of professional identity. The data gathered in this research suggests that the principal chose to ignore clearly articulated concerns about the detrimental impact of the change initiative upon the professional identities of most of his teaching staff. Consequently, he eventually lost their necessary support and engagement for the change, and thereby jeopardised its success.

6.3 Research Question:

How do teachers from different career stages respond to the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College?

School contexts typically contain teachers who are at varying stages along their career pathway. At each career stage, teachers experience different types of life events and these can have a varied influence on the way that they engage in teaching and learning. It is plausible that any variation in a teacher's phenomenological response to the principal's change initiative at Emmanuel College could be attributed to a career stage factor rather than by the actual tenets of the change initiative. For this research, the teachers' responses to the principal's change initiative are explored in relation to what Huberman (1989) indicated may be the typical response of teachers at each career stage.

Huberman's (1989) career stage model was developed during the era where teachers were positioned as autonomous and collegial professionals. This staged model sought to illustrate the trajectories of teachers throughout their career. Huberman (1989) acknowledged that teachers' career "journeys are not adequately linear, predictable or identical" (p. 264). However, he does suggest that there is some general commonality in the distinctive orientation that teachers have, at particular stages of their life and career regarding their world and the role they play in it. At the time data were collected, the teachers at Emmanuel College spanned the first four of Huberman's (1989) career stages. Teachers from each of these stages presented with a positive attitude towards engaging in opportunities for teacher learning, and they recognised the benefits of this being both contextualised and personalised. While the teachers across each of the four career stages shared commonality in their objective response to experiencing teacher learning within the context of Emmanuel College, it could be anticipated that there would be some variation in their subjective responses to the change and that this could be attributed to their distinctive orientations at their particular career stage.

Teachers in their first career stage typically present with a sense of naivety and an openness to embrace all opportunities for learning as they have not yet developed a professional memory that can be used as the lens to interpret their experiences (Huberman, 1989). The teachers at Emmanuel College, who were entering the profession acknowledged it was beneficial being shown a way to implement guided reading in their classroom. They were initially willing to embrace the modelled practice as they did not already have an established repertoire of pedagogy, and they preferred to adopt this rather than be perceived as floundering as a teacher. However, with time, these teachers explained that their willingness began to dissipate as they felt a sense of restriction because they could not explore other practices with a view to extend their repertoire of pedagogy for the teaching of guided

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reading. Feelings of frustration began to surface as teachers came to the realisation that they were limited to learning and implementing *only* the change facilitator's modelled practice for guided reading.

By the second stage of a teacher's career, they see themselves as a teacher and their professional experiences and interactions with others have reinforced their perception of this (McCormick & Barnett, 2006). They strive to be autonomous and actively seek opportunities to innovate on their pedagogical practice in order to build their professional repertoire of pedagogy. At Emmanuel College, the teachers' sense of frustration at being restricted to the change facilitator's "standard style" of practice (2A: Monica) became particularly pronounced. This is not surprising as experiencing a sense of restriction at this juncture contradicts the professional needs of teachers at this career stage (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). The principal's expectation of a unified school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading required a high level of assimilation for the teacher's practice, yet provided no avenue for differentiation. Brewer (1991) explained that this approach results in teachers seeking to distinguish themselves from the group in word and/or action and it leads to a high level of resistance. Brewer's (1991) comments were reflected in the teachers' responses during their semi-structured interviews. During their interviews, each of the teachers at this career stage shared their struggle with having to comply with the "standard style" of pedagogy, and they cited instances whereby they sought to differentiate themselves from their colleagues by using a self-selected innovative pedagogical practice for guided reading. From these teachers' experiences, it was apparent that the principal utilised a management-by-exception [passive] process to address each of these instances (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Teachers' responses indicated that the principal sought to coerce staff into compliance with his perspective and expectations by utilising discipline, coercion, and negative feedback.

Instead of teachers at their second career stage building a positive sense of identity and self-efficacy as teachers of guided reading, their social interactions with the principal and change facilitator resulted in the development of feelings to the contrary. These teachers endeavoured to implement the facilitator's modelled practice while also making some adjustments to their guided reading lessons to align them more closely with the learning needs of their students. However, for these teachers, their interactions with the principal and change facilitator led them to feel that they "were doing it all wrong" because they were not being "robots" (2A: Monica) or "replicas of each other" and implementing the "standard style" of guided reading lesson expected at Emmanuel College. The contradiction between

what these particular teachers perceived a quality teacher does, and what they were expected to do at Emmanuel College, created a heightened sense of confusion and frustration for them at this important developmental stage in their career. These teachers reported that their sense of self-efficacy was hindered by their experiences at Emmanuel College rather than being nurtured.

There was a noticeable misalignment beginning to emerge between the way that teachers saw themselves as educators and the way that Huberman (1989) described that such teachers typically felt when transitioning from the second stage of their career. Huberman (1989) explained that teachers typically transition from the second career stage feeling highly efficacious, autonomous, and innovative and they also present with a strong sense of enthusiasm towards the teaching profession. These positive subjective feelings lead teachers towards Huberman's (1989) third stage, experimentation/diversification. At this stage, teachers eagerly engage in opportunities for teacher learning and they strive to expand their repertoire of pedagogical practice. This stage is referred to as the 'golden stage' of teaching as teachers are not only very confident in their ability to teach, but they are also typically extremely capable and high-quality educators (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

But it is acknowledged that not every third career stage teacher reaches this path. The alternate pathway through the third stage is termed by Huberman (1989) as stocktaking/interrogation. Teachers who transition through this alternate pathway present with feelings of monotony towards their school experiences, and they feel constrained by imposed work pressures and their internalised feelings of tension (Huberman, 1989).

In past decades, teachers have been permitted to show autonomy in their teaching and learning and this has afforded them the opportunity to be experimental with regard to their pedagogical practice (Hargreaves, 2000; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). However, at Emmanuel College, the principal expected each and every teacher to consistently comply with a prescribed school-wide approach to guided reading. This expectation negated a teacher's opportunity to transition to Huberman's (1989) typical third stage titled the experimentation/diversification stage. Those teachers at Emmanuel College who were in their third career stage when the principal's change initiative was introduced were forced to shift from the experimentation/diversification stage to the alternate and far less desirable stocktaking/interrogation stage. The use of the word "forced" was consistently used by all

teachers at this stage to describe their experience when the change initiative was introduced at Emmanuel College.

Moreover, Huberman (1989) explained that in order to shift teachers from the experimentation/diversification stage to the alternative stocktaking/interrogation stage, they needed to experience heightened and ongoing levels of work pressure. During the semi-structured interviews, teachers from all career stages perceived that the principal utilised intentional pressure to make them comply with his expectations. The principal explained that he considered that it was necessary to apply pressure if he was to get teachers to move away, and stay away, from what could be called 'the experimentation stage'. Teachers from all career stages, not just those in the third career stage, found it challenging working within a school context underscored by what they described as being an "enormous" (2C: Sally) level of work pressure.

At Emmanuel College, teachers reported that there was no avenue for experimentation with guided reading, and this in turn, enabled teachers to have only one pathway through the third stage of their career, and that was through the stocktaking/interrogation stage. Teachers at this stage spoke of their "keenness to become highly competent professionals" (3E: Paula), yet they also expressed feelings of deflation due to being "restricted to the facilitator's practice" (3C: Jenny). These teachers in particular felt a sense of disempowerment because they perceived their social interactions with the facilitator cultivated nothing more than a proficient standard of competency. Furthermore, the teachers' interpretation of the principal's vision for change was that he intended for his approach to teacher learning to raise the quality of their pedagogical practice, so they were highly capable professionals, yet their experience contradicted this view.

Huberman (1989) claimed that teachers at the stocktaking/interrogation career stage have had their sense of enthusiasm and motivation eroded and they are left with feelings of pessimism and monotony. These feelings affected the lens through which these particular teachers at Emmanuel College viewed their experience with learning in a school context. The depth of teachers' sense of monotony with the principal's approach to teacher learning was evident in Leila's (3D) comment whereby she likened the teachers at Emmanuel College to mice who were "stuck in a wheel". Having a sense of monotony shapes the way these teachers viewed their professional world, it influenced their style of interaction with others, and it affected their level of will and commitment towards future opportunities for learning.

As Fullan (1993) explains, when teachers are left feeling frustrated and disempowered it forces them to reassess the emotional investment that they want to make in their job. For teachers at this particular third career stage, the principal's expectation for teachers to engage in learning within the school context became perceived as more of a tedious and laborious chore than as a professionally beneficial experience.

By the fourth career stage, Huberman (1989) explained that teachers' career trajectory typically diversifies into four subcategories of the serenity/conservatism and affective distance stages. At Emmanuel College, the teachers at this fourth career stage clustered in the disenchanted sub-trajectory. Teachers in this subcategory typically have had the magic for teaching eroded along with their idealism and optimism for learning and change (Huberman, 1989). As experienced teachers, those in their fourth career stage would be no stranger to change as initiatives would have been introduced throughout their years of teaching, focuses would have shifted, resources may have been added and then withdrawn, and expectations would have varied due to new leaders and/or curriculum changes (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). While disenchanted teachers continue to objectively support change initiatives, they do so with a progressively decreased level of emotional commitment each time "the rug [gets] pulled from under their feet" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 66).

From the semi-structured interview comments, it was apparent that the fourth career stage teachers' objective responses to change were positive, and they valued professional renewal and participation in lifelong learning. However, the subjectivity of this group of teachers played an influential role in shaping their view of their experiences of the change explored in this research. The principal's change initiative sought to remove teachers' sense of individuality and creativity with respect to their pedagogical practice, and instead replace this with a consistent school-wide approach to guided reading. Thus, the experienced teachers at Emmanuel College were required to abandon their pedagogical practice, which had underscored their repertoire for approximately two decades. This group of teachers at Emmanuel College felt that this was done without justification or reference to any theoretical underpinning. This led to these teachers feeling a sense of suspicion towards the motives of the principal and they questioned the professional credibility of the change facilitator. This reflects Bailey's (2000) assertion that teachers at this career stage are the most vociferous when they perceive that expectations are being imposed on them, or when they suspect that the motives and capabilities of reform designers and facilitators are non-genuine.

Huberman's (1989) career stage model is premised on a typical incline in enthusiasm, motivation, capability, and confidence and this begins in the early stage of a teacher's career. The peak occurs usually in the third career stage and is followed by a gradual decline in these characteristics until the fifth career stage, which involves a teacher's disengagement or retirement from the profession (Huberman, 1989). This typical trajectory is, however, premised on the traditional notion of a teacher, that is, one who is afforded autonomy, individuality, and social and collegial interaction during opportunities for learning. Data from teachers at the research school contrasted markedly with this typical career progression presented by Huberman (1989). Rather than the teachers' motivation and enthusiasm towards teaching building progressively and peaking at the mid-career point, it highlighted a downward decline that commenced right from the teachers in their first career stage, and was evident throughout each subsequent career stage. It was at the first career stage where teachers began to express frustration at being limited to the "standard style" of pedagogy modelled by the change facilitator, and this became further pronounced for teachers in their second career stage. Thus, by the third stage, these teachers' feelings of enthusiasm, motivation, and self-efficacy had further regressed into negative subjective feelings of disempowerment and monotony. Feelings of disenchantment characterised teachers in their fourth career stage.

Also of note is Huberman's (1989) argument that within a staff there are typically a body of teachers from the second and third career stage whose high levels of enthusiasm and motivation can be harnessed to drive a change initiative within a school context. These teachers' sense of positivity is often the impetus for fostering change with other teachers within a particular school context (Huberman, 1989). This is to argue that the enthusiasm and positivity of some teachers can overcome the hesitancy or even resistance in others. However, at Emmanuel College, the way the principal enacted the particular change initiative dissipated most teachers' feelings of positivity and instead cultivated generalised feelings of frustration, monotony, and disempowerment within his staff. This type of subjective frame of reference shaped the way that most of the teachers approached their opportunities for learning, the way they enacted guided reading within their classrooms, and it underpinned how they interacted with the change facilitator. It can be argued that the way that the teachers at Emmanuel College were expected to engage in teaching and learning cultivated negative subjective responses and this was not conducive to genuinely enhancing the quality of their professional knowledge and practice.

Generally, the career stage of a teacher could explain the variation in response to the change initiative introduced at Emmanuel College. However, analysis of data from the teachers' semi-structured interviews highlights a departure from what Huberman (1989) presented as being the typical phenomenological responses of teachers at certain career stages. Regardless of their respective career stage, most of the Emmanuel College teachers shared a common opinion of the change initiative. Thus, it can be argued that the generalised negative subjective responses from teachers at Emmanuel College can be attributed to their perceptions of the tenets underpinning the principal's change initiative, rather than their career stage.

What this highlights for principals initiating educational change is the importance of considering the individual professional needs of each teacher bringing about the change, rather than simply seeing the combined staff as a single vehicle for change. While it takes the unified efforts of many teachers to create a change, each teacher will go about their role in their own way for their own reasons. The change must be meaningful to the individual teacher if it is to gain their commitment and involvement. A successful educational change process must be flexible enough and resourced sufficiently so that it can meet the diversity of needs amongst all of the participating teachers. As suggested by the data in this particular research, a closely prescribed and controlled change initiative is unlikely to meet the needs of any participating teacher regardless of their past experiences. Hence, such a limiting initiative invariably buffs up against the phenomenological ideals and aspirations of so many of the teachers involved that its chance of success is significantly decreased.

6.4 Research Question:

In what ways do teachers feel the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College influences their sense of professionalism?

In the 1960s, teaching shifted from the pre-professional age, which had centred on a transmission style of teaching, to teachers being regarded as autonomous and collegial professionals (Hargreaves, 2000; Turney, 1969). This move to professionalism placed a greater emphasis on teachers to not only learn the 'craft' of teaching, but also to acquire the theoretical knowledge to justify their choice of pedagogical practice (Hawley & Valli, 1999). Teachers were now being seen as capable of making independent and discretionary professional decisions regarding the implementation of pedagogical practice within their

own classrooms. Furthermore, the increasing richness of the teaching profession was attributed to the growing diversity of teachers' practice and this contrasted with the pre-professional age, which sought to promulgate a culture of uniformity, control, compliance, and accountability within schools.

As an outcome of this transition to professionalism, opportunities for teacher learning, termed 'in-services', became the most common style of professional learning for teachers. This style of learning flourished during this era as teachers were positioned as professionals and viewed as autonomous and collegial learners (Hargreaves, 2000). Teachers now had the freedom to select topics of professional development that were of personal interest, to engage in professional conversation with educators beyond their own school-based context, and also to be exposed to a wide array of pedagogical practice.

Importantly, in the context of this research, this view of the teacher as a professional was evident at Emmanuel College. A common claim by these teachers was that they felt they were 'masters of their own domain' especially prior to the introduction of the principal's change initiative. As such, the teachers felt empowered to experiment with and integrate the new professional knowledge and practice that they gained from attendance at 'in-service' learning opportunities into their teaching repertoire and to use it at their discretion.

At the time when the principal first introduced the change initiative to the Emmanuel College staff, the teachers saw themselves as capable, confident, autonomous, and collegial educators. They regarded themselves as professionals. They valued having opportunities to engage in professional learning in order to regularly update the quality of their knowledge and practice. There was a strong proclivity amongst teachers at Emmanuel College to engage in professional conversation with their colleagues in order to contribute towards building a professional community of learners at this school.

When the principal introduced his change initiative at Emmanuel College, it ran contrary to the way that teaching and learning had been occurring at this school. Previously, the culture of the school had been strongly premised on teacher individualism, isolation, and autonomy, and this aligned with how teachers were positioned in what Hargreaves (2000) termed the age of the autonomous and collegial professional. It can be expected that introducing change would naturally elicit a subjective response from teachers to some degree.

This was particularly so at Emmanuel College because the principal's change initiative extended beyond being a slight adjustment to the teachers' practice and their style of learning. Rather, his change initiative sought to replace teachers' attendance at externally-located opportunities for learning by introducing a style of teacher learning that involved them working with a change facilitator within the context of their classroom. This approach required the de-privatisation of classrooms and involved the implementation of a school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading.

The principal's intention for selecting this approach was to raise teacher capacity, to make teachers accountable for the quality of their professional practice, and to make a more positive contribution to the school's performance on National testing (e.g. NAPLAN) which is reported annually on the publicly-accessible MySchool website (ACARA, 2010). The principal's strong proclivity towards performativity and accountability had a significant impact on the teachers' sense of professionalism.

Indeed, these views expressed by the principal were reflective of those being promoted by governments and academics alike where the acceptance of teacher professionalism was closely aligned with additional responsibilities and expectations. For example, Caldwell (2000) argued that with the growing recognition of teacher professionalism came the expectation of full accountability of individuals, and this accountability was towards the client, towards the company for which they were employed, and towards society as a whole. As professionals, teachers were now being viewed as needing to make a significant contribution to the future economic prosperity of the nation (Cassells et al. 2012). They were seen as responsible for raising the next generation of leaders and workers of this nation. This perspective placed greater responsibility on teachers to elevate their students' standard of performance (Cassells et al. 2012), and this was reflected in the Melbourne Declaration (MCEETYA, 2008a). The government's desire to remain increasingly competitive at an international level escalated the growing sense of accountability that was being placed on teachers. On the one hand, teacher accountability was viewed as being a mechanism to raise the professionalism of teachers. But, on the other hand, it became a turning point in the careers of teachers as it heralded a move towards creating a post-professional view of teaching (Hargreaves, 2000). This age is characterised by control, compliance, and accountability, and these key tenets reflected the pre-professionalism era.

Consequently, today's teachers are caught in the invidious position of wanting to act as professionals while being treated as non-professionals (Leaton Gray & Whitty, 2010; Ryan & Bourke, 2013; Stone-Johnson, 2014). Most teachers want to provide the best learning environment for their students (Barr & Mellor, 2016). They want to have opportunities to grow and maximise their professional knowledge in order to enrich and individualise the learning for their students. They want the professional freedom to be flexible and creative in their own idiosyncratic but professional way (Barr & Mellor, 2016). But there seems to be increasing external socio-political expectations, directives and accountabilities that control and constrain their professional freedom.

