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PRINCIPALS' PARTNERSHIPS:

An action research study on the professional development of New Zealand school leaders.

A thesis
submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
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Abstract

This report describes an action research study conducted between 1992 and 1995 with 12 New Zealand primary school principals.

Prior to this study, major administrative changes in the education system in New Zealand had been introduced, to give schools more responsibility for their own management in conjunction with elected committees of parents. This research sought a model of professional development which would assist principals to implement new ideas and practices, deal effectively with the current issues and problems in their schools and provide skills, challenges and support.

This was a qualitative study in which an action researching community, consisting of the principals and an academic researcher, met regularly using peer partnerships and group meetings to provide observation, reflection and evaluative feedback on leadership practice.

The questions that guided the research study were:

1. Do partnerships assist in the professional development of primary school principals?
2. If so, in what ways?

This research was designed as a conscious effort to not only develop a theory of professional development for school leaders but in so doing, to provide professional development which would help the school leaders to understand and then change their situation. The underlying theoretical principle of praxis was embedded and interwoven throughout the researcher's and principals' actions. The research was practical and based on the needs and concerns of the principals involved. In this way it was both a research and development model.

The findings were analysed using grounded theory techniques within a structure of action research. Thus, the processes of action research in this research study became a method for the analysis process as well as for that of data collection. The community of researchers were jointly involved in the analysis of the findings in this research. There were 18 months of data gathering using methods of oral and written reflections, interactive interviewing, observations and examination of records.

The 12 primary school principals in this study testified that the partnerships' programme assisted in their professional development. In the words of one principal:

> This research has made me focus on my own educational leadership. It has led me through a series of processes which has enabled me to reflect on and analyse my own actions. The research has made me take an in-depth look at my own leadership style and has given me the opportunity to observe others.

The ways in which these principals believed they had gained from their involvement in the research fell into four major categories. The Partnerships' programme assisted critical reflection on practice to occur; it increased professional interactions; it assisted in educational leadership development and finally, it established a structure for the principals to use processes of action research for school development. The vehicles for the principals to achieve praxis were reflection and alternative perspectives. Praxis led to emancipatory actions and feelings of agency. The principals' partnerships, the involvement of the university researcher and the meetings of the community of action researchers, became integral parts of this process.

The thesis that is presented rests on the principals' perceptions that a model of professional development which involves principals in partnership, with the support and challenge from a university academic, can successfully provide the essential components of professional development programmes in which praxis is the desired outcome.

This thesis concludes that the Partnerships' programme assisted in the professional development of these 12 school leaders. The principals, when working together in each other's schools, created a mild disruption to everyday practice which led to opportunities for reflection on leadership practices. The university researcher also assisted in this intervention process. The combination of the two was effective to enable critical reflection on practice and subsequent change in practice to occur.

On the basis of these findings a grounded theory of professional development is offered and recommendations are made for further research in this area.

Acknowledgments

I am indebted to a number of people who made this investigation possible. I would like to record my sincere gratitude to:

My supervisors Professor Peter Ramsay and Professor Noeline Alcorn who were always available to discuss, challenge, debate, support and encourage me through the research process. They acted as critical friends and were part of the team and invaluable in the action research process.

The 12 principals who gave so much of their time when it was obvious that this was a precious commodity. They demonstrated a willingness to continually improve their leadership and provide better learning in their schools. They provided me with the motivation and enthusiasm to continue with this project.

My mum, dad and daughter Bronwen who have had this research as part of their lives too for the last four years and supported me always in so many different ways.

My friends and colleagues who have been encouraging and supportive while I have worked on this study.

Prologue

Any study of this nature is a "learning journey." In the course of such a journey there are bound to be many wrong turns, blind alleys and false starts. Even when the journey is completed (if it ever is) revisitation of the route may reveal better ways of doing things and better explanations. There are likely to be suggestions and challenges, even to what has been taken to be the main route. Such is the case here. In the process of examining this study there were three main issues about its theoretical location. These issues were: whether its location as critical theory was appropriate and related; whether this was praxis-oriented research; and whether reflexivity was achieved in this study. I will take each of these issues in turn, and outline what guided me in taking the positioning that I did. At the end of the report there is a revisitation in the form of an epilogue. It should be noted that the prologue and epilogue are additional to the original study, written after its initial presentation. To return to the metaphor, the paths of the study are revisited and some wrong turns are noted.