A growing culture of international competitiveness, fuelled by students' achievement on 'league tables' of performance (OECD, 2011), has led to a suite of educational reforms being introduced in Australia (ACARA, 2010, 2012; Education Queensland, 2010; Education Services Australia, 2011a, 2011b, 2012a, 2012b, 2013; MCEETYA, 2008a, 2008b). The underlying intent of these reforms has been to target the quality of teachers' professional knowledge and practice, as there has been a presumption that teacher quality is reflective of students' standard of performance on standardised tests. In the Melbourne Declaration (MCEETYA, 2008a), it is documented that the Australian government desires to be second to none in terms of student achievement. Furthermore, the Australian Education Act (2013) states the government's intention to be 'top 5 by 2025' on international 'league tables' of student achievement. Thus, the educational reforms that have been introduced into education, in an attempt to meet these future-oriented goals for the profession, have shifted the focus from 'teaching' quality to 'teacher' quality (Mockler, 2011). This change in terminology has had a considerable effect on the way teachers have been positioned as professional educators and learners.

The teacher quality agenda has heralded a shift away from providing support and encouragement for teachers to engage in pedagogical innovation and collaboration. In the comments from teachers at Emmanuel College, there was a sense of nostalgia for the past. Teachers reflected fondly on either their prior personal experience of being afforded autonomy or their constructed perception of the level of autonomy traditionally afforded to teachers. In recent times, the focus on teacher quality has led to "a desire to narrowly measure and quantify teachers' work, to standardise practice and attribute blame to teachers where their students fail to measure up" (Sachs & Mockler, 2012, p. 37). These characteristics were reflected in the reported experiences of most of the teachers at

Emmanuel College. They discussed their considerable frustration at having to surrender their sense of individuality in order to comply with a school-wide approach to guided reading, they perceived their performance was constantly being assessed by the change facilitator, and they felt fearful of being reprimanded by the principal for their students' standard of reading achievement. Thus, for the teachers at Emmanuel College to be considered as a professional educator by their principal and change facilitator, they felt that they needed to surrender their sense of professionalism. This aligns with Hargreaves and Fullan's (2012) perspective on the de-professionalisation of teachers in this post-professional era of education.

As the change initiative progressed, the teachers at Emmanuel College reported experiencing an evolving school culture premised on greater levels of control, compliance, and accountability than they had previously experienced. Teaching and learning was now being seen as a predictable process, and teachers were being held to account for the uniformity of their practice. For most of these teachers, this elevated sense of accountability forced them to shift their perspective from focusing on making a contribution to students' individual learning to being accountable to school-level expectations. There was a clear sense that teachers from all career stages wished they had the opportunity to be autonomous rather than being accountable for compliance with a school-wide approach to guided reading. These teachers reported feeling a sense of professional deflation at having to abandon their class-level teaching goals, and instead work towards implementing the principal's imposed school-wide vision for the teaching of guided reading. This experience of most of the teachers at Emmanuel College supports the perspective of Ryan and Bourke (2013) who argue that the professionalism of teachers today is becoming gauged by their "behaviour rather than their attitudes or intellectuality" (p. 3). Stone-Johnson's (2014) perspective is that teachers in this current era of education perceive that they have no choice but to surrender their professionalism.

During the semi-structured interviews with teachers, it was apparent that they considered relevance and accountability as key influences on their sense of professionalism. This aligned with the work of Caldwell (2000) and Hargreaves (2000) who argued that teacher professionals strive to provide relevant opportunities for learning and they feel a sense of accountability for their standard of practice. Relevance is also consistently cited as a key characteristic of effective teacher learning (CERI, 1998; Hawley & Valli, 1999; Knowles, 1980; McRae et al. 2001; Pedder & Opfer, 2013). At Emmanuel College, the teachers'

inability to diversify their practice and make it relevant for the needs of their students was a strong point of contention. The theme "lack of relevance" consistently underpinned teachers' interview comments. These teachers also felt there was a strong sense of accountability at Emmanuel College and they viewed the de-privatisation of their classrooms as a mechanism for allowing the change facilitator and principal to judge their standard of performance. However, the teachers' most vociferous responses were related to the expectation for compliance with the imposed pedagogy. Teachers felt this expectation contradicted their sense of professionalism.

The depth of teachers' subjective responses to the change initiative was evident in their discussions regarding the way that the principal's change initiative had directly influenced their implementation of pedagogical practice. Not only did their words convey their depth of displeasure at having to forego their autonomy and conform to an imposed style of pedagogy but also, so did their vocal expression and their body language during their interview. Common phraseology was evident amongst these teachers when they reflected on the principal's expectation for their compliance with the school-wide approach to guided reading. Such phrases included, "told what to do", "be blind followers", "no choice", and "forced to do the practices". For teachers in their second career stage, the phrase "a dictatorship" was also consistently cited when explaining their experiences at Emmanuel College. It was apparent that, for teachers at Emmanuel College, being able to experiment and 'craft' their pedagogical practice in their own unique way carried significant meaning in defining them as a professional. However, this was not permitted within this school context. As explained by Taubman (2009), when teachers perceive that they have had their "autobiographical idiosyncrasy" stripped from them, they experience a negative phenomenological response. This perspective was evident in the responses from most teachers at Emmanuel College.

Autonomy was foregrounded by the teachers at Emmanuel College as a critically important element associated with their sense of professionalism. This aligns with the work of Hargreaves (2000) as he maintained that the ability to be autonomous and make discretionary judgements is seen as a central tenet of being a professional educator. At Emmanuel College, there was misalignment between the principal's expectations of a professional and the lens through which teachers viewed their role as a professional. From many teachers' responses during semi-structured interviews, they perceived a professional to be one who enacted their 'craft' in a skilful, creative, and problem-oriented manner.

Teachers' sense of professionalism was closely connected with the enactment of their pedagogical practice and their ability to do this in a self-determined manner. In contrast, the principal's perspective was that teacher professionalism was attributed to their compliance with his imposed directives.

It seems that at Emmanuel College, the principal placed more emphasis on performativity than on fostering the professionalism of teachers. Sachs and Mockler (2012) caution against this, as they argue that developing a regulatory and measurement-oriented performance culture in education has a damaging effect on teachers' sense of autonomy and professionalism. At this school, teachers felt they were not afforded autonomy but rather were restricted in the way that the principal permitted them to enact their role. Teachers argued that the principal's expectation for their compliance with the facilitator's modelled practice did not promote authentic teaching and learning. This perspective was in alignment with that presented by Dainton (2005) who maintained that replicating the thoughts, ideas, strategies, and lessons of others does not count as professionalism. Dainton's (2005) sentiments were also more recently reflected by Ryan and Bourke (2013) and Stone-Johnson (2014). They argue that teachers in the current political climate are being reduced to 'drones and clones' of the imposed intentions of others (e.g. policy-makers and principals) in a quest to raise their quality and, in turn, positively affect student achievement outcomes. Furthermore, Ryan and Bourke (2013) maintain that by defining teachers' practice, and expecting compliance with it, principals are not promoting the professionalism of teachers but, rather, are contradicting it.

It can be argued that this occurred at Emmanuel College. The principal was steadfast in his commitment to realise teachers' compliance with a school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading, and this resulted in him positioning teachers as passive and compliant implementers of his vision for teaching and learning. While this approach resulted in all teachers complying with his expectations, it contradicted the assumptions of adult learners proposed by Knowles (1998) and the characteristics identified for effective teacher learning (CERI, 1998; Hawley & Valli, 1999; McRae et al. 2001). There was commonality in the way that all teachers at Emmanuel College described their experience of having to forego their professionalism and comply with the principal's expectations. During their semi-structured interviews, each teacher used the word "frustrating" when sharing their perceptions of their experiences at Emmanuel College. Teachers at the research school

constructed the view that their experience of compliance with the principal's expectations for a school-wide approach to guided reading eroded their sense of professionalism.

In summary, teacher professionalism evokes both a practical and a phenomenological effect. The teacher acts as a professional, and in so doing, feels like a professional based upon their observations and critique of their actions. Indeed, these two dimensions of professionalism – action and feeling – are complimentary. Professional actions induce strong feelings of personal professionalism, which, in turn, encourages the enhancement of future professional actions. Also, this implies that any reduction or restriction in professional practice impacts upon the phenomenological aspect of professionalism. No matter how well intentioned, any educational change that has the effect of decreasing a teacher's sense of professional autonomy and collegiality will likely produce teacher resistance because of its potential to negatively affect the teacher's desire to feel professional. It is possible that the teacher will judge the proposed change not by its intended desirable outcomes, but by how it will detract from their sense of professionalism. This being so, it is imperative that a principal leading an educational change strives to counteract this potential problem by ensuring that they regularly acknowledge and affirm the professionalism of the teachers concerned.

6.5 Research Question:

How do the dispositional characteristics of the principal and change facilitator influence the way teachers engage with the change initiative at Emmanuel College?

The dispositional characteristics of the principal of Emmanuel College became evident through his style of leadership. Both Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) acknowledged that there are different typologies of leadership, and they identified the transformational and transactional styles. In recent times, theorists have proposed the existence of a third typology, termed transrelational leadership (Branson, 2011; Branson et al. 2016; Duignan, 2014; Eacott, 2015; Uhl-Bien, 2006). The more common typology of leadership prevalent within organisations, including education, is the transactional style of leadership (Burns, 1978; Lamb, 2013).

6.5.1 The Dispositional Characteristics of the Principal

It can be argued that a transactional style of leadership was demonstrated by the Emmanuel College principal as there was alignment between the tenets of this style, his vision of

leadership, and his dispositional characteristics. Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) explain that transactional leaders seek to lead change by exercising power, authority, and control. The principal's responses during his semi-structured interview highlighted that he perceived an effective leader of change was one who displayed the dispositional characteristics of directness, assertiveness, and power. The principal's willingness to exercise control and assert his authority to teachers was reflected in the content of his journal feature article and it was apparent during staff meeting interactions and email communications. At staff meetings, the principal made public expressions of his intolerance regarding teachers who may adopt a casual attitude towards change, those who intent to do things their own way, or those who may seek to "high-jack" his change initiative by expressing their own personal opinions about it. The principal's disposition afforded him the confidence to "pull teachers into line" and "actively discourage" ideas and behaviours that were contrary to his vision. This is reflective of the dispositional characteristics demonstrated by a transactional leader (Lavery, 2011; Russell, 2011).

Furthermore, the Emmanuel College principal firmly maintained that an effective principal is one who is able to assert expectations to staff. Graham's (2B) use of the phrase "very upfront, obvious and forward about his expectations" sums up the general opinion of teachers at Emmanuel College with regards to the principal's disposition. Also, in his interview, the principal's most frequently used phrase was "I would expect". This phrase was stated almost two dozen times during his interview, and each time it was used with a strong verbal emphasis. The frequency of this command gave further insight into the depth of the principal's desire to exercise his authority and to control teachers' pedagogical practice.

Moreover, the principal regarded his imposed expectations for teachers to be non-negotiable. The principal openly acknowledged to staff that he was confident to exercise punitive measures with teachers to ensure their compliance with his school-wide vision for the teaching of guided reading, and this intent was also clearly conveyed during his semi-structured interview. This type of punishment, referred to as contingent punishment (Judge & Piccolo, 2004), is often utilised by transactional leaders in order to control teachers' behaviours (Burns, 1978; Tracey & Hinkin, 1998). Both the teachers and change facilitator at Emmanuel College concurred that contingent punishment was willingly and frequently employed by the principal in order to ensure teachers' words and actions complied with his expectations.

This lens through which the principal viewed his teachers shaped the way that he interacted with his staff in both oral and written forum. It can be argued that the principal's perspective was firmly grounded in a deficit mindset and a blame mentality. As transactional leaders have a strong proclivity for creating a performance-driven work culture, they can become very data focused and associate output results with staff performance quality (Bolden et al. 2003; Burns, 1978). In staff meetings and email correspondence, the principal expressed to teachers his firm opinion that the Emmanuel College student achievement data for reading were a result of their lack of compliance with his expectations. The continued annual downward trajectory of student achievement data for reading fuelled the principal's frustration with teachers at Emmanuel College. During his semi-structured interview, it was apparent that from 2010 onwards, the principal asserted an even greater sense of authoritative power over teachers than he had previously demonstrated with them. This behaviour was premised on the assumption that taking a more authoritarian approach with teachers and demanding that they demonstrate greater effort would realise an elevation in teacher quality, and in turn, positively affect student achievement outcomes.

However, the principal failed to realise that meaning is actively constructed within a relationship with others in a particular socio-cultural context (Crotty, 2003; Neuman, 2000; Sarantakos, 1998; Uhl-Bien, 2006). At this juncture of the change initiative, the teachers at Emmanuel College were already demonstrating protective vulnerability coping strategies, and having the principal assume greater levels of power and authority over them would have exacerbated their subjective responses. Hence, the principal's authoritarian and controlling dispositional approach resulted in many teachers acting contrary to that which he had intended. Thus, by ignoring the teachers' subjective responses to change and the key role that relationality plays in shaping and influencing teachers' attitudes and behaviours, the principal further eroded any chance that his change initiative would be effective at raising teacher capacity. In effect, many of the teachers reported that their investment in the change initiative declined further, rather than being strengthened as the principal had intended.

A relational perspective on leadership does not view power as a commodity belonging to people in hierarchical positions (Branson et al. 2016; Foucault, 1977), but instead it is seen as being distributed throughout an organisation and belonging to all of the collective dynamic (Uhl-Bien, 2006). From this perspective, meaning is something that coevolves and is constructed during a relationship with others within the social field (Uhl-Bien, 2006). As

the principal's dispositional characteristics were not premised on relationality, he made no genuine and authentic effort to include the voice of teachers with regard to the introduction or sustainability of the change initiative at Emmanuel College. Teachers from all career stages felt that the principal intentionally excluded them from having a voice when it came to any decision-making processes that were to have a direct impact on the way they taught within their classroom.

In his semi-structured interview, the Emmanuel College principal openly stated that he discouraged teachers from sharing their ideas and opinions publicly during staff meetings. Instead, he explained that his "door was always open" to give teachers a forum to share their thoughts and ideas with him. However, from the perspective of numerous teachers this was perceived as a deceptive ploy by the principal to appear inclusive of other opinions, while his true motivation was to prevent any sharing of criticisms in a public forum. In the view of many teachers, this was a non-genuine offer as the principal had little, if any, intention of amending his vision for how the teaching and learning of guided reading were to happen at Emmanuel College. The teachers at this school felt the principal heard their opinion, but he intentionally chose not to listen to their ideas. The change facilitator agreed that the principal said he had an 'open-door policy', yet he did not genuinely welcome teachers' ideas or opinions.

High-quality relationships between a principal and their teachers are based on trust and mutual respect (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Gerstner & Day, 1997; Ilies et al. 2007). As meaning is constructed within relationships (Crotty, 2003; Neuman, 2000; Sarantakos, 1998; Uhl-Bien, 2006), it can be argued that by continually experiencing relationships with the principal that were premised on control and authority, the Emmanuel College teachers developed feelings of inauthenticity and a sense of non-trustworthiness with regard to his character. As teachers began to perceive that their principal had little genuine concern for their ideas and opinions, they would have been likely to view future social interactions through the lens of this experience (Handberg et al. 2015; Neuman, 2000). This could have influenced teachers to view the principal's future attempts at sincerity as a façade. Feelings of insincerity and inauthenticity breed feelings of distrust, and over time this can lead to resentment, resistance, and disengagement from a change initiative. It can be argued that the principal's dispositional characteristics had a considerable impact on shaping teachers' negative phenomenological responses to the change initiative at Emmanuel College.

6.5.2 The Dispositional Characteristics of the Change Facilitator

The principal of Emmanuel College had a transactional style of leadership, and when employing the change facilitator, he acknowledged that he felt a sense of affinity with her style of teaching. Her "direct and firm" character resonated with the principal's own disposition. The principal liked the fact that the change facilitator was happy to operate from a 'deficit mindset' and impart knowledge and practice *to* teachers, rather than work *with* them to build their professional capacity (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). This process reflects what Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) referred to as an empirical-rational approach to change. When commencing at Emmanuel College, the change facilitator did not have any previous experience at facilitating a whole-school change initiative. Yet despite this, the principal consistently positioned the change facilitator as "the authoritative source of expertise". This led teachers to believe that the change facilitator had a high level of professional knowledge about guided reading and a practical capability at leading change.

A further point of alignment between the principal and the change facilitator was their agreement on the need to use pressure to make teachers embrace change. The principal intentionally placed teachers under ongoing and heightened levels of pressure. He felt this was necessary in order to realise his vision. The facilitator agreed that heightened levels of pressure was important in order to promulgate a culture of compliance at a school-wide level. She was happy to overlook the pressure that she was placing on teachers in order to introduce and sustain the change initiative at Emmanuel College. This perspective contrasts the approach taken by authentic leaders of change who seek to value the wellbeing of their staff rather than just being focused on "the bottom line" (Amanchukwu et al. 2015, p. 12). Thus, not only were teachers subjected to a transactional authoritative style of leadership at a school leadership level, they also experienced this from the change facilitator at a class-based level as well.

The dispositional characteristics of a change facilitator can have an influence on the meaning teachers attribute to their experiences within a particular context (Uhl-Bien, 2006). Teachers at Emmanuel College were provided with periodic opportunities to interact 'one-on-one' with the change facilitator. From these interactions, teachers constructed perceptions about the value they gained from working with the change facilitator. Initially, the teachers at Emmanuel College were extremely eager to be co-creators of knowledge and skill rather than being viewed as merely clients (O'Rielly & Reed, 2010). They wanted to have a deeper sense of connection, a clearer appreciation of their situation, and a stronger grasp on their

part in the process of change (Branson et al. 2016). Teachers reported that when they first engaged the facilitator in discussion about the school expectations for guided reading she was happy to talk about what it was they were supposed to do. Subsequently, however, when the teachers were eager to extend their professional knowledge and practice through further in-depth discussions with the change facilitator, they encountered intentional resistance from her. She deflected teachers' questions by intentionally returning the discussion to how teachers were expected to teach guided reading at Emmanuel College. Teachers reported that at no time during her time as change facilitator did she explain the theory or research-base that underpinned her choice of practice. As more and more time passed, the teachers began to construct the opinion that the change facilitator didn't seem to have any clue about the theory that her practice was based on. Teachers indicated that the more they interacted with the change facilitator, the more they felt they could see a void in her knowledge base. The change facilitator's unwillingness to engage in professional conversation with teachers initially caused them frustration, and then these feelings fuelled their suspicions regarding the depth of her professional knowledge and her authenticity as a leader of change.

There was a generalised sense of frustration and de-motivation towards the change initiative reported by most teachers at Emmanuel College and this was influenced by the change facilitator's discontinuity in the way she responded to their questions. Teachers' had commonality in their use of the phrases "jump around" and "goes off on a tangent". They argued that the facilitator's haphazard and lacklustre personal interactions were a great cause of frustration. This depth of frustration is reflected in a teacher's comment whereby she likened her experience with the change facilitator to a merry-go-round experience. She felt she had been going "round and round" for years trying "to grab bits and pieces of useful information here and there". The negative subjective feelings that teachers experienced during their interactions with the change facilitator led them to question the credibility of her expertise and to express reservations about her capability as an effective leader of change. These teachers felt that the change facilitator may be out of her depth leading a change initiative within a school context as she had typically only presented lectures and workshops *to* teachers in de-contextualised situations prior to being employed at Emmanuel College in 2005.

From their individual experiences with the change facilitator, many of the teachers developed an opinion of her that contradicted what the principal had been telling them regarding the facilitator's "supposed expertise" (4A: Bert). These contradictory views would

have undoubtedly affected the teachers' willingness to commit time and effort to working closely with someone that they regarded to be an inauthentic change facilitator. These perceptions foreground the critical influence that relationality and the dispositional characteristics of a change facilitator had on shaping the way that teachers disengaged with a change initiative.

The teachers' experience at Emmanuel College was that the change facilitator delivered what they saw as a generic style of lesson that must be replicated by each teacher in every classroom. Teachers considered that by complying with the change facilitator's modelled practice, their pedagogy was of benefit to only about half of their class. This perspective was based on teachers' perceptions that there were students whose learning needs and styles suggested a different approach might be more suitable than the 'standard style' modelled by the change facilitator. It was apparent that this situation elicited negative subjective feelings from teachers, and that these were compounded over time as they continued to be forced to meet the principal's inflexible expectations for teaching and learning.

A teacher's professional commitment is influenced by their ability to 'craft' their practice to meet the needs of their students (Nias, 1989; Turney, 1969). At Emmanuel College, there was a generalised sense of frustration amongst teachers with the lack of variability and flexibility that they were afforded to take their practice and make it relevant for their particular learners. Teachers at Emmanuel College desperately wanted to be respected as professionals and not told *how* to do guided reading, but have it left to their professional judgement to work out how they *could best adopt* the facilitator's practice for their class and students.

Feelings of inauthenticity tend to breed emotions such as distrust, resentment, and disengagement. These negative subjective feelings contributed towards a widespread sense of disinclination towards opportunities to work with the change facilitator. It is argued that the principal's expectations for teachers' continued engagement with the same change facilitator for more than a decade, would have had a considerable influence on shaping their phenomenological response to the change initiative.

To summarise, a transactional style of leadership was adopted by the principal of Emmanuel College and supported by the change facilitator. They were both confident to assert their control over teachers and exercise their authority. Although the teachers were being blamed for the students' perceived low standard of achievement in reading, they had little

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opportunity to voice ideas for how to redress this concern, and they experienced heightened levels of pressure to perform to imposed expectations regarding how best to teach guided reading. Thus, most of the teachers felt that the dispositional characteristics of the principal and change facilitator were inauthentic and non-trustworthy. Their lack of any form of a professional and inclusive relationship with the teachers bred subjective feelings of disappointment, disbelief, frustration and distrust, and, over time, this resulted in most of the teachers resenting, resisting, and then disengaging from the change initiative at Emmanuel College.

6.6 Summary of Key Findings

From teachers' responses in the survey and during semi-structured interviews, it can be deduced that they had very positive professional identities at the commencement of the change initiative at Emmanuel College. They seemed keen to extend their pedagogical repertoire and they embraced the concept of teacher learning within a school context. Teachers acknowledged the value that could be gained from building a community of professional learners at Emmanuel College. They keenly embraced informal opportunities to engage in social interaction and professional conversation with their colleagues in order to contribute to and learn from their shared expertise.

The teachers' subjective responses to the implementation of the change initiative at Emmanuel College affected their sense of professionalism. Teachers felt they were told what to teach and when they had to teach it. This situation left teachers feeling a sense of powerlessness, and this was reflected in their use of phrases such as "pawns in someone else's game" (4E: Diane) or "mice stuck in a wheel" (3D: Liela). Having to comply with a school-wide 'standard-style' of practice left teachers feeling that they had no opportunity to advance the quality of their professional practice beyond a proficient standard of competency. Having their pedagogical practice periodically supervised and receiving feedback that highlighted areas for improvement in teachers' compliance with the school-wide approach to guided reading left them feeling not only pressured to perform but also inadequate as practitioners. Teachers' social interactions with the change facilitator consistently left them feeling deflated and perceiving that their performance was inadequate no matter how hard they tried to improve. While teachers were eager to be highly competent professionals, there was consensus amongst them that this was not possible within the structure that they were expected to work within at Emmanuel College.

The principal of Emmanuel College had a transactional style of leadership, and this led him to value performance more than he valued his staffs' wellbeing and the relationship he had with them. This style of leadership facilitated a school culture that was very rigid and procedural instead of one that nurtured and supported teachers' individuality, creativity, and autonomy (Lavery, 2011). Teachers act towards what carries meaning for them within a particular context (Crotty, 1998; Oliver, 2012). At Emmanuel College, teachers came to realise that demonstrating compliance with the principal's expectations for guided reading carried greater meaning within that particular school context than showcasing high-quality practice or meeting the needs of each of their learners. Thus, for teachers at Emmanuel College, their "interpretations of their continuing interaction within their context" (Canrinus et al. 2011, p. 594) led them to feel that they had no option other than to surrender their professional identity and comply with the expectations of the change initiative.

The principal and change facilitator's approach to introducing and sustaining the change initiative at Emmanuel College had deleterious effects not only on teachers' sense of professional identity, but also on their subjectivity with regard to the teaching of guided reading. Teaching is a profession that cannot be reduced to a technical or cognitive process, as it is underscored and driven by emotion (Denzin, 1984). Yet, the principal and change facilitator sought to reduce teachers' practice to a "standard style" of pedagogy. For the teachers at this school, their labour of love was exploited, and they were left feeling vulnerable (Hargreaves, 1998). Their experience reflected the work of Blase (1988) and Kelchtermans (2005) who argued that vulnerability is particularly compounded in school contexts underpinned by control and regulation processes. The level of emotional response demonstrated by teachers within these types of contexts highlights what is at stake for teachers to lose (Van Veen et al. 2005). At Emmanuel College, teachers expressed heightened levels of emotion when responding to the change initiative. The passion with which teachers responded to questions during their semi-structured interviews gave an insight into their experience at Emmanuel College. For teachers from all career stages, having to surrender their sense of professionalism and professional identity carried significant meaning. It can be argued that teachers at this school had a strong desire to be high-quality educators and being forced to comply with a school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading required them to abandon their dream of becoming the teacher they had envisaged being.

The teachers at Emmanuel College consistently used the word "frustrated" to describe their experience with the change initiative. They were frustrated with the restrictions placed on their involvement in professional development, with their lack of opportunity to voice an opinion, and with their perceived sense of inauthenticity and non-trustworthiness of the principal and change facilitator. Teaching is a highly emotion-laden profession (Kelchtermans, 2005) and any sense of distrust erodes the foundations on which teachers' will and commitment is premised. Knowles (1998) proposes that teachers' subjectivity can influence their behaviour and result in a progressive rescinding of the level of time, effort, and motivation they dedicate towards the tenets of a principal's change initiative. It can be argued that this occurred at Emmanuel College. While teachers at Emmanuel College "continued to go through the motions" (3B: Mary) of teaching guided reading, their feelings of distrust progressively evolved into resentment, resistance, and then to an emotional disengagement from the principal's change initiative.

The principal of Emmanuel College intended for his change initiative to raise the quality of teachers and positively affect student achievement outcomes for reading. However, the way that the principal and the change facilitator implemented and sustained the change initiative at Emmanuel College resulted in a situation that yielded the opposite of what they had intended. Teachers' increasingly negative phenomenological responses to the change initiative at Emmanuel College were viewed by the principal and change facilitator as not being of any real significance.

As explained by Branson (2010), phenomenology has typically been regarded as an 'overlooked insight' despite the critical influence that it has on shaping the behaviours of individuals within a workplace context. It is argued that the principal and change facilitator's disregard for the pivotal role that phenomenology plays in shaping the perceptions and behaviours of individuals eroded the professional identities of teachers at Emmanuel College, left them feeling de-professionalised, and led to a stagnation in the quality of their pedagogical practice for guided reading.

6.7 Conclusion

It can be argued that the way that the principal and change facilitator introduced and then sustained the change initiative at Emmanuel College reflected an imposed and directive style of leadership. This approach to change mirrors the tenets of the suite of educational reforms that have been introduced in recent times by the Australian government, and its affiliated

bodies such as AITSL. The underlying premise of educational change in this nation has centred on promulgating a culture of control, compliance, and accountability in order to improve teacher quality and elevate student achievement outcomes. While this imposed and directive approach to change is being championed as the 'best way forward' in leading educational change, research emanating from the United States of America during the past decade has been suggestive that this approach to change has a deleterious effect on teachers' sense of professionalism and their professional identity (Carpenter et al. 2012; Tschannen-Moran, 2009). Findings from this research add strength to this view because they highlight the negative phenomenological responses that teachers can have when being forced to embrace an imposed change initiative. For the teachers at Emmanuel College, their experience of a change initiative premised on control, compliance, and accountability led them to feel de-professionalised as educators as they were forced to surrender their professional identity. These findings add support to the research on educational change emanating from school contexts within the United States of America (Carpenter et al. 2012; Rowan, 1990; Tschannen-Moran, 2009).

Teaching is a highly relational profession (Barr & Mellor, 2016), and so the social interactions that teachers have with significant others in their school context considerably shapes the way that they view their world, how they act within it, and the meaning they attribute to embracing change (Blumer, 1969; Vygotsky, 1978). When teachers' social interactions lead them to perceive a sense of autonomy and inclusivity, they are more inclined to exert the time and effort required to build their professional capacity as educators by engaging in processes that extend their knowledge and practice. However, this research has highlighted that when a change initiative is introduced and sustained in an authoritarian and controlled manner, teachers feel pressured to abandon their autonomy and individuality and conform to the imposed expectations. Processes for accountability can make teachers feel fearful of receiving contingent punishment, and ongoing processes of observation and feedback can foster feelings of inadequacy. Further to this, perceptions of inauthenticity and distrust towards leaders and change facilitators can undermine the establishment of an effective professional relationship.

When teachers' subjective feelings of frustration, pressure, and vulnerability shape the lens through which they view their school experiences, teachers can transition from resenting educational change, through to resisting it, and then emotionally disengaging from the process. Thus, it can be argued that an educational change agenda that is premised on

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directing and controlling the way teachers engage in teaching and learning is unlikely to raise the academic performance of students or build a teacher's sense of professionalism and identity.

CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research is to explore the phenomenological experiences of teachers with regard to the implementation of a principal's change-initiative within a single-school context. This chapter begins with an overview of the thesis. The educational context in which this research was embedded is revised, in addition to the four areas of literature that were reviewed in relation to the research problem. The design of the research is then briefly explained, and key findings for each of the contributing research questions that guided this study are stated. Recommendations are made, and these are based on a synthesis of the literature and the findings from this research. Areas for further research are then suggested. The contribution that this thesis makes to the body of literature on educational change is also presented in this chapter.

7.2 Overview of the Thesis

In the first chapter of this thesis, it was discussed that while educational change has been consistently attempted since the 1960s, it remains "neither deep nor sustainable" (Fullan, 2005, p. 1) and "infuriatingly elusive" (Hargreaves, 2005, p. 282). These assertions suggest that there continues to be an "overlooked insight" with regard to the implementation of successful educational change (Branson, 2010). This perspective informs the research problem for this study. The research school, Emmanuel College, provided a clearly bounded yet fertile ground for exploring teachers' phenomenological experiences of the principal's proposed change initiative for the teaching of guided reading. This initiative involved the change facilitator providing all teachers at Emmanuel College with personalised and contextualised opportunities for teacher learning in alignment with the principal's school-wide vision for how best to teach guided reading. All teachers at Emmanuel College, irrespective of their career stage, were expected to comply with a school-wide approach to the teaching of guided reading, and receive periodic personalised feedback on their performance from the change facilitator.

In Chapter Two, the research problem was positioned within the international and Australian educational contexts. This research acknowledged that seeking to raise student achievement outcomes by targeting the quality of teachers in schools has been a point of commonality

amongst a number of nations throughout the world in recent times. In particular, the Australian government has had a concentrated focus during the past decade on students' achievement outcomes, and this has been fuelled by the publication of national rankings on international 'league tables' (OECD, 2012). In an effort to remain economically competitive, now and into the future, the Australian government has been firmly committed to raising the quality of teachers in Australian schools so that there is an elevation in student performance. A series of nation-wide educational reforms have been instigated with the hope of realising this vision, and these have been premised on the presumption that teacher quality is a measurable construct. The government has approached the topic of educational change from an economic and managerial perspective (Cassells et al. 2012) rather than acknowledging that there is a subjective dimension, which considerably influences the way teachers embrace educational change. Education systems also overlay on principals and teachers, certain beliefs and practices regarding learners and learning, as well as expectations for how teaching is to occur within systemic schools. The systemic directives, and school-specific processes and practices, of a particular Catholic Education Office govern the research school, Emmanuel College, and these were discussed in Chapter Two as well.

In Chapter Three, the literature aligned with the research purpose was reviewed in relation to four areas of scholarship, and these were: change, teacher learning, professional identity, and leadership. Throughout the decades, there has been an evolving understanding of the process of enacting change as new learning "incorporates, integrates and then transcends" what is viewed as being the current perspective on leading educational change (Branson, 2010, p. 10). As the perspectives on how best to lead educational change have shifted, there has been a re-conceptualisation of the way that teachers have been positioned as learners. Consequently, there have been a number of approaches to teacher learning adopted throughout the past decades, and these have varied in the extent to which they have positioned teachers as active or passive agents of change. Furthermore, a teacher's sense of professionalism can be considerably influenced by the way that they are positioned as learners and the effect that a change initiative has on their ability to be an autonomous professional. A teacher's professional identity is closely connected with the way that they enact their professional role within a school context. Finally, this chapter highlighted how the introduction of a change initiative into a school typically involves a change in expectations regarding teachers' level of professional knowledge, pedagogical practice, and/or engagement with colleagues. Moreover, the leadership style of the principal and their

change facilitator influence the way that these expectations come to fruition within a school. Their style of leadership can influence teachers' subjectivity and this, in turn, can affect the extent to which they willingly embrace a change initiative. From this literature review, the overarching research question was clarified, along with the contributing research question that emerged from each of the four areas of the reviewed literature.

The research design was explained in Chapter Four. The individual professional experiences and the social interactions of the teachers at Emmanuel College shaped their perceptions about professional learning within this school context. These perceptions in turn, influenced the way they constructed personalised meanings about the proposed change, and, thus, how they implemented the expected pedagogical practice for guided reading. Hence, this research was positioned within the epistemological perspective of constructionism. An interpretivist research paradigm was used to explore the individual meanings that each educator at the research school had regarding the implementation and sustainability of the principal's change initiative. Furthermore, in support of this epistemological perspective and research paradigm, symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969) was chosen as the theoretical perspective guiding this research.

At the Exploration Stage of this research, school documents were analysed, and all teachers completed an electronic teacher survey. Analyses of these data provided tentative headings and suggested possible research questions for the semi-structured interviews conducted with the principal, change facilitator, and 16 teachers during the next stage of data collection, the Inspection stage. As suggested by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), in a study involving both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques, prominence is given to the qualitative data gathered. For this research, qualitative data from each participant was analysed using a Constant Comparative Analysis [CCA] method and five themes were generated. These were used to structure the presentation of the findings in Chapter Five.

The purpose of Chapter Five was to present the data of this research in a clearly articulated way. This occurred under the five themes of Predispositions, Engagement, Teacher Learning, Leadership, and Experiences. Then, in Chapter Six, the findings of this study were discussed in relation to the research questions. Table 7.1 presents a synthesis of the key findings for each of the contributing research questions that guided this study.

Table 7.1

Synthesised Findings of this Research

Research Questions	Findings
In what ways did the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College impact on the professional identity of the teachers?	The majority of teachers at Emmanuel College reported that the change initiative detrimentally affected their professional identity. Most teachers felt that the principal attributed students' poor standard of achievement in reading to their quality of practice. These teachers perceived that the de-privatisation of their classrooms was intended to force them to be compliant implementers of an imposed school-wide approach to guided reading. Most teachers regarded that the change facilitator's observations of their practice had a supervisory intent, and they felt that feedback was a critique of their level of quality and the degree of their compliance with the principal's imposed expectations for guided reading.
How do teachers from different career stages respond to the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College?	Regardless of their respective career stage, most of the Emmanuel College teachers shared a common negative subjective response to the educational change initiative that had been implemented at this school for more than a decade
In what ways do teachers feel the educational change initiative at Emmanuel College influences their sense of professionalism?	Most teachers at Emmanuel College complied with the principal's expectations for a school-wide approach to teacher learning and pedagogical practice for guided reading, and this was regardless of their negative feelings towards this change initiative. They reported feeling restricted and frustrated with the approach to teacher learning delivered within the school context as they felt its emphasis on control, compliance, and accountability required them to forego their autonomy and surrender their professionalism.
How do the dispositional characteristics of the principal and change facilitator influence the way teachers engage with the change initiative at Emmanuel College?	Most of the teachers at Emmanuel College felt that the dispositional characteristics of the principal and change facilitator were inauthentic and non-trustworthy. They perceived the principal and change facilitator lacked a professional and inclusive relationship with teachers and they argued that this bred the subjective feelings of disappointment, disbelief, frustration and distrust, and over time, this resulted in most of the teachers resenting, resisting, and then emotionally disengaging from the change initiative.