The process of this doctoral study was enjoyable, although at times frustrating. The debates, the challenges, the discussions, the work in the field with the principals, and the University sessions when we met as a community of researchers to reflect on the model and issues in education, were illuminating. As I listened to the principals' voices on tape, analysed the findings and thought about my next actions, there were occasions of excitement and occasions of despair. My supervisors acted as critical friends through all of the supervision sessions, raising points of interest, debating and critiquing theory. The more recent challenges by my outside examiners have also required me to rethink, reanalyse and go through my field notes again. There were areas discovered which could have been developed further and made more of, others where claims were not fully substantiated, and some things which demanded retraction.

As the report which follows will demonstrate, the actual goals of creating a challenge to school principals' habitual ways of knowing as well as supporting the principals at this time, and assisting them to theorise their practice and to recapture their focus on leadership, were achieved in no small measure. However, it should also be noted at this point that the claims made for the location of these goals, and the study generally speaking, in the field of critical theory were not well founded and this was, indeed, one of the "wrong turns" mentioned in the journey metaphor above. It is to issues relating to this placement that I now turn. In the epilogue, each of these issues will be revisited in the light of the content in the report itself.

The location of the study in critical theory

In 1980, Robert Cox stated that what makes a study critical is:

> ...that it stands apart from the prevailing order of the world and asks how that order came to be...[It] does not take institutions and social power for granted but calls them into question by concerning itself with their origins and how and whether they might be in the process of changing...[the] critical approach leads towards the construction of a larger picture of the whole of which the initially contemplated part is just one component, and seeks to understand the process of change in which both parts and whole are involved.
>
> (Cox, 1980, p. 129).

Clearly, what follows in the thesis report does not satisfy the tenets of critical theory as defined by Cox (1980). I had interpreted critical theory to mean being able to work at a micro level within the prevailing order, without changes to major structures or institutions. As Cox (1980) pointed out, one cannot deal with separate parts within the prevailing order if one is a critical theorist, but must deal with the social and political order as a whole. This study was more in the order of what Cox (1980) described as problem-solving theory rather than critical theory. Problem-solving theory "takes the world as it finds it" and the aim of problem-solving is "to make these [power] relationships and institutions work smoothly by dealing effectively with particular sources of trouble" (pp. 129, 130). This explains the perspective I took - how to help principals reclaim educational leadership within a climate of managerialism; not to change the climate, but to work with the principals to find ways of working more effectively within it, or at best to maintain a preferred role in the light of challenges to it.

To act as a critical theorist would have been difficult in the educational climate in which this study took place. This climate will be described in detail in the epilogue but it should be understood that very powerful forces were operating to push the educational reforms through, that the teachers' organisations were being progressively disempowered and that the profession itself was split on the value of the reforms. Some of the principals in my study were known supporters (at least initially) of the reforms. Given this and the social and political climate, the principals might not have taken part in the research if they had felt that my intention was to get them to challenge the power relations in education in New Zealand that were causing them the dilemmas and the difficulties they were facing (Robertson, 1991). As will be pointed out in the epilogue, perhaps there was more I could have done on the principals' behalf as a researcher, but this would have also been difficult in the context of the times. While there were some major achievements, there were also some disappointments, which will be revisited at the end of the report. In retrospect, maintaining the status quo was difficult enough, let alone persuading the principals to challenge the existing and the newly developing power structures.

Support for this point-of-view comes from Peters, Hope, Marshall and Webster (1996, p. 26) who stated in their book on critical theory, post structuralism and the social context in New Zealand that:

> Indigenous critical theory is reactive rather than proactive toward a hostile ideological environment. The institutional space from which a nationally and internationally oriented critical outlook might be forged is itself under threat.