7.3 Recommendations

In this section of the chapter, recommendations are suggested that may enable education systems, school leaders, teachers, and students to respond more effectively to the introduction and sustainability of change initiatives within a school context. These recommendations are based on a synthesis of the findings of this research in conjunction with the literature. They are organised into five areas: *System Support for Leaders of Change, Leading Change in Schools, Teachers as Agents of Change, Transparency of a Change Process,* and *Student Involvement in Change.*

7.3.1 System Support for Leaders of Change

Throughout past decades, principals were afforded a high-level of autonomy to lead their school staff communities towards a context-relevant vision for change. However, in more recent times, a growing emphasis on globalisation and international competitiveness has shifted the focus of educational change from being a local-level issue to a more explicitly national-level education agenda (Cassells et al. 2012; Gillard, 2008, 2009; Rudd & Gillard, 2008; Rudd & Smith, 2007). Hence, school principals have been caught in the middle of this transition. While principals may want to enact their own educational change initiatives, based on their vision for what they perceive to be local-level school-based needs, they are becoming increasingly expected to comply with the national government's imposed educational change agenda as well as the directives of the particular education system in which they are employed. This can lead to principals feeling pressured to meet systemic expectations regarding student achievement performance targets. The publication of each school's annual NAPLAN testing performance data, on the publicly-accessible MySchool website (ACARA, 2010), has also contributed to principals moving towards increased performativity expectations of students and teachers. Thus, education today is becoming increasingly premised on a performance and development culture (Education Services Australia, 2012a). Hence, it can be argued that the leadership of schools today is becoming a far more complex role than in previous eras of education as principals strive to accommodate and integrate both local-level needs and national-level educational change agendas.

Today, principals are expected to comply with top-down expectations targeting teacher quality, enact change initiatives in their school with a view to raising student achievement outcomes while, at the same time, being cognisant of teachers' responses to change. The professional support that has typically been provided to principals at a systemic level has predominantly centred on the visible, practical, and objective dimensions of their role. Thus, principals have generally been provided with professional support to build their capacity to deal with the managerial demands of running a school, as well as to acquire information relating to the expectations associated with government and system-level education reforms. It can be argued that principals have received little professional support that extends their professional knowledge about how best to promote teachers' sense of professionalism, and how to positively foster teachers' professional identities while enacting educational change. Without access to the opportunity to broaden their professional knowledge, principals may

implement and sustain change initiatives that could have a negative phenomenological effect on teachers.

> **Recommendation 1:** It is recommended that educational system administrators, like the Catholic Education Office pertinent to this research, provide principals with opportunities for professional development to build their personal capacity as effective leaders of change. These opportunities for learning should focus on equipping principals with the knowledge to understand the differences in the professional needs of teachers at each career stage, and afford them ideas about how to effectively promote teachers' sense of professionalism and identity as educators when implementing educational change in a school context.

7.3.2 Leading Change in Schools

Educational change within a school context is considerably influenced by the quality of the principal (Fullan, 1992, 2000, 2001, 2016). They have an influential role in deciding what is valued and foregrounded within a school's culture (Crowther, 2011). The most common style of leadership demonstrated by principals has traditionally been a transactional style (Burns, 1978). This style of leadership proposed that an effective principal was one who was performance-driven and focused on raising 'the bottom line' (Bolden et al. 2003), as well as one who attended to the managerial aspects of their role by exercising power, hierarchical authority, and utilising reward and punitive systems (Russell, 2011; Tracey & Hinkin, 1998).

However, the suitability of this style of leadership for educational change has begun to be questioned due to scholarly literature in recent times that has explored the influence that subjectivity has on shaping behaviour (Branson, 2010, 2011; Eacott, 2015; Uhl-Bien, 2006). Scholars are now beginning to argue for the use of a transrelational style of leadership as it is premised on the assumption that meaning is constructed within the relationships that occur between individuals (Bradbury & Lichtenstein, 2000; Branson, 2010, 2011; Eacott, 2015; Uhl-Bien, 2006). From this perspective, relationality is foregrounded as a key dimension of a principal's role. Principals ascribing to a transrelational style of leadership seek to empower their teachers to be co-creators of knowledge and skills rather than positioning them as passive recipients and compliant implementers of an imposed change initiative (O'Rielly & Reed, 2010). Distributed leadership is an example of an approach some transrelational principals are beginning to utilise in order to place teachers at the centre of educational change in schools (Ross et al. 2016). Subjective feelings of value and inclusivity

are more likely to enhance teachers' ongoing willingness and commitment to embrace change than school-based cultures premised on control, compliance, and accountability (Carpenter et al. 2012). This research has highlighted the deleterious effects that a transactional style of leadership has on teachers' phenomenological response to change.

> **Recommendation 2:** It is recommended that principals embrace a transrelational style of leadership with a view to authentically fostering inclusive and collaborative professional learning relationships with a school staff.

In order to successfully lead educational change, leaders now need to have an ability to understand the phenomenology of change. It can be argued that "leaders are being judged by a new yardstick: not just by how smart they are, or by their training or expertise, but also by how well they handle their self and others" (Goleman, 1999, p. 3). This perspective has necessitated a shift in the mindset of leaders away from an objective perspective on educational change to one that foregrounds the importance of the leader's character and relationality, and highlights the critical influence that teachers' subjectivity has on shaping their will and commitment to educational change.

Leaders need to be skilful at dealing with the complex web of relationships that exist within their context, and these are influenced by their staffs' beliefs, feelings, and emotions. They should seek to create an underlying sense of safety and emotional security, in which risk and creativity can flourish (Hargreaves, 2004). When teachers perceive that their leader facilitates a context premised on collegiality, respect, honesty, and transparency, they are more likely to actively and positively embrace change to the way they engage in teaching and/or learning. Thus, in this political climate where teacher quality is being challenged, the critical contribution that the leader makes to the way teachers engage in teaching and learning is becoming increasingly acknowledged in literature. Authentic leaders today are required to be cognisant of the way that their dispositional characteristics and sense of relationality can influence teachers' subjective emotional responses to change. It can be argued that there has been little emphasis placed on principals to reflect on the critical influence that that their level of relationality has on shaping teachers' subjective responses to change. This is despite relationality and subjectivity being key influences on the effectiveness of an educational change initiative.

> **Recommendation 3:** It is recommended that formalised structures be put in place within schools to enable principals to periodically gather data on the level of

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relationality they appear to have when leading their school community, and their influence on teacher's subjectivity. Reflection tools, such as the "360-degree feedback process" (Edwards & Ewen, 1996), can provide principals with open and transparent feedback on teachers' perceptions of their level of authenticity, trustworthiness, and relationality.

The quality of a learning relationship is premised on a high-level of social interaction between a change facilitator and teachers (Fletcher, 2012; Lofthouse, Leat, Towler, Hall & Cummings, 2010). Within a school context, a change facilitator's role is multi-faceted. Initially, a change facilitator seeks to build a rapport with the teachers in order to establish a collegial professional relationship (Education Queensland, 2010). They can facilitate curriculum development tasks such as introductory workshops at staff meetings as well as developing school policies in consultation with the principal (Education Queensland, 2010). A change facilitator can engage teachers in processes that foster critical self-reflection on their pedagogy, work with them to analyse student assessment data, as well as co-plan lessons with them (Elish-Piper & L'Allier, 2010; Gibson, 2006). Explicit modelling of pedagogical practice can occur for teachers within their class-based context, and constructive feedback can then be given to teachers to help inform, shape, and redefine their future implementation of pedagogical practice (Education Queensland, 2010; Zbar, Marshall & Power, 2007). Each of these dimensions of a change facilitator's role is premised on the need for high-quality interpersonal skills. Thus, the importance of relationality is foregrounded as a key dispositional characteristic of an effective change facilitator. This research has highlighted the negative effect on teachers' subjectivity when a change facilitator is perceived as having a poor level of relationality.

Furthermore, a change facilitator is typically afforded the position of 'expert' in a particular curriculum area, and the way that they share this expertise with teachers can influence their phenomenological response to change. It is anticipated that change facilitators support teachers to increase their knowledge and skill in a particular pedagogical area through developing a one-on-one relationship. Here, the teachers are being fully supported by the change facilitator to translate new professional knowledge and pedagogy into their classroom practice (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Putnam & Borko, 2002). Teachers, however, do not respond well to being *forced* by a change facilitator to comply with their imposed knowledge and practice, and this was reflected in the sentiments expressed by most of the teachers at Emmanuel College. Today, it is becoming increasingly

apparent that, as a leader of change, a facilitator should act with authenticity and interact with teachers in such a way that they earn the trust of those that they lead (Branson, 2010; Duignan, 2014; Fullan, 1993, 2005, 2016; Gavin et al. 2003; Leithwood et al. 1999).

This foregrounds the importance of a change facilitator operating from a premise of inclusivity and collaboration rather than seeking to impose their professional knowledge and practice *onto* teachers. Change facilitators need to foster with teachers a professional relationship that is based on trust so that teachers feel comfortable to actively engage in the de-privatisation of their practice, commit to a deep professional reflective process, and be open to receiving pedagogical critiques on their practice (van Leent & Exley, 2013). In this research, the majority of teachers questioned the change facilitator's level of professional knowledge and expertise, and they reported feelings of distrust. The subjective feelings experienced by most of the teachers at Emmanuel College led them to perceive that the change facilitator was inauthentic and untrustworthy. Without a sense of trust, teachers are disinclined to willingly and wholeheartedly commit to a change initiative.

> **Recommendation 4:** It is recommended that a change facilitator, involved in opportunities for teacher learning within a school context, not only has a high-level of professional knowledge of their curriculum area but also that this is complemented by a disposition enabling them to be effective oral communicators and to socially interact with teachers in a genuinely open, inclusive, authentic, and trustworthy manner.

7.3.3 Teachers as Agents of Change

Within many schools, leaders approach educational change initiatives with the perspective that change is "something that is done *to* teachers, rather than *with* them, still less *by* them" (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996, p. 17). However, for educational change to effectively occur within a school context, teachers should not be positioned as victims of change, but rather should be given opportunities to build their individual capacity as well as taking an active role in shaping, leading, and sustaining school-wide change (Crowther, 2011; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). An approach such as distributive leadership favours the establishment of learning teams and fosters collaborative relationships between staff (Bush, 2013). This shifts the locus of control from one individual (e.g. principal) and instead empowers a staff to be authentically involved and to take genuine ownership for change (De Matthew, 2014). Thus,

change becomes an interactive collaborative process premised on inclusion, rather than being an event characterised by hierarchical control.

A teacher's level of commitment to a change initiative soars when they feel a sense of involvement and ownership (Fullan, 1992). When teachers feel empowered, as active agents of change, they have "a hunger for more learning, stronger commitment, and greater professional fulfilment" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 55). This research highlights the deleterious effect that can occur from teachers' phenomenological response to a proposed change when they are positioned as passive agents of change. Feelings of resentment and frustration can give way to a sense of resistance and lead to an emotional disengagement from the imposed change initiative.

> **Recommendation 5:** It is recommended that teachers are seen as active agents of change, and are given a voice and afforded the opportunity to be authentically involved in decision-making processes relating to the planning and implementation of change initiatives within a school context. Teacher involvement can occur along a continuum ranging from the provision of ideas and opinions on school-based surveys, to engaging in formal conversations with leaders and change facilitators, through to being a member of a working party that gathers data, ideas, strategies, and processes to inform a vision for change.

Arguably, a proposed educational change will necessitate some form of professional learning amongst those teachers tasked with bringing about the change. During the past two decades, there has been a growing awareness of the characteristics that underpin effective opportunities for teacher professional learning. To this end, there has been commonality amongst scholars such as Desimone (2009), Hawley and Valli (1999), Ingvarson et al. (2005), and those involved with the Centre for Education Research and Innovation [CERI] (1998), in describing the characteristics of effective teacher learning programs. These scholars argue that teacher learning is enriched within an ongoing and participant driven, context-based, interactive process that involves inquiry, feedback, and goal-setting.

These characteristics describe how teachers should engage in opportunities for professional learning and they align with the way that Knowles (1980) suggested that adults should be positioned as learners. Today it is becoming increasingly acknowledged that adult learning is not a process of transmission. From scholarship there emerges a strong propensity for positioning teachers as active learners, and it is regarded that authentic learning is embedded

in, and evolves out of, the interactions that a teacher has within the sociocultural community of their school context (Ahedo, 2009; Vygostky, 1978; Webster-Wright, 2009).

Thus, when enacting a change initiative, it can be argued that the richness of the experience lies within the professional interactions that occur between the teachers and the change facilitator. These interactions can focus on a change facilitator's feedback about how a teacher's 'perceived reality' juxtaposes an 'ideal reality' (Duignan, 2014). These interactions can enable a teacher and change facilitator to collaboratively develop authentic, personalised, and context-specific professional learning goals that seek to build teachers' capacity as high-quality educators.

> **Recommendation 6:** It is recommended that in order to position teachers as active agents of change, they should be permitted to develop personalised learning goals that are relevant to their professional needs in a nominated curriculum area. The change facilitator can then use these personalised learning goals as he/she works *with* teachers to develop their professional knowledge and/or pedagogical practice. A personalised goal-driven approach to teacher learning enables them to feel supported as learners as they strive to enhance their professional capacity as educators.

De-privatisation has heralded the end of the culture of individualism and isolation that traditionally characterised the teaching profession (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Within education today, government-imposed change agendas are defining what constitutes a quality teacher and how teaching should occur in schools throughout this nation (Education Services Australia, 2011a). Expectations presented by the government-endorsed body, referred to as AITSL, highlight the view that teaching should be a profession characterised by transparency of practice and be open to external scrutiny.

Thus, it can be argued that teacher autonomy has been eroded as 'top-down' imposed policies, documents, and practices have defined what teachers should know, how they should implement pedagogy, and how they should engage with their colleagues at each stage of their career (Education Services Australia, 2011a). This quest to define teaching as a series of generic competencies and observable practices has led to teachers having to surrender their professionalism and sense of professional identity (Barr & Mellor, 2016; Hargreaves, 2005; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Rowan, 1990). The expectation to be generic teachers and implement a 'standard-style' of practice negates the existence of the invisible

dimension of teaching. This, however, is a powerful contributor to teacher quality as it adds the vitality and creativity that shapes the way a teacher enacts their professional role (Barr & Mellor, 2016).

This research has highlighted the frustration that is experienced by most teachers at Emmanuel College when they were expected to "robot each other" by implementing a standard-style of practice. The majority of teachers involved in this research wanted to be regarded as autonomous professionals and be permitted to have the flexibility to 'craft' their practice to reflect their individualised style of teaching, yet the principal's expectations did not permit this to occur. Crowther (2011) argues that when change initiatives fail to recognise the individualised needs of each teacher and just focuses on imposing standard generic expectations on them, they will remain practically, conceptually, and strategically incomplete.

> **Recommendation 7:** It is recommended that teachers be afforded the opportunity to implement pedagogical practice in their classroom with some degree of autonomy to allow for individual variability and flexibility in teaching style and student learning needs.

7.3.4 Transparency of a Change Process

The culture within education today is promulgating the view that a quality teacher is one who complies with government-endorsed expectations that define their role, as well as being capable of embracing a principal's expectations regarding how they implement pedagogical practice (Barr & Mellor, 2016). In some school contexts, there is alignment between the two hierarchical levels of expectations for teachers' practice, yet in other schools, misalignment can occur. When this happens, teachers are placed in a position whereby there is incongruence between what they are expected to do in practice and what they are told to be like in theory. This situation can create a sense of internal tension for teachers, and over time, this can influence the subjective response that they have towards enacting their role in a change initiative.

It can be argued that at present many educational systems are premised on a 'top-down' perspective of change which expects teachers to become passive and compliant implementers of imposed expectations for teaching and learning. Within such educational environments, there are limited formalised processes in place which enable teachers to openly voice the effect that school change initiatives are having on their professional role

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and their sense of subjectivity. As teachers' phenomenological responses influence the way they act within a particular context, it is essential that a principal has a keen awareness of how teachers are genuinely feeling towards school change initiatives. When principals commit to periodically reviewing the implementation of change initiatives, they can view change as a flexible and adaptable phenomenon. This mindset can position them more readily to make ongoing adjustments and amendments to change processes so that teachers can continue to feel that their professional needs are being met, as well as ensuring that it is open to supporting the learning needs of their students.

> **Recommendation 8:** It is recommended for schools undergoing a significant educational change that, during each school year, teachers be released from class for a conversation with the principal to discuss their individual experiences with the change initiative. This could take the form of a semi-structured interview and provide the principal with an insight into each teacher's phenomenological response to the implementation or sustainability of a school change initiative.

Within some school contexts, however, teachers may feel that their principal is inauthentic and non-trustworthy. This may influence the extent to which they feel comfortable to openly share their personal opinions and professional experiences about the principal's change initiative or their involvement with a change facilitator. Teachers may be hesitant during scheduled meetings to honestly share their perceptions with their principal for fear of negative consequences or reprimand. Teachers may also perceive that despite the principal providing them with the opportunity to share any negative experiences of the change initiative, little, if any, modification may occur to the way they are expected to enact the change initiative. When teachers feel that they are placed in this type of situation, there needs to be established protocols that provide teachers with an avenue to confidentially share their perceptions with somebody in a systemic leadership role other than the school principal. This research has highlighted that having little avenue for authentically voicing an opinion regarding a change initiative or a change facilitator, can elicit a negative phenomenological response from teachers.

> **Recommendation 9:** It is recommended that education systems offer opportunities for teachers to meet with area supervisors/directors so that they can confidentially share their perceptions and experiences of the tenets of a principal's change

initiative, as well as the level of authenticity that they perceived from their interactions with the principal and/or change facilitator.

7.3.5 Student Involvement in Change

In the mid to late-2000s Prime Ministers, Rudd and Gillard, both argued that teacher quality was 'to be blamed' for Australia's ranking on international tests of student achievement (Gillard, 2008, 2009; OECD, 2012; Rudd, 2011). Following this, the then Minister of Education, Pyne (2015a), also expressed his displeasure at Australia's results "lagging behind other nations" (p. 1). Education was viewed as having a considerable role to play in shaping the national economy of the future (Cassells et al. 2012; Rudd, 2011), and the standard of teacher quality in this nation was seen to be jeopardising Australia's chance at being a highly productive nation with a competitive national economy. As a consequence of the government's perspective, a number of educational change initiatives were promulgated throughout Australian schools with a view to elevating teacher quality and, in turn, positively affecting students' achievement on international 'league tables' (OECD, 2012). While these change initiatives were typically developed in consultation with representatives of the government and education profession, there remained little, if any, inclusion of student voice. This research also highlighted that there was a lack of consideration for the inclusion of the students' voice in the development and implementation of the change initiative at the research school. This was despite the change initiative being implemented with the primary intention of realising an elevation in students' level of achievement on NAPLAN tests of reading (MCEETYA, 2008b).

> **Recommendation 10:** It is recommended that students be regarded as key participants in educational change, and be given the opportunity to share their perceptions about the way that a change initiative has been implemented, or may be implemented in the future. Involvement can include students' completion of surveys, participation in open group forums, or individual interviews.

7.4 Recommendations for Future Research

This research was conducted at Emmanuel College. The intent of limiting the research site to a single-school context was so that the researcher could reduce, as much as practically possible, the variables associated with the phenomenon being explored. The purpose of doing this was to enhance the credibility of the findings so that the phenomenological

subjective responses from teachers could be considered attributable to the change initiative implemented at Emmanuel College.

While this particular research study identified the phenomenological subjective responses that teachers at Emmanuel College had towards their participation in an imposed change initiative, it would be advantageous to explore further the responses of teachers from other schools regarding an imposed change initiative within their particular school context. Thus, it is recommended that future research in the area of the phenomenological responses to change initiatives involve an expansion in the number of research sites to include at least two or more schools. In doing this, areas of convergence and divergence in teachers' perceptions to change can be explored in greater detail.

At Emmanuel College, the imposed change initiative focused on embedding a school-wide approach to the teaching of a specific curriculum area, namely guided reading. It can be argued that because the responses provided by teachers were specific to one curriculum area, they may not be representative of their generalised perceptions of change. Thus, it is recommended that further research be conducted that explores teachers' phenomenological responses to an imposed change initiative in curriculum areas other than guided reading. This future research could occur at Emmanuel College as well as across a number of school contexts where change initiatives are being enacted in a range of different curriculum areas.

At the research school, the principal expected the teachers to engage with the change facilitator during periodic opportunities for teacher learning within the school context over a considerably extensive period of time. Findings from this research have highlighted that teachers' social interactions with the change facilitator during this time have been perceived as frustrating, inauthentic, and limiting to their growth in professional knowledge and practice. For these teachers' perceptions of the change were strongly influenced by the personal lens through which they viewed their social and professional interactions with the change facilitator (Blumer, 1969; Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, it is argued that the teachers' reported phenomenological responses to the change initiative were shaped, to some degree, by their perceptions of this particular change facilitator's dispositional characteristics. Thus, it is suggested that future research be conducted in a number of schools where different change facilitators are employed to support teachers to enact change initiatives within a school context. In doing this, a greater understanding can be gleaned of the influence that a

change facilitator's dispositional characteristics has on shaping the responses that teachers have to change.

This research focused on a single-school context and explored the responses that teachers had to being involved in an imposed change initiative. However, it is acknowledged that the current educational change agenda in this nation has an effect on educators other than teachers. It can be argued that the current political context has placed principals in a precarious position as they are expected to enact certain processes and practices with a view to elevate the quality of teaching in their school and also target improvement in student achievement outcomes, while also addressing school-level needs. Also, systemic educational expectations are overlaid onto the role of the principal and this compounds the complexity of the principal's leadership role and exacerbates the level of pressure that they are placed under to build and sustain a culture of performance and development within their school (Education Services Australia, 2012a). While it was beyond the scope of this current research to explore the phenomenological response that the principal had towards the current political, systemic, and local-level change agendas, it is recommended that this be explored in future research.

7.5 Contribution to Knowledge

There are five contributions to knowledge made by this research. The first contribution acknowledges the influence that teachers' autonomy has on shaping their sense of identity. The second contribution elucidates the influence that an expectation for teachers' compliance with a school-wide 'standard style' of pedagogical practice has on teachers' perceptions and behaviours at each of the first four career stages. The third contribution highlights how a culture of de-privatisation and accountability may de-professionalise teachers. The fourth contribution recognises the key role that a leader's sense of relationality can play in shaping teachers' level of engagement in educational change. The final contribution relates to a change facilitator's disposition and their level of professional knowledge and how this has a considerable influence on shaping teachers' experiences of a change initiative within a school context.

7.5.1 Contribution 1

The first contribution to knowledge is the influence that teachers' autonomy has on shaping their sense of professional identity. Traditionally, teaching was an isolated and individualised profession whereby teachers were positioned as 'masters of their own

domain'. This perception afforded teachers the autonomy to co-ordinate their involvement in opportunities for teacher learning and to 'craft' their practice according to their own idiosyncratic ways or in accordance with the perceived needs of students in their class. Teachers' sense of professional identity is couched in the way they personally 'craft' their pedagogical practice in conjunction with their personality and teaching style. Thus, any change initiative that affects teachers' level of autonomy has the potential to affect their professional identity. This research has shown that removing teachers' ability to be autonomous professionals and make individualised decisions regarding the implementation of pedagogical practice for guided reading, can strike at the core of their identity as a teacher. Feelings of frustration and de-motivation can be experienced by most teachers as they come to the realisation that foregoing their autonomy involves surrendering their own vision for the type of teacher they envisaged being.

7.5.2 Contribution 2

The second contribution to knowledge is the influence that an expectation for teachers' compliance with a school-wide 'standard style' of pedagogical practice has on teachers' perceptions and behaviours at each of the first four career stages. Huberman (1989) describes a teacher's professional journey from career entry to retirement, and at each stage he identifies variation in the way teachers perceive themselves and the way they may engage in teaching and learning. Huberman's (1989) career stage model begins with a graduate teacher entering the profession, and he maintains that their level of self-confidence, competence and professional identity experiences continued growth during the first three stages of a teacher's career. It is during this time that they access professional development, engage in social interaction with their colleagues, and experiment with pedagogy in order to build a repertoire of professional practice. Teachers typically exit the third career stage as highly confident and professionally capable educators. Huberman (1989) claims that from the fourth stage of career, teachers' enthusiasm and motivation towards teaching begins to decline, and a sense of disenchantment can pervade their perspective of teaching and negatively influence their response to a change initiative.

This research has shown how teachers within a single-school context, from four stages of career, can present with a convergence in their perspective towards the principal's change initiative. Irrespective of their stage of career, most teachers reported heightened levels of frustration at being restricted to implementing only one approach to the teaching of guided reading. At the research school, the elimination of teachers' opportunity to engage in

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experimentation with pedagogical practice removed what Huberman (1989) identified as being the typical pathway of most teachers as they transition from being teacher graduates, to early career teachers, and then to confident and highly capable teachers at the mid-career point. By removing teachers' opportunity to experiment, a principal can negate teachers' chance of developing a positive identity of themselves as a professional. Enforcing an expectation for compliance with a 'standard-style' of practice for guided reading can cultivate teachers' sense of disenchantment. Rather than this subjective feeling being potentially limited to teachers in Huberman's fourth career stage, at the research school it was characteristic of the subjective responses of most teachers, and it begin as early as the first stage of career. This research has highlighted that irrespective of teachers' career stage, when they are expected to comply with a 'standard-style' of practice, they can experience a sense of disenchantment, and this subjective feeling has a considerable affect on their level of enthusiasm, motivation and willingness to engage in teaching and learning. This deleterious effect on teachers' subjectivity can undermine the success of a change initiative.

7.5.3 Contribution 3

The third contribution to knowledge highlights how a culture of de-privatisation and accountability may de-professionalise teachers. In an increasingly political and performance-orientated educational context, no longer are classrooms being seen as isolated and individualised places. Rather, teachers' pedagogical practice is becoming more public and this has led to it being open to the potential for scrutiny. Teachers are being held more publicly accountable for their standard of performance, and this can be measured using data from student achievement on standardised tests or from class-based observations of teachers' practice. In recent times, teaching has come to be defined by a series of objective, discrete, observable, and measurable skills. This research has shown that most teachers at the research school are apprehensive about de-privatisation as this enables a change facilitator to access their classroom and it allows them to have their pedagogical practice scrutinised. In doing this, teachers perceive a constant sense of accountability and with this comes a fear of reprimand if their quality of performance does not meet the expectations of their principal. These teachers also reported a high level of frustration at having to bear the blame from their principal when students' performance on standardised tests of reading achievement do not meet national minimum standards, despite their best efforts to comply with the tenets of the principal's change initiative.

7.5.4 Contribution 4

The fourth contribution to knowledge is that a leader's sense of relationality can play a critical role in shaping teachers' level of engagement in educational change. If a leader adopts a transactional style of leadership and chooses to impose a business-orientated model of change onto an educational context, a culture of performativity can develop. This study has highlighted that when a principal adopts a transactional style of leadership, expectations are imposed *onto* teachers, and processes are put in place to position teachers as passive and compliant implementers of a vision for change. This contrasts teachers' professional mindset whereby they seek to actively contribute ideas and opinions regarding a school-related change initiative.

As teachers develop meaning, and refine this, during the social interactions that they have with others, their perceptions of the professional relationship that they have with their principal can shape the way they engage in teaching and learning. At the research school, most of the teachers felt that their principal was inauthentic and non-trustworthy, and this led to feelings of resentment and resistance towards the principal's expectations for his change initiative. Negative subjective feelings led to most of the teachers emotionally disengaging from the change initiative, and this ran contrary to the principal's vision for his teaching staff. It is clear that a transactional style of leadership did not engender a school culture that fostered teachers' motivation to become high-quality educators. It is possible that a transrelational style of leadership may yield more positive subjective feelings amongst teachers and have a greater chance of elevating teachers' engagement in educational change. This style has the potential to positively effect teachers' subjectivity as it is premised on the importance of developing an effective professional relationship between a leader and their staff, and it enables knowledge to be socially constructed and to coevolve within a culture of transparency, equality, and authenticity.

7.5.5 Contribution 5

The fifth contribution to knowledge is that a change facilitator's disposition and level of professional knowledge can have a considerable influence on shaping teachers' experiences of a change initiative within a school context. The subjective feelings that teachers have towards the change facilitator can potentially influence the level of enthusiasm and motivation that they display with regard to being involved in a change initiative. This study has shown that when a change facilitator's disposition is perceived by teachers as being characterised by lacklustre interpersonal skills and/or a lack of depth in professional

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knowledge, they begin to question the facilitator's credibility as an expert. Distrust can undermine the establishment of a positive professional relationship and, over time, it may erode any sense of benefit that teachers perceive from participating in opportunities for learning with the change facilitator. Teachers act towards what has professional value for them, and so experiencing feelings of restriction and resentment towards a change facilitator does little to foster teachers' enthusiasm towards engaging in future opportunities for teaching learning with a change facilitator.

7.6 Concluding Remarks

Teaching is a profession where teachers invest their sense of self in their work (Barr & Mellor, 2016; Nias, 1991), and so there is a strong emotional dimension to any implemented processes for educational change (Crow et al. 2016; Hargreaves, 1998, 2000; Kelchtermans, 2005). This is because a change initiative can strike at the core of what teachers perceive as the fundamental dimension of their role, that is, the way they teach within their classroom context. Consequently, since a teacher's professional identity is closely connected with the way they enact their 'craft', a change initiative can be perceived as a possible attack on the fundamental premise of who they are as a professional educator. Thus, when implementing a change initiative in a school context, teachers may view it in terms of either what they are set to gain or lose from the experience (Van Veen et al. 2005).

The introduction of a change initiative targeting improvement in teacher quality is likely to elicit a phenomenological response, to some degree, from all of the teachers involved because it requires a level of adjustment to their attitudes and beliefs about teaching and learning (O'Sullivan, 2002). Fullan (2001) conceptualises change as being "a double-edged sword" (p. 1) as some teachers can view change as exciting and energising, yet others perceive feelings of fear, anxiety, and loss. Teachers are more likely to embrace change if they perceive it presents little threat to their professional identity and if the change is considered as being personally relevant and will assist in improving their professional knowledge and pedagogical practice (Bishop, 1986; Robinson & McMillan, 2006). Implementing change in a school context can elicit subjective feelings of loss, anxiety, bitterness, and resistance as teachers are expected to let go of the practices, procedures, routines, and behaviours that they perceive shape their identity, and instead embrace new ways of teaching and learning (Lewin, 1958; O'Sullivan, 2002; Van Veen et al. 2005). When

change is forced on teachers, they can feel a sense of doubt in their competence as well as a shift in their sense of professional identity.

Teachers are "creatures of circumstance, products of their working environment" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012, p. 30), and so their ongoing exposure to a range of experiences influences their perceptions, and in turn, shapes their behaviour (Yavetz, Goldman & Pe'er, 2014). Thus, teacher perceptions are not a fixed phenomenon as meaning is continually being constructed and re-constructed within their social dynamics and their professional relationships that occur within a school context (Uhl-Bien, 2006).

All of this implies that the style of leadership that a principal adopts, and the way that they socially interact with their staff, provides a critically important influence upon how a teacher views a proposed change. Some principals implement change from a transactional mindset (Burns, 1978), and focus on leading with authority and control. In these schools, teachers are positioned as passive agents of change. Conversely, other principals may choose a transrelational style of leadership (Branson, 2011; Branson et al. 2016; Duignan, 2014; Eacott, 2015; Uhl-Bien, 2006). This approach requires a principal to lead with authenticity and build a professional relationship with teachers based on trust and relationality.

In this research, it can be argued that the principal was a transactional leader as this reflected his dispositional proclivity for control and authority. This style of leadership led the majority of teachers at the research school to perceive that they were de-professionalised by their involvement in the change initiative. The principal promulgated a school culture of compliance and this involved intentionally removing teachers' opportunity to express their individuality, creativity, and autonomy with regards to the teaching of guided reading. The employment of a change facilitator formed a key part of the principal's change agenda, and she periodically visited teachers' classrooms to model the expected 'standard style' of pedagogy and to observe teachers' implementation of this practice. Most teachers felt, however, that in this particular case the change facilitator's role was less aligned with their needs and more aligned to those of the principal. This particular change facilitator seemed, through the interpretation of many of the teachers, to be the eyes and ears of the principal rather than the personal guide and mentor for each staff member.

Teachers from different career stages can typically exhibit variation in their phenomenological response to change (Huberman, 1989). However, at Emmanuel College there was an uncharacteristic generalised sense of commonality in teachers' subjective

responses to the principal's change initiative. While all teachers at this school continued to comply with the principal's expectations for teaching and learning, they reported a progressive decline in the positivity of their subjective responses to the change. Regardless of their individual career stage, each teacher's social interactions and professional conversations continued to reinforce their constructed view that the character of the principal and change facilitator was inauthentic, non-genuine, and non-trustworthy. These feelings of distrust towards the principal and change facilitator shaped teachers' level of will and commitment towards their participation in the change initiative. Teachers' subjective feelings grew from an initial resentment at having to abandon their sense of autonomy and teacher voice, to resistance at being de-professionalised, through to feelings of demoralisation as they were forced to surrender their professional identity and comply with an imposed 'standard style' of pedagogy for the teaching of guided reading.

The principal's intention for introducing and sustaining the change initiative at Emmanuel College was to raise teachers' quality of knowledge and practice. However, it can be argued that teacher quality could not be effectively elevated in this school context while his preferred leadership style continued to promulgate a culture of teaching and learning premised on control, compliance, and accountability. These tenets contradicted teacher engagement. As a result of experiencing ongoing negative phenomenological responses to the change initiative, most teachers not only had their sense of professionalism and identity eroded, they also reported that they lost the joy and enthusiasm that they once brought to their role as an educator of guided reading. If the principal of Emmanuel College wished to be seriously committed to enacting the change initiative, there needed to be a re-conceptualisation of how the teachers were positioned as teachers and learners.

Thus, the outcomes from this particular research adds an important contribution to the view that, while the phenomenological dimension of change initiatives continues to be overlooked, effective educational change will remain elusive. This research has identified that the imposition of the described change initiative on the teachers at Emmanuel College resulted in them expressing negative phenomenological responses which reinforced their reluctance, if not resistance, towards continuing to enact the change. In the light of this outcome, this research supports the understanding that a planned educational change strategy is significantly deficient if it does not incorporate a means for ascertaining, and positively responding to, the ongoing phenomenological responses to the change processes from those involved in bringing about the change. Moreover, this implies that those who are overseeing

the change need to not only be effective managers of the change process but also, and just as effective, be leaders of people. In order to ensure the successful completion of a desired change, the leader must be able to fully engage with each person who is involved in the change.

This is to argue that no longer can educational change be viewed as essentially an objective, technical, rational, logical process, but rather it needs to be considered as a highly phenomenologically charged activity whereby its effectiveness is dependent upon it being largely co-constructed, relationally-driven, and individually paced. To this end, the successful leader of educational change must embrace the essential qualities of relationality, authenticity, and trustworthiness. Educational change will only become far more regularly successful when those responsible for leading it are provided with the knowledge, skills and disposition enabling them to collaboratively and empathetically work with each and every person who has been asked to create the change. The genesis of successful educational change is how the people feel about being involved in the change. If the leader suitably attends to this fundamental responsibility then, arguably, far less of their attention might need to be given to how and what is being done to achieve the change.