They also said "Critical theory could not underwrite a pre-given political project...but critical enquiry can open up opportunities for political intervention" (Peters et al, 1996, p. 25). This doctoral study was reactive in that sense, and it was not until I was immersed in the data and analysing it, that I realised that this [problem-solving] approach could move into a critical theory perspective if the principals started calling the power relations into question with an appraisal of the social and political complex as a whole. Mistakenly, I believed that challenging parts of new developments constituted a critical approach. I now agree that to be genuinely critical one needed to deal with the social and political order as a whole. Focusing on professional leadership versus managerialism was not enough to substantiate this claim.

The authors who guided my methodological approach took a different stance to Cox (1980) and I interpreted their theoretical positioning in a way that I believed would be workable in this educational environment. In retrospect, it is probable that many of these authors would be surprised that their work was being used to lay claim to a critical theory (e.g Barnett, 1990; Duignan, 1989; Fullan, 1985; Kolb, 1984). These theorists were influential in the development of a model of change process whereby principals would become critically reflective, when this was not a part of normal practice. This is not, though, critical theory as defined by Cox (1980) and others.

The ideas and principles of a community of researchers conducting emancipatory action research as outlined by Carr and Kemmis (1986) attracted me as a framework for this particular study. Not all of their principles of emancipatory action research were achieved however, as will be evident as readers progress through the research report. The emancipatory action research that they described and which formed the foundation of my research design is, as they too stated, not critical or radical enough for some but produces change at a rate that is practically achievable (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 131). On reflection, this is rather pragmatic and too "cosy" to be regarded as critical theory at all. I have revisited their book and would like to present their framework of the five requirements of critical theory, and show the reader how I believed at the beginning of the study that I could meet them. In hindsight, I should have presented these principles in the methodology section rather than just referring to the development of a "community of researchers."

Firstly, Carr and Kemmis (1986, p. 129) stated that *"educational theory must reject positivist notions of rationality, objectivity and truth" (original italics).* I felt this meant that the research must be more than the positivistic, more than the interpretive, and move to a critical level, where it would deal with the concerns of participants in real social situations and therefore assist the principals *while* they were involved in the research.

Secondly, they stated that *"educational theory must accept the need to employ the interpretive categories of teachers" (original italics)* (p. 129). I planned to utilise the language of the principals through a reciprocal approach to developing the theory. Every theorem was developed in conjunction with the principals and opportunities were made through the methods employed in the research for them to respond to all theory developed.

Thirdly, Carr and Kemmis (1986, p. 129) stated that a critical study must *"provide ways of distinguishing ideologically distorted interpretations from those that are not. It must also provide some view of how any distorted self-understanding is to be overcome" (original italics).* This is called the organisation of the processes. For this purpose I decided to organise two main processes of enlightenment. The first was in enabling these principals to get beyond the impression management (Goffman, 1959) of their professional world in a legitimate opportunity to observe another school principal in action. The second was, rather than only interviewing the principals individually and observing them in the field, to develop a "community of researchers" made up of a group of principals who had between them a great diversity of experience.

Fourthly, Carr and Kemmis (1986, p. 130) stated that *"it must be concerned to identify and expose those aspects of the existing social order which frustrate the pursuit of rational goals and must be able to offer theoretical accounts which make teachers aware of how they might be eliminated or overcome."* This is the *organisation of action (original italics).* Carr and Kemmis (1986, p. 130) believed that this "central task of emancipating people from the positivist 'domination of thought' through their own understandings and actions" was the overriding concern of the Frankfurt School of critical theorists. The model of professional development in this study aimed to expose those aspects of the existing order that were frustrating, by opening up situations that helped the principals to realise that other principals had similar concerns to them. It was hoped that the principals could work together focusing on educational leadership and resisting the influence of managerialism. However, it must be underlined that this did not represent the complete "social order" referred to by Carr and Kemmis (1986) and nor did the "organisation of action" occur in any large measure. Again, therefore, the study was not in the area of critical theory but was better placed in what Cox (1980) called problem-solving theory.