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9.0 Appendices

Appendix A: ACU Human Research Ethics Committee Approval

Human Research Ethics Committee
Committee Approval Form

Principal Investigator/Supervisor: Dr Janelle Young   Brisbane Campus

Co-Investigators:

Student Researcher: Miss Anne-Marie Black   Brisbane Campus

Ethics approval has been granted for the following project:
Exploring the Influence of Teachers' Phenomenological Experiences of a Principal's Change Initiative.

for the period: 25 July 2011 to 30 November 2011

Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) Register Number: Q2011 54

<u>Special Condition/s of Approval</u>

Prior to commencement of your research, the following permissions are required to be submitted to the ACU HREC: N/A

The following <u>standard</u> conditions as stipulated in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans* (2007) apply:

    (i)   that Principal Investigators / Supervisors provide, on the form supplied by the Human Research Ethics Committee, annual reports on matters such as:
- security of records
- compliance with approved consent procedures and documentation
- compliance with special conditions, and

    (ii)   that researchers report to the HREC immediately any matter that might affect the ethical acceptability of the protocol, such as:
- proposed changes to the protocol
- unforeseen circumstances or events
- adverse effects on participants

The HREC will conduct an audit each year of all projects deemed to be of more than low risk. There will also be random audits of a sample of projects considered to be of negligible risk and low risk on all campuses each year.

Within one month of the conclusion of the project, researchers are required to complete a *Final Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer.

If the project continues for more than one year, researchers are required to complete an *Annual Progress Report Form* and submit it to the local Research Services Officer within one month of the anniversary date of the ethics approval.

K. Pashley.

Signed: ....   Date: 26.7.2011
(Research Services Officer, McAuley Campus)

Appendix B: Catholic Education Office
Ethics Approval

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne

Catholic Education

A11.096 JS:em ref:173

24 August 2011

Ms Anne-Marie Black
PO Box XX
XXXX QLD XXXX

Dear Ms Black

The committee met on Monday 22 August 2011 and approval has been granted for you to proceed with your research project *"Exploring the Influence of Teachers' Phenomenological Experiences of a Principal's Change Initiative"*.

I would ask you to contact the principals of the school seeking their involvement in the project.

Please note that participation in your study is at the discretion of the principal. The

committee wishes you all the best for your research and we look forward to receiving the

result of your research.

If you have any further queries, please contact me on (XX) XXXXXXXX.

Yours sincerely

Judith A. Seery
Research Coordinator
Catholic Education Office

Appendix C: Information Letter to the Principal

ACU National

INFORMATION LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL

TITLE OF PROJECT: Exploring the Influence of Teachers' Phenomenological Experiences of a Principal's Change Initiative

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: Dr. Janelle Young

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Anne-Marie Black

PROGRAMME IN WHICH ENROLLED: Doctor of Philosophy
Australian Catholic University
(McAuley Campus)

You are invited to participate in a research project. The purpose of this project is to gather data on the effect on teachers' responses to change when a school-based approach to professional development is implemented in a single-school context.

Participants will complete an online survey exploring their perceptions of the model of professional development at the school, the school learning environment, and guided reading pedagogical practices. Participants will also have the opportunity to be involved in a semi-structured interview to provide further details regarding professional development, the school learning environment and their guided reading pedagogical practices.

This study does not pose any significant risks or discomfort for participants. The survey will be emailed electronically to participants so it can be completed at a convenient time. Semi-structured interview times will be organised at a mutually convenient time either during or after school hours.

Participation in the research project requires participants to spend approximately fifteen minutes of their time to complete the online survey. The semi-structured interviews are envisaged to run for approximately forty minutes.

Participation in this research project enables participants to contribute to the field of educational research. Through their involvement in this research project, participants enable the researcher to gather and analyze data regarding an approach to professional development, features of a school learning environment, and pedagogical practices for guided reading. It is envisaged results will contribute to furthering professional knowledge in these areas. Research information and results will be summarized and may appear in written publications or be presented orally to others in a form that does not identify participants in any way. All data will be reported in a de-identified form.

Participants are free to refuse consent, or to withdraw consent at any time, thus discontinuing their participation in the study, without providing justification. These courses of action will not prejudice future employment.

Participant confidentiality is ensured through the allocation of a research code to data for each participant. Data collection, analysis, and presentation are reported using coded, non-identifiable data. All electronically retained data will be kept in password protected file on the researcher's USB. Data gathered from this research project will be stored in Dr. Janelle Young's office (School of Education, Australian Catholic University - McAuley Campus) to ensure the confidentiality of participants is upheld. All primary data will be retained by the University for five years following publication or for five years following completion of the project if data are not used for publication. After this period, data are to be disposed of in accordance with the University's Retention and Disposal Schedule.

Any questions regarding this project should be directed to the Principal Supervisor, Dr. Janelle Young, and the Student Researcher.

Dr. Janelle Young

School of Education
Australian Catholic University
McAuley Campus
P.O BOX 456
VIRGINIA QLD 4014

Telephone: (07) 3623 7160
Fax: (07) 3623 7247
Email: Janelle.Young@acu.edu.au

On conclusion of the research project, results will be provided for all participants.

This research project has been approved by both the Human Research Ethics Committee at the Australian Catholic University and the Executive Director of Brisbane Catholic Education.

In the event that you have any complaint or concern about the way that you have been treated during the study, or if you have any query that the Primary Supervisor and Student Researcher has not been able to satisfy, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the nearest branch of the Research Services Office..

Address: Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee
                ℅ Research Services
                Australian Catholic University
                Brisbane Campus
                P.O. BOX 456
                VIRGINIA QLD 4014

Telephone: (07) 3623 7429
Fax: (07) 3623 7328

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. The participant will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this research project, you should sign both copies of the Consent Form, retain one copy for your records and return the other copy to the Principal Supervisor or Student Researcher.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Janelle Young   Anne-Marie Black
(Principal Investigator)   (Student Researcher)

Appendix D: Principal Consent Form

ACU National

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne

PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM
Copy for Researcher

TITLE OF PROJECT: Exploring the Influence of Teachers' Phenomenological Experiences of a
Principal's Change Initiative

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: Dr. Janelle Young

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Anne-Marie Black

I ……………………….. *(the Principal)* have read *(or, where appropriate, have had read to me)* and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in a forty minute semi-structured interview which will be audio-recorded, realising that I can withdraw my consent at any time without adverse consequences. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way.

NAME OF PRINCIPAL:…………………………………………………………………………………

SIGNATURE: …………….................………………………………………… **DATE:** ……..……….

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR:…………………………………..**DATE:** ………….....

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER:………...………………………….**DATE:** ……………

Appendix E: Information Letter to Participants
[Teacher and Facilitator]

⊕ **ACU National**

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne

INFORMATION LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS [Teacher and Change Facilitator]

TITLE OF PROJECT: Exploring the Influence of Teachers' Phenomenological Experiences of a Principal's Change Initiative

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: Dr. Janelle Young

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Anne-Marie Black

**PROGRAMME IN
WHICH ENROLLED:** Doctor of Philosophy
Australian Catholic University
(McAuley Campus)

You are invited to participate in a research project. The purpose of this project is to gather data on the effect on teachers' responses to change when a school-based approach to professional development is implemented in a single-school context.

Participants will complete an online survey exploring their perceptions of the school-based approach to professional development at the school, the school learning environment, and guided reading pedagogical practices. Participants will also have the opportunity to be involved in a semi-structured interview to provide further details regarding professional development, the school learning environment and their guided reading pedagogical practices.

This study does not pose any significant risks or discomfort for participants. The survey will be emailed electronically to participants so it can be completed at a convenient time. Semi-structured interview times will be organised at a mutually convenient time either during or after school hours.

Participation in the research project requires participants to spend approximately fifteen minutes of their time to complete the online survey. The semi-structured interviews are envisaged to run for approximately forty minutes.

Participation in this research project enables participants to contribute to the field of educational research. Through their involvement in this research project, participants enable the researcher to gather and analyze data regarding a school-based approach to professional development, features of a school learning environment, and pedagogical practices for guided reading. It is envisaged results will contribute to furthering professional knowledge in these areas. Research information and results will be summarized and may appear in written publications or be presented orally to others in a form that does not identify participants in any way. All data will be reported in a de-identified form.

Participants are free to refuse consent, or to withdraw consent at any time, thus discontinuing their participation in the study, without providing justification. These courses of action will not prejudice future employment.

Participant confidentiality is ensured through the allocation of a research code to data for each participant. Data collection, analysis, and presentation are reported using coded, non-identifiable data. All electronically retained data will be kept in password protected file on the researcher's USB. Data gathered from this research project will be stored in Dr. Janelle Young's office (School of Education, Australian Catholic University - McAuley Campus) to ensure the confidentiality of participants is upheld. All primary data will be retained by the University for five years following publication or for five years following completion of the project if data are not used for publication. After this period, data are to be disposed of in accordance with the University's Retention and Disposal Schedule.

Any questions regarding this project should be directed to the Principal Supervisor, Dr. Janelle Young, and the Student Researcher.

> Dr. Janelle Young
> School of Education
> Australian Catholic University
> McAuley Campus
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Telephone: (07) 3623 7160
Fax: (07) 3623 7247
Email: Janelle.Young@acu.edu.au

On conclusion of the research project, results will be provided for all participants.

This research project has been approved by both the Human Research Ethics Committee at the Australian Catholic University and the Executive Director of Brisbane Catholic Education.

In the event that you have any complaint or concern about the way that you have been treated during the study, or if you have any query that the Primary Supervisor and Student Researcher has not been able to satisfy, you may write to the Chair of the Human Research Ethics Committee care of the nearest branch of the Research Services Office..

Address: Chair, Human Research Ethics Committee
               ℅ Research Services
               Australian Catholic University
               Brisbane Campus
               P.O. BOX 456
               VIRGINIA QLD 4014

Telephone: (07) 3623 7429
Fax: (07) 3623 7328

Any complaint or concern will be treated in confidence and fully investigated. The participant will be informed of the outcome.

If you agree to participate in this research project, you should sign both copies of the Consent Form, retain one copy for your records and return the other copy to the Principal Supervisor or Student Researcher.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Janelle Young   Anne-Marie Black
(Principal Investigator)   (Student Researcher)

Appendix F: Participant Consent Form
[Teacher and Facilitator]

ACU National

Australian Catholic University
Brisbane Sydney Canberra Ballarat Melbourne

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM [Teacher and Change Facilitator]

TITLE OF PROJECT: Exploring the Influence of Teachers' Phenomenological Experiences of a Principal's Change Initiative

PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR: Dr. Janelle Young

STUDENT RESEARCHER: Anne-Marie Black

I ………………………….. *(the participant)* have read *(or, where appropriate, have had read to me)* and understood the information provided in the Letter to Participants. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in a forty minute semi-structured interview which will be audio-recorded, realizing that I can withdraw my consent at any time without adverse consequences. I agree that research data collected for the study may be published or may be provided to other researchers in a form that does not identify me in any way.

NAME OF PARTICIPANT:……….....……………………………………………………………

SIGNATURE: ……………….................………………………………………… **DATE:** ……………….

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR:……………………………………...**DATE:** …………....

SIGNATURE OF STUDENT RESEARCHER:………...…………………………**DATE:** ……………

Appendix G: Semi-structured Interview Questions [Principal and Change Facilitator]

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SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: Principal and Change Facilitator

The following questions were used to guide the conduct of semi-structured interviews with the principal and change facilitator. Additional questions were added as necessary to explore participant responses further.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PRINCIPAL

What is the approach to professional development at this school?

1. In your words, explain the approach to professional development used at this school?
2. What made you choose this approach to professional development at this school?

Professional Development at the school

3. How do staff members respond to the change facilitator?
4. What made you choose this particular change facilitator?
5. Do you meet with the change facilitator to set goals for professional development sessions?
6. How often are goals set?
7. How often do teachers participate in professional development with the change facilitator?
8. Where does the professional development occur?
9. Is the professional development done at an individual or group level or both? Please explain.
10. What sorts of things do you expect teachers to do when they are working with the change facilitator?

Implementing professional development within a school context

11. Is all staff across all year levels required to participate in the professional development sessions?
12. Do you think professional development within a school context is something that is useful for all teachers across the primary year levels? Please explain.
13. To what extent do you feel that the information provided to teachers during professional development at this school meets the needs of the student learners at this school?
14. How do you think teachers feel about having their teaching of guided reading observed by the change facilitator?
15. Does the change facilitator provide you with feedback following teacher observations of guided reading? Please explain.
16. What happens if the change facilitator provides you with negative feedback about teachers' involvement in guided reading?

Comparisons between professional development within a school context and other models of professional development

17. Have you been involved in any other types of professional development models for teachers during your career? Please explain the types.
18. How do you feel this type of professional development compares to an approach to professional development delivered within a school context?

Advantages and disadvantages of professional development within a school context

19. To what extent has the approach to professional development at this school influenced your staffs' teaching of guided reading?
20. What do you see as the benefit/s of using an approach to professional development delivered within a school context with teachers?
21. What do you see as the benefit/s of using an approach to professional development delivered within a school context for a school learning community?
22. What do you see as the major disadvantages of an approach to professional development delivered within a school context?
23. What influence has the approach to professional development at this school had on the state and national testing results for students at the school?

24. One of the change facilitator's goals has been to assist with sustaining consistency in guided reading practices across all primary years at your school. Why do you believe in the importance of a consistent approach to guided reading? Please explain.

Vision for change
25. Who is responsible for developing the vision for this school?
26. Who do you see as the people who put that vision into practice/reality?
27. What opportunities are there for teachers to develop their leadership skills?

Dimensions of a school learning environment
28. What do you think are some key features of the school's learning environment that has contributed to staff feeling (positive or negative) about their professional development experience?
29. To what extent do you feel staff could approach their colleagues to discuss questions/concerns about the teaching of guided reading?
30. How do you think teachers feel having you tell them how to teach guided reading?
31. How do your staff feel about having an external change facilitator tell them how to teach guided reading?
32. To what extent do you feel that your staff can openly express their ideas/opinions within this particular school?
33. What are your perceptions of teachers' reactions to change within this school?
34. Is change something that occurs at a Leadership team level or collaborative (or both)? Please elaborate.
35. How do you feel about the availability of resources within this school?
36. How would you best describe the level of work pressure your staff have at this school? Please elaborate.

Future improvements/directions for professional development
37. What changes could be made to this school environment to enhance your staffs' experience of professional development?
38. How could the approach to professional development at this school be improved to more accurately meet your staffs' needs as learners?
39. How could the change facilitator assist your staff to further their pedagogical practices in guided reading in the coming years?

Additional comments
40. Are there any other comments you wish to raise?

QUESTIONS FOR THE CHANGE FACILITATOR

What is professional development within a school context?
1. In your words, what is the approach to professional development at this school?
2. What made you agree to use the approach to professional development at this school?

Facilitating professional development at the school
3. How do staff members feel about having to be involved in professional development about guided reading?
4. How do staff members respond to being expected to work with you to improve their teaching?
5. Do you meet with the principal to set goals for professional development sessions?
6. How often do teachers participate in professional development with you?
7. Where does professional development occur in this school context?
8. Is professional development done at an individual or group level or both? Please explain.
9. What sorts of things do you expect teachers to do when they are working with you?

Teachers' participation in professional development within a school context

10. Is all staff across all year levels required to participate in professional development sessions?
11. Do you think that professional development within a school context is something that is useful for all teachers across the primary year levels? Please explain.
12. To what extent do you feel that the information provided to teachers during professional development at this school meets the needs of the student learners at this school?
13. How do you think teachers feel about having their teaching of guided reading observed by you (the change facilitator)?
14. What sorts of things do you give teachers feedback on following their observations of guided reading?
15. To what extent do you think teachers take on board the feedback you give them regarding their teaching of guided reading?
16. Are you required to provide feedback to the principal regarding observations of teachers' guided reading lessons? If yes, in what format is this given?
17. What happens if you provide the principal with negative feedback about teachers' involvement in guided reading?

Comparisons between professional development within a school context and other models of professional development

18. Have you been involved in providing any other types of professional development models for teachers? Please explain the types.
19. How do you feel this type of professional development compares to an approach to professional development delivered within a school context?

Advantages and disadvantages of professional development within a school context

20. To what extent has the approach to professional development at this school influenced the teaching of guided reading that happens at this school?
21. What do you see as the benefit/s of using an approach to professional development delivered within a school context with teachers?
22. What do you see as the benefit/s of using an approach to professional development delivered within a school context for a school learning community?
23. What do you see as the major disadvantages of an approach to professional development delivered within a school context?
24. What influence has the approach to professional development at this school had on the state and national testing results for students at the school?
25. One of your goals has been to assist with sustaining consistency in guided reading practices across all primary years at this school. Why do you believe in the importance of a consistent approach to guided reading? Please explain.

Vision for change

26. Who is responsible for developing the vision for this school?
27. Who do you see as the people who put that vision into practice?
28. What opportunities do you see for teachers to promote their leadership skills and be involved in change?

Dimensions of a school learning environment

29. What do you think are some key features of the school's learning environment that has contributed to staff feeling (positive or negative) about your involvement in their professional development experience?
30. To what extent do you feel staff could approach their colleagues to discuss questions/concerns about the teaching of guided reading?
31. How do you think teachers feel having you tell them how to teach guided reading?
32. To what extent do you feel that teachers can openly express their ideas/opinions within this particular school?

33. What are your perceptions of teachers' reactions to change within this school?
34. Is change something that occurs at a Leadership team level or collaborative (or both)? Please elaborate.
35. How do you feel about the availability of resources within this school?
36. How would you best describe your perception of the level of work pressure at this school? Please elaborate.

Future improvements/directions for professional development
37. What changes could be made to this school environment to enhance your ability to provide professional development for teachers in the area of guided reading?
38. How could the approach to professional development at this school be improved to more accurately meet the needs of the teachers?
39. How do you see yourself assisting teachers to further their pedagogical practices in guided reading in the coming years?

Additional comments
40. Are there any other comments you wish to raise?

Appendix H: PDSER Teacher Survey
[Part A: Professional Development]

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PDSER Teacher Survey (Part A)

Questions were listed in order when administered to participants. Headings were not included on the online survey.

PART A: Professional Development

	Teacher Professional Renewal	**Strongly Disagree** ▼	**Disagree** ▼	**Agree** ▼	**Strongly Agree** ▼
1	Participating in professional development within a school context updates my professional knowledge.				
2	Participating in professional development about guided reading within a school context will improve student learning opportunities in the classroom.				
3	Participating in professional development within a school context encourages me to reflect on aspects of my teaching.				
4	Participating in professional development within a school context increases my knowledge of what can be done in the classroom.				
6	Participating in professional development within a school context renews my enthusiasm for teaching.				
7	Participating in professional development about guided reading within a school context gave me some useful ideas on how to improve student achievement outcomes.				
13	Knowledge gained from participating in professional development within a school context will improve my teaching.				
15	Participating in professional development within a school context encourages teachers to share what they have learned with their colleagues.				
16	I learn new and different ideas from participating in professional development sessions within a school context.				
19	I look forward to trying out new things in my teaching.				
20	I plan to use the knowledge gained from participating in professional development about guided reading at this school in my work with students.				
21	Participating in professional development about guided reading within a school context provided me with an opportunity to focus on improving student achievement outcomes.				
24	Feedback from the facilitator of professional development at this school helps me to know how to improve my teaching.				
27	I feel that I am a better teacher when I engage in professional development within a school context.				
30	I enjoy being released from the class to work with the facilitator of the professional development at this school.				
32	Professional development in a school context has made me change the way I teach.				

School Level Collegiality	Strongly Disagree ▼	Disagree ▼	Agree ▼	Strongly Agree ▼
8	Teachers in my school share ideas, knowledge and skills gained from participating in professional development within a school context.				
12	I am comfortable with the facilitator of the professional development at this school observing me teach.				
18	Adequate support is available to teachers at my school to share information gained from participating in professional development within a school context.				
22	I feel confident to share my knowledge with others.				
25	I feel confident to ask the facilitator of professional development at this school any questions I have about implementing pedagogical practices.				
28	I learn from observing other people when they are teaching.				

Applicability of the Professional Development Model	Strongly Disagree ▼	Disagree ▼	Agree ▼	Strongly Agree ▼
5	Information presented in professional development sessions at this school is directly relevant to teaching and learning in my school.				
9	I think the approach to professional development at this school helps me feel supported when implementing new pedagogical practices.				
10	Participating in professional development sessions at this school is a waste of time.				
11	Information presented in professional development sessions at this school is directly applicable to teachers' work in this school.				
14	Participating in professional development sessions at this school is not useful.				
17	I think the ideas presented in professional development sessions at this school are too difficult to put into practice.				
23	I learn more from attending external professional development compared to professional development within a school context.				
26	External professional development helps me know how to apply pedagogical practices with students in my class.				
29	The facilitator of professional development at this school is knowledgeable in her chosen area.				
31	I would recommend being involved with school-based professional development to teachers at other schools.				

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PDSER Teacher Survey (Part B)

Questions were listed in order when administered to participants. Headings were not included on the online survey.

PART B: School-Learning Environment

AFFILIATION	Strongly Disagree ▼	Disagree ▼	Agree ▼	Strongly Agree ▼
1 I seldom receive encouragement from colleagues.				
8 I feel accepted by others.				
15 I am ignored by other teachers.				
22 I feel that I could rely on my colleagues for assistance if I should need it.				
29 I feel that I have many friends among my colleagues at this school.				
36 I often feel lonely and left out of things in the staff room.				

PROFESSIONAL INTEREST	Strongly Disagree ▼	Disagree ▼	Agree ▼	Strongly Agree ▼
2 Teachers frequently discuss teaching methods and strategies with each other.				
9 Professional matters about guided reading can be raised by teachers during staff meetings.				
16 Many teachers attend external in-service and other professional development courses/sessions.				
23 Teachers show little interest in what is happening in other schools.				
30 Teachers are keen to learn from their colleagues.				
37 Teachers show considerable interest in the professional activities of their colleagues.				

STAFF FREEDOM	Strongly Disagree ▼	Disagree ▼	Agree ▼	Strongly Agree ▼
3 I am often supervised to ensure that I follow directions correctly.				
10 It is considered very important that I closely follow curriculum documents.				
17 There are many rules and regulations that I am expected to follow.				
24 I am allowed to do almost as I please in the classroom.				
31 My classes are expected to use prescribed texts and prescribed resource materials.				
38 I have to use very strict control in the classroom with my students.				

	PARTICIPATORY DECISION MAKING	Strongly Disagree ▼	Disagree ▼	Agree ▼	Strongly Agree ▼
4	Decisions about the running of the school are made by the principal without consulting teachers.				
11	I have to refer even small matters to the principal for a final answer.				
18	My ideas can be put into action without gaining the approval of the principal.				
25	Teachers are frequently asked to participate in decisions concerning administrative policies and procedures.				
32	I am encouraged to make decisions without running them past the principal.				
39	I have very little say in the running of the school.				

	INNOVATION	Strongly Disagree ▼	Disagree ▼	Agree ▼	Strongly Agree ▼
5	It is very difficult to change anything in this school.				
12	Teachers are encouraged to be innovative at this school.				
19	There is a great deal of resistance to the principal's proposals for a change initiative.				
26	Most teachers like the idea of a change initiative.				
33	New courses or curriculum materials are seldom implemented at this school.				
40	There is a lot of experimentation with different teaching approaches.				
43	New and different ideas are always being tried out in this school?				

	WORK PRESSURE	Strongly Disagree ▼	Disagree ▼	Agree ▼	Strongly Agree ▼
6	There is constant pressure to keep working at a high level at this school.				
13	Teachers have to work long hours to complete all their work.				
20	The requirements of this school give me no time to relax.				
27	You can take it easy here and still get work done at this school.				
34	There are a lot of deadlines to meet.				
41	It is hard to keep up with your work load.				

	STUDENT SUPPORT	Strongly Disagree ▼	Disagree ▼	Agree ▼	Strongly Agree ▼
7	Most students are helpful and co-operative for teachers.				
14	Most students are pleasant and friendly to teachers.				
21	There are noisy, badly behaved students.				
28	Students get along well with teachers.				
35	Students are well-mannered and respectful to the school staff.				
42	Very strict discipline is needed to control the students.				

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PDSER Teacher Survey (Part C)

Please select your response to each question.

(Questions were listed in order when administered to participants.)

PART C: Pedagogical Practice - Guided Reading

	PART C: Pedagogical Practice - Guided Reading
Q1	How much time do you typically have each week for guided reading? ☐ Less than 30 minutes ☐ 30-59 minutes ☐ 1 to less than 1 ½ hours ☐ 1 ½ to less than 2 hours ☐ 2 hours to 2 ½ hours ☐ Longer than 2 ½ hours
Q2	Which of the following best describes the primary purpose for your guided reading instruction? (Tick only one) ☐ To provide demonstrations of skills, strategies, response, and/or procedures to students ☐ To provide interventions around scaffolded instruction for students ☐ To facilitate a group response between students around a shared text ☐ To facilitate a group response between students around multiple texts
Q3	How often is guided reading connected to shared and independent reading, writing instruction, or content areas in your instruction? ☐ Always ☐ Usually ☐ Sometimes ☐ Seldom ☐ Never
Q4	Do you use texts in your guided reading that connect to your content area "themes"? ☐ Yes all the time ☐ Yes most of the time ☐ Yes sometimes ☐ No never
Q5	How many guided reading groups do you typically maintain in your reading program? ☐ None ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 or more
Q6	How many sessions per week do you typically meet with each group? ☐ Less than 1 session ☐ 1 session ☐ 2 sessions ☐ 3 sessions ☐ 4 sessions ☐ 5 sessions or more

Q7	How long do you typically meet with each guided reading group? ☐ Less than 10 minutes ☐ 10-14 minutes ☐ 15-19 minutes ☐ 20-24 minutes ☐ 25-29 minutes ☐ 30 minutes or longer
Q8	How many students, on average, are in your guided reading groups? ☐ 1 or 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 or more
Q9	How are your students placed in guided reading groups? ☐ Based on developmental reading level ☐ Based on identified areas of reading need ☐ Mixed reading abilities ☐ Based on another method (please specify) _____
Q10	Which of the following diagnostic or assessment tools do you use to place your students in guided reading groups? (Tick all that apply) ☐ Folio records from the previous year ☐ Running record or individual reading inventory ☐ Scores from standardised reading assessments ☐ Daily observation ☐ Other (please specify) _____
Q11	How often do you normally change the students in your guided reading groups? ☐ Never ☐ Once a year ☐ Once a term ☐ Once a month ☐ 1 to 3 times per month ☐ 1 to 3 times per week ☐ 4 or more times per week
Q12	Which of the following best explains your text selection for guided reading groups? ☐ Every guided reading group reads the same book but each groups has a different learning focus ☐ Every guided reading group reads the same book and has the same learning focus ☐ Most groups read the same book and have the same learning focus ☐ All groups read different books and have the same learning focus ☐ All groups read different books and have different learning focuses
Q13	What percentage of the books chosen for use during guided reading are narrative stories only (as opposed to informational texts etc? ☐ None, use informational texts etc only ☐ 1%-24% ☐ 25%-49% ☐ 50%-99% ☐ 100%, use narrative stories only
Q14	What percentage of the books used during guided reading are chosen by the students? ☐ None ☐ 1%-24% ☐ 25%-49% ☐ 50%-74% ☐ 75%-99% ☐ 100%

Q15	Which best describes the levels of the books chosen during guided reading? (Tick only ONE) ☐ All students read books at their instructional level only ☐ Students do not always read books at their instructional level only

Q16	How often do you use each of the following texts during guided reading? (Give an answer for each)				
	Levelled reading books	Always ☐	Usually ☐	Sometimes ☐	Seldom ☐	Never ☐
	Non-levelled reading books	Always ☐	Usually ☐	Sometimes ☐	Seldom ☐	Never ☐
	Newspapers	Always ☐	Usually ☐	Sometimes ☐	Seldom ☐	Never ☐
	Magazines	Always ☐	Usually ☐	Sometimes ☐	Seldom ☐	Never ☐
	Comics	Always ☐	Usually ☐	Sometimes ☐	Seldom ☐	Never ☐
	Poems	Always ☐	Usually ☐	Sometimes ☐	Seldom ☐	Never ☐
	Brochures	Always ☐	Usually ☐	Sometimes ☐	Seldom ☐	Never ☐

Q17	While you are working with a guided reading group, what are the other students usually doing? ☐ Working independently (no adult assistance provided) ☐ Working independently (but can consult with the teacher) ☐ Working independently (school officer present in the room for student assistance) ☐ Some students working independently, some working with the school officer ☐ All students completing a task through direct instruction from the school officer

Q18	When you are conducting guided reading, what sorts of activities are other groups doing? (Tick all that apply) ☐ Literacy comprehension tasks related to their guided reading text ☐ Literacy comprehension tasks unrelated to their guided reading text ☐ Literacy cloze passage ☐ Writing Task ☐ Spelling Task ☐ Grammar Task ☐ Proof reading/Editing Task ☐ Catch up work (unfinished tasks from other subject areas) ☐ Tasks from other Key Learning Areas ☐ Computer – literacy related tasks ☐ Computer tasks – not related to literacy ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Q19	How many days per week do you **explicitly** teach students (at a whole class level) skills for improving their reading? ☐ Do not teach (at a whole class level) skills for improving students' reading (skip the next two questions) ☐ Less than 1 day ☐ 1 day ☐ 2 days ☐ 3 days ☐ 4 days ☐ 5 days

Q20	How much time would you spend each day **explicitly** teaching students skills for improving their reading (at a whole class level)? ☐ Less than 10 minutes ☐ 10-14 minutes ☐ 15-19 minutes ☐ 20-24 minutes ☐ 25-29 minutes ☐ 30 minutes ☐ More than 30 minutes

Q21	When do you **explicitly** teach students skills to improve their reading (at the whole class level)? ☐ Before guided reading sessions ☐ After guided reading sessions
Q22	Do you utilise formal running records to assess your students' reading progress? ☐ Yes I conduct them all myself ☐ Yes I conduct most of them (school officer, learning support assist with some) ☐ Yes I conduct some of them (school officer, learning support assist with many) ☐ My school officer or learning support teachers completes all these for me ☐ No (skip the next question)
Q23	How many times is a formal running record (for reading) completed for an individual student? ☐ Once a year ☐ Once a semester ☐ Once a term ☐ Once a month ☐ Once a week
Q24	How would you rate your knowledge about guided reading instruction? ☐ Very well informed ☐ Fairly well informed ☐ Not very well informed ☐ Not at all informed
Q25	How do you feel about the number of texts available for guided reading? ☐ There is an abundance of texts available for guided reading ☐ There are an adequate amount of texts available for guided reading ☐ There is a limited number of texts available for guided reading ☐ I struggle to find texts suitable for students in my class for guided reading
Q26	What is your preferred way of learning about guided reading? ☐ Through reading books ☐ Watching DVDs, Youtube clips ☐ By attending workshops/PD sessions ☐ By observing other people teaching ☐ By receiving feedback on my teaching
Q27	How confident are you doing guided reading in your classroom? ☐ Very confident ☐ Fairly confident ☐ Not very confident ☐ Not confident at all
Q28	How confident are you to explain your guided reading pedagogical practices to others? ☐ Very confident ☐ Fairly confident ☐ Not very confident ☐ Not confident at all
Q29	In what ways do you feel your teaching of guided reading could improve? ☐ Attending more PD sessions/external workshops ☐ More feedback on my teaching of guided reading ☐ More resources ☐ More time to observe other teachers teaching guided reading ☐ More understanding of administering assessment instruments (e.g. running records) ☐ More understanding about how to extract information from assessment instruments ☐ Other (please specify) _____

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SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:
Teacher Participants

The following questions were used to guide the conduct of semi-structured interviews with teacher participants. Additional questions were added as necessary to explore participant responses further.

What is the approach to professional development at this school?
1. In your words, what is the approach to professional development used at this school?
2. How often do you participate in professional development with the change facilitator?
3. Where does the professional development occur at this school?
4. Is professional development at this school done at an individual or group level or both? Please explain.
5. What sorts of things do you do with the change facilitator when you are participating in professional development at this school?

Involvement in professional development within a school context
6. Is all staff across all year levels required to participate in professional development sessions at this school?
7. Do you think that professional development within a school context is something that is useful for all teachers across the primary year levels? Please explain.
8. To what extent do you feel that the information provided to you during professional development sessions at this school meets the needs of your student learners?
9. How do you feel about having your teaching of guided reading observed by the change facilitator?
10. Do you find the feedback given by the change facilitator to be useful? Please explain.

Comparisons between professional development within a school context and other models of professional development
11. Have you been involved in any other types of professional development in your teaching career? Please explain the types.
12. How do you feel this prior professional development compares to an approach to professional development delivered within a school context?

Advantages and disadvantages of professional development within a school context
13. Why do you think this school's principal has chosen the approach to professional development at this school?
14. To what extent has the approach to professional development influenced your teaching of guided reading?
15. To what extent has the school-based approach to professional development at this school influenced the school's state and national results for reading?
16. What do you see as the benefit/s of using an approach to professional development delivered within a school context with teachers?
17. What do you see as the benefit/s of using an approach to professional development delivered within a school context for a staff learning community?
18. What do you see as the major disadvantages of an approach to professional development delivered within a school context?
19. One of the change facilitator's goals has been to assist with sustaining consistency in guided reading practices across all primary years at your school. Do you agree with the idea of a consistent approach to guided reading? Please explain.

Vision for change
20. Who is responsible for developing the vision for this school?
21. Who is responsible for driving 'change' in this school?
22. What involvement do you have in the vision and implementation of change at this school?

Dimensions of a school learning environment
23. What do you think are some key features of the school's learning environment that has contributed to you feeling (positive or negative) about your professional development experience?
24. To what extent do you feel you could approach your colleagues to discuss questions/concerns about the teaching of guided reading?
25. How do you feel having an external change facilitator tell you how to teach guided reading?
26. To what extent do you feel that you can openly express your ideas/opinions within this particular school?
27. What are your perceptions of other teachers' reactions to change within this school?
28. Is change something that occurs at a Leadership team level or collaborative (or both)? Please elaborate.
29. How do you feel about the availability of resources within this school?
30. How would you best describe your level of work pressure at this school? Please elaborate.

Future improvements/directions for professional development
31. What changes could be made to this school environment to enhance your experience of professional development?
32. How could the approach to professional development at this school be improved to more accurately meet your needs as a learner?
33. How could the change facilitator assist you to further your pedagogical practice in guided reading in the coming years?

Additional comments
34. Are there any other comments you wish to raise?