Codd said in an address in 1993, "Educators in New Zealand in the 1990s must win back the high ground of educational discourse" (p. 17). He said that they needed to resist the current forces of managerialism and technocratic reductionism, and that he hoped they were prepared for the challenge as they were at the front line of that resistance. I wondered what decisions these principals would decide to make in rising to this challenge. Carr and Kemmis (1986, p. 148) stated that "the criterion by which the organisation of action may be judged is that *the decisions must be prudent (original italics);* that is, that the decisions are such as to ensure that those involved can carry out the activity without exposing themselves to unnecessary risks. Those deriving their views from authors like Cox (1980) would probably challenge this caveat but I felt that as a researcher I could not and should not persuade the principals to take direct action in challenging the prevailing order. While, as will be shown shortly, I exposed the principals to what was happening in the wider educational world - through seminars, discussions and articles - I allowed them, ultimately, to frame their own actions. Unlike Comstock (1982) my programme stopped short of forcing change upon the principals by entering the research field with a set agenda for action. Again, therefore, it fails to meet Cox's (1980) and Carr and Kemmis' (1986) descriptions of critical theory, as it stops short of requiring action.

Finally, Carr and Kemmis (1986, p. 150) stated that critical education theory is practical in the sense that it is being directed towards helping practitioners "inform themselves about the actions they need to take to overcome their problems and eliminate their frustrations." This study took place within a community of researchers and within the principals' own schools; it had an applied relationship between practice and developing theory and was therefore practical. I hoped that many other principals reading this report would be able to relate to the experiences of the 12 principals in the study. As Poster (1989) stated "critical theory springs from an assumption that we live amid a world of pain, that much can be done to alleviate that pain, and that theory has a crucial role to play in that process" (p. 3). This was the perspective that I took at the beginning of this research – that a professional development model could be designed to alleviate some of the pain these principals were experiencing. The key point being examined here, however, is that this is an insufficient interpretation of critical theory as the actions taken do not lead "towards the construction of a larger picture of a whole" or seek "to understand the processes of change in which both parts and whole are involved" (Cox, 1980, p. 129). Working with just one component as I did, does not constitute critical theory.

My intention was not to set out to change the social and political situation or the system that had placed these principals in the situation they were in. Principals had the attitude that Tomorrow's Schools were here to stay and that they would remain positive

and make it work (McConnell & Jeffries, 1991). This intention, therefore, immediately directs this study into that of problem-solving rather than critical theory (Cox, 1980). David Tripp (1990) said socially critical action research is not simply a matter of challenging the system, but of seeking to understand what makes the system the way it is, and challenging that. I interpreted this to mean I could make the principals aware of the forces and dominant discourses operating on them that were stifling their abilities to be critically reflective educational leaders. But as Kemmis (1993, internet) wrote, while I had the "aspiration to change the social (or educational) world of these principals for the better through improving shared social practices, our shared understandings of these practices, and the shared situations in which these practices are being carried out" and while I felt that this project offered ways for these principals to improve their social and political life at the school level through research on the here and now, it fell well short of being critical theory.

In summary then, I had hoped that this study would enable the principals involved in it to take time to reflect and become aware of the bigger picture of education in New Zealand. However, it did not set out to challenge power relations or the overall social order. The question begged here is whether involvement in this type of study would enable them to become politicised as Alcorn (1993) suggested they should. I wanted to bring these principals along a learning curve to where they were prepared to be politically and socially critical. As readers will become aware this goal was achieved minimally, if at all.

I also believed that the greatest challenge to achieving principals' development was how to get them to be open to new ideas, new perspectives and to actually change their practice in the light of this new knowledge. I felt that neither liberal-humanistic nor critical theory approaches had the solution to this challenge on their own, hence my combination of paradigms, which in effect weakened the study. Would the principals' day-to-day reactionary behaviours still stop them from lifting their heads to view the wider picture? Could these principals become freed from the hegemonic forces of managerialism and refocus on their leadership as their primary role in their schools? Would this alone satisfy a claim to critical theory or does some other paradigm more effectively fit the interpretive framework? In the epilogue I will revisit these questions. For