[PASW Statistics Program: Descriptive Analyses Extract]

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Statistics

		SLEQ13 The supply of equipment and resources is inadequate	SLEQ14 Teachers have to work long hours to complete all their work	SLEQ15 Most students are pleasant and friendly to teachers	SLEQ16 I am ignored by others teachers	SLEQ17 Professional matters are seldom discussed during staff meetings	SLEQ18 It is considered very important that I closely follow curriculum documents
N	Valid	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		1.96	3.54	3.36	1.46	1.75	3.54
Std. Deviation		.793	.508	.488	.576	.701	.576
Minimum		1	3	3	1	1	2
Maximum		4	4	4	3	4	4

Statistics

		SLEQ17 I feel that I have many friends among my colleagues at this school	SLEQ38 Teachers are keen to learn from their colleagues	SLEQ19 My classes are expected to use prescribed texts and prescribed resource materials	SLEQ40 There is a lot of experimentation with different teaching approaches	SLEQ41 facilities are inadequate for serving a variety of classroom activities and learning groups of different sizes	SLEQ42 There are a lot of deadlines to meet
N	Valid	28	28	28	28	28	28
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.29	3.21	2.54	2.82	2.18	3.39
Std. Deviation		.600	.630	.508	.723	.670	.567
Minimum		2	2	2	1	1	2
Maximum		4	4	3	4	3	4

Key Phrases	Coding Category	Colour
Equipment, resources, prescribed texts, facilities	Resource Adequacy	
Long hours, deadlines	Work Pressure	
students	Student Support	
Other teachers, colleagues	Affiliation	
Learn from colleagues, experimentation	Innovation	
Follow curriculum documents	Staff Freedom	
Professional matters	Participatory Decision Making	

4= Strongly Agree (SA)	3= Agree (A)	2= Disagree (D)	1=Strongly Disagree (SD)

Q9. How do you feel about having your teaching of guided reading observed by the change facilitator?

observation of practice   *feelings accountability*

1A	I think naturally having my teaching observed makes me nervous. It is meant to help me grow and come out more confident – but it just makes me nervous.
1B	I don't feel comfortable having the coach watch me teach. She makes me nervous.

feelings of accountability   *observation of practice*   *observation of practice*   *feelings of accountability*

2A	I don't like being observed at all because I get nervous with her. I would like it if it was more positive. I feel like it is just an assessment and I feel like I am always doing it wrong.
2B	I spoke to the principal the other day and mentioned this. I said some people don't like it and are apprehensive. It is because it's the fear of the unknown. When teachers don't know what they are supposed to be doing they get a bit anxious. When everyone knows what they are meant to be doing, they are happy to give it a crack. If you don't know what she is observing, then you feel nervous.
2C	It is pressure on the day having her observe you and that makes me nervous. It is a lot of pressure for one little lesson. You feel so much pressure being placed on you. Having someone else in your room watching you, it makes for a lesson that is not natural. The kids realise it is not a natural lesson and this also places pressure on them and they behave differently. This means the coach observes a lesson where you and the kids behave differently. It's not a real indication of how you teach. It is a fake lesson that she observes.

benefit of PD   *lack of clarity with learning goals*   *lack of clarity with goals*

Feelings of accountability   *feelings of accountability*   *benefit of PD*   *observation of practice*

feelings of accountability   *feelings of accountability*   *feelings of work pressure*   *feelings of work pressure*

feelings of work pressure   *observation of practice*

pressure to perform to expectations   *pressure to perform to expectations*

3A	I haven't had a negative experience following her observing me….yet. But the thought that it might makes me nervous.
3B	Nothing negative has come from it so far but I'm nervous that it is going to happen.
3C	I'm not a huge fan of it. It can be really stressful. It can actually get quite daunting to have someone else watch you teach. I can understand the benefits in it in theory, but it is really scary. Every time people say to her "I'm scared because you are coming into the room" she thinks it is silly. But you know she is still someone in authority that is watching your lesson. So that comes across as a bit daunting and nerve-racking.
3D	It does make me a little nervous I have to be honest. She tells us feedback and ways that we have to improve.
3E	I think it is like anything — whenever anyone external comes in there is the extra pressure of a person watching you. So I supposed there is that little bit of pressure to perform. It makes you evaluate what you are doing. You have to critically analyse everything you are doing before you do it. But you are also so worried while you are teaching that you aren't doing it right and that you are going to get in trouble later. It is so nerve-racking and daunting.
3F	It is a chance for me to ask questions if I am unsure about what I am doing and whether what I am doing is correct. But I'm also a bit scared and nervous that I will admit that I'm not confident at something and that could turn around and be used against me and they will say I'm not a good teacher.

feelings of accountability   *observation of practice*   *feelings of accountability*   *benefit of PD*

assessment of practice from authority figure   *observation of practice*   *assessment from authority figure*

pressure to perform to expectations   *feelings of accountability*   *pressure to perform to expectations*

assessment of practice from authority figure   *assessment of practice from authority figure*

benefit of PD   *assessment of practice from an authority figure*   *feelings of accountability*

4A	I am a fairly confident person regarding my teaching. I know what I am doing. The lesson the coach observes isn't a true indication of what their lessons normally look like anyway because people are on edge. They forget things because they are so nervous. She can come in and watch me and have a look at what I'm doing. She can give me some feedback. Some of it I take on board, some I just disregard because it isn't helpful.
4B	Well I was very annoyed at first having her observe me because we've done so many lessons in front of her over the years. I was nervous. I have been teaching for a while. You know the point of her observations is to tell you if you are doing it right or not. Once I did it I found out I was doing all the right things — copying what she told me to do. She has her way of teaching, but it is frustrating having to do it her way. Everyone's way is different. You can't just be expected to adopt one person's way. It just doesn't fit and it makes people so frustrated.
4C	Well someone like our literacy coach can make you feel insecure. She has a definite way that she wants to work. In my mind I think that a mature experienced teacher should be allowed to have our own style, but not at this school! We have to do what she is feeling is the best way. We get no say in it. So therefore you feel a little bit not incompetent but unsure whether she will approve of what you have done and the way you approach it. In myself I know that what I am doing is successful and worthwhile, but whether she approves of it is another thing. Her way of thinking makes me anxious and having to have her watch me teach makes me really incredibly nervous.

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Q9. How do you feel about having your teaching of guided reading observed by the change facilitator?

Transcript Phrases   ## Axial·Coding·

Transcript Phrases	Axial Coding
Having my teaching observed Watch me Observed She is observing Observe Watching you She observes Her observing me Watch you teach The coach observes Have a look at what I'm doing Her observing me Watch you teach Watching your lesson	Observation of practice
Nervous Don't feel comfortable Don't like it Apprehensive Anxious People are on edge So nervous The thought it might makes me nervous I'm nervous it is going to happen It can be really stressful It can actually get quite daunting It is really scary Daunting and nerve-racking Worried while you are teaching A bit scared and nervous Very annoyed Feel unsure Feel insecure Nerve-racking and daunting Frustrating So frustrated Really incredibly nervous	Feelings of accountability
Just an assessment Always doing it wrong I'm scared because you are coming into the room She is someone in authority She gives us feedback and ways to improve Worried while you are teaching that you aren't doing it right You are going to get in trouble later Whether what I am doing is correct Turn around and used against me The will say I am not a good teacher Whether she will approve Give me some feedback The point of her lessons is to tell you if you are doing it right or not	Assessment of practice from an authority figure

Not a natural lesson You and the kids behave differently It isn't a real indication A fake lesson Isn't a true indication Extra pressure of a person watching you That little bit of pressure to perform It makes you evaluate what you are doing Critically analyse everything We get no say at this school! We have to do what she is feeling is the best way Copying what she told me to do Definite way she wants to work Everyone's way is different Expected to adopt one person's way	Pressure to perform to expectations
Pressure A lot of pressure So much pressure Places pressure on Do so many lessons in front of her over the years	Feelings of work pressure
Fear of the unknown Teachers don't know what they are supposed to be doing Whether she approves is another thing	Lack of clarity with learning goals
Meant to help me grow and come out more confident I'd like it if it was more positive Happy to give it a crack I can understand the benefits of it in theory Ask questions if I am unsure	Benefit of professional development
Should be allowed to have our own style A fairly confident person – know what I'm doing	Desire for autonomy

Appendix N: PDSER Teacher Survey: Part C
Guided Reading Findings – Descriptive Analyses

N.1 Purpose of Guided Reading

Questions 1 to 9 focus on each of the 28 Emmanuel College teachers' purpose for guided reading, aspects relating to their grouping of students, as well as the duration and regularity of their guided reading lessons. Descriptive data are presented in Table N.1.

Table N.1
Purpose of Guided Reading

Questions	Frequency	Percent
Q1: Do you use guided reading in your classroom?		
Yes	28	100
No	0	0
Q2: How much time per week do you typically have for guided reading?		
More than 2.5 hours	8	28.6
2 to 2.5 hours	10	35.7
1.5 to 2 hours	5	17.9
1 to 1.5 hours	5	17.9
Q3: Which of the following best describes the primary purpose for your guided reading instruction?		
To facilitate a group response between students around a shared text.	6	21.4
To provide demonstrations of skills, strategies, response and/or procedures to students.	18	64.3
To provide interventions around scaffolded instruction for students.	4	14.3
Q4: How often is guided reading connected to shared and independent reading, writing instruction, or content areas in your instruction?		
Always	1	3.6
Usually	16	57.1
Sometimes	9	32.1
Seldom	2	7.1
Q5: Do you use texts in guided reading that connect to other curriculum area content ("themes").		
Yes all the time	1	3.6
Yes most of the time	10	35.7
Yes sometimes	15	53.6
No never	2	7.1
Q6: How many guided reading groups do you typically maintain in your reading program?		
5 or more	10	35.7
4	17	60.7
3	1	3.6
Q7: How many sessions per week do you typically meet with each group?		
4 sessions	2	7.1
2 sessions	11	39.3
1 session	15	53.6
Q8: How long do you meet with each guided reading group?		
30 minutes or longer	5	17.9
25-29 minutes	7	25.0
20-24 minutes	8	28.6
15-19 minutes	6	21.4
10-14 minutes	2	7.1
Q9: How many students, on average, are in your guided reading group?		
7 or more	5	17.9
6	9	32.1
5	14	50.0

N.2 Grouping for Guided Reading

Questions 10 to 12 focus on how each of the 28 teachers at the research school group students for guided reading. Descriptive data are presented in Table N.2.

Table N.2
Grouping for Guided Reading

Questions	Frequency	Percent
Q10: How are your students placed in guided reading groups?		
Based on developmental reading level	19	67.9
Based on identification of areas of need	8	28.6
Based on comprehension ability	1	3.6
Q11: Which of the following diagnostic assessment tools do you use to place your students in guided reading groups?		
Folios from previous years	6	21.4
Daily observation	14	50.0
None specified	8	28.6
Q12: How often do you normally change the students that are in your guided reading groups?		
Once a month	2	7.1
Once a term	24	85.7
Once a year	2	7.1

N.3 Texts Used for Guided Reading

Questions 13 to 23 focus on the texts that each of the 28 teachers at Emmanuel College select and use for guided reading. Descriptive data are presented in Table 5.10.

Table N.3a

Texts Used for Guided Reading

Questions	Frequency	Percent
Q13: Which of the following best explains your text selection for guided reading groups?		
All groups read different books and have different learning focuses	21	75.0
Every guided reading group reads the same book but each group has a different learning focus	2	7.1
Every guided reading group reads the same book and has the same focus	2	7.1
Most groups read the same book and have the same learning focus	3	10.7
Q14: What percentage of the books chosen for use during guided reading are narrative stories only (as opposed to informational texts etc.)?		
50-100%	8	28.6
25-49%	15	53.6
1-24%	5	17.9
Q15: What percentage of the books used during guided reading are chosen by the students?		
75-100%	0	0
50-74%	1	3.6
25-49%	2	7.1
1-24%	10	35.7
0%	15	53.6

Questions	Frequency	Percent
Q16: Which best describes the levels of the books chosen for use during guided reading?		
All students read books at their instructional level only	11	39.3
Students do not always read books at their instructional level	17	60.7
Q17: How often do you use each of the following texts during guided reading – Levelled reading books?		
Always	7	25.0
Usually	15	53.6
Sometimes	4	14.3
Seldom	2	7.1
Never	0	0.0
Q18: How often do you use each of the following texts during guided reading – Non-levelled reading books?		
Always	0	0.0
Usually	5	17.9
Sometimes	14	50.0
Seldom	5	17.9
Never	4	14.3
Q19: How often do you use each of the following texts during guided reading – Newspapers?		
Always	0	0.0
Usually	0	0.0
Sometimes	10	35.7
Seldom	8	28.6
Never	10	35.7
Q20: How often do you use each of the following texts during guided reading – Magazines?		
Always	0	0.0
Usually	1	3.6
Sometimes	14	50.0
Seldom	6	21.4
Never	7	25.0
Q21: How often do you use each of the following texts during guided reading – Comics?		
Always	0	0.0
Usually	0	0.0
Sometimes	8	28.6
Seldom	9	32.1
Never	11	39.3
Q22: How often do you use each of the following texts during guided reading – Poems?		
Always	0	0.0
Usually	0	0.0
Sometimes	12	42.9
Seldom	10	35.7
Never	6	21.4
Q23: How often do you use each of the following texts during guided reading – Brochures?		
Always	0	0.0
Usually	0	0.0
Sometimes	7	25.0
Seldom	12	42.9
Never	9	32.1

Table N.3b

Percentage Frequencies of Text Types used for Guided Reading

Questions	Frequency	Percent
Levelled Narrative reading texts		
Always	7	25.0
Usually	15	53.6
Sometimes	4	14.3
Seldom	2	7.1
Never	0	0.0
Non-levelled Narrative reading texts		
Always	5	17.9
Usually	14	50.0
Sometimes	0	0.0
Seldom	5	17.9
Never	4	14.2
Non-levelled Narrative: Comics		
Always	0	0.0
Usually	0	0.0
Sometimes	8	28.6
Seldom	9	32.1
Never	11	39.3
Non-levelled Non-narrative: Newspapers		
Always	0	0.0
Usually	0	0.0
Sometimes	10	35.7
Seldom	8	28.6
Never	10	35.7
Non-levelled Non-narrative: Magazines		
Always	0	0.0
Usually	1	3.6
Sometimes	14	50.0
Seldom	6	21.4
Never	7	25.0
Non-levelled Non-narrative reading texts: Poems		
Always	0	0.0
Usually	0	0.0
Sometimes	12	42.9
Seldom	10	35.7
Never	6	21.4
Non-levelled Non-narrative reading texts: Brochures		
Always	0	0.0
Usually	0	0.0
Sometimes	7	25.0
Seldom	12	42.9
Never	9	32.1

N.4 Instruction with/away from the Teacher

Questions 24 to 28 focus on the types of activities students participate in when they are with the teacher for guided reading, or away from the teacher completing other tasks. The regularity of the 28 Emmanuel College teachers' guided reading instruction is also presented. Descriptive data are presented in Table N.4.

Table N.4
Instruction with/away from the Teacher

Questions	Frequency	Percent
Q24: While you are working with a guided reading group, what are the other students usually doing?		
Working independently (no adult assistance provided)	4	14.3
Working independently (school officer/parent present in the room for student assistance)	14	50.0
Some students working independently, some working with the school officer	9	32.1
All students completing a task through direct instruction from the school officer/parent	1	3.6
Q25: When you are conducting guided reading, what sorts of activities are other groups doing? (multiple selection permitted)		
Literacy comprehension tasks related to guided reading texts	16	57.1
Literacy comprehension tasks unrelated to guided reading texts	13	46.4
Literacy cloze passage	18	64.3
Writing task	22	78.6
Spelling task	21	75.0
Grammar task	19	67.9
Proof reading/Editing task	12	42.9
Catch up work (unfinished tasks from other subject areas)	2	7.1
Tasks from other Key Learning Areas	3	10.7
Computer-literacy related tasks	17	60.7
Computer tasks – not related to literacy	1	3.6
Other	3	10.7
Q26: How many days per week do you explicitly teach students (at a whole class level) skills for improving their reading?		
5 days	6	21.4
4 days	7	25.0
3 days	6	21.4
2 days	6	21.4
Less than 1 day	2	7.1
Do not explicitly teach this at a whole class level	1	3.6
Q27: How much time would you spend each day explicitly teaching students skills for improving their reading (at a whole class level)?		
More than 30 minutes	5	17.9
25-29 minutes	4	14.3
20-24 minutes	9	32.1
15-19 minutes	4	14.3
1-14 minutes	4	14.3
Q28: When do you explicitly teach students skills to improve their reading (at the whole class level)?		
After guided reading	6	21.4
Before guided reading	19	67.9
Do not explicitly teach this at a whole class level	3	10.7

N.5 Assessment Tools and Techniques for Guided Reading

Questions 29 and 30 focus on the assessment tools and techniques the 28 teachers at Emmanuel College use to inform guided reading pedagogical practice and groupings of students. Descriptive data are presented in Table N.5.

Table N.5

Assessment Tools and Techniques for Guided Reading

Questions	Frequency	Percent
Q29: Do you utilise formal running records to assess your students' reading progress?		
Yes all myself	6	21.4
Yes I do most of them	19	67.9
Yes I do some of them	1	3.6
The Learning Support Teacher completes all these for me	1	3.6
No I do not benchmark students	1	3.6
Q30: How many times is a formal running record (for reading) completed for an individual student?		
Once a month	1	3.6
Once a term	9	32.1
Once a semester	17	60.7
I do not use running records	1	3.6

N.6 Teacher Knowledge and Confidence for Guided Reading

Questions 31 to 36 focus on the knowledge and confidence that each of the 28 teachers at Emmanuel College have to implement guided reading. Descriptive data are presented in Table N.6.

Table N.6

Teacher Knowledge and Confidence for Guided Reading

Questions	Frequency	Percent
Q31: How would you rate your knowledge about guided reading instruction?		
Very well informed	9	32.1
Fairly well informed	17	60.7
Not very well informed	2	7.1
Q32: How do you feel about the number of texts available for guided reading?		
Very positive – a good quantity and variety is available	25	89.3
Moderately positive – there is a satisfactory amount of texts and variety available	3	10.7
Not positive – there is a limited quantity and lack of variety available	0	0.0
Q33: What is your preferred way of learning about guided reading?		
Observing others teaching	8	28.6
Reading books about the topic	15	53.6
Attending workshops/PD sessions	3	10.7
Receiving feedback on my teaching	2	7.1
Q34: How confident are you doing guided reading in your classroom?		
Very confident	13	46.4
Fairly confident	14	50.0
Not very confident	1	3.6
Q35: How confident are you to explain your pedagogical practices for guided reading to others?		
Very confident	5	17.9
Fairly confident	17	60.7
Not very confident	6	21.4
Q36: In what ways do you feel your teaching of guided reading could improve?		
Attending PD workshops/sessions	11	39.3
Having more resources	4	14.3
Having time to observe others when they are teaching	7	25.0
Receiving more feedback on my teaching	2	7.1
Gaining more understanding about extracting information from assessment instruments	4	14.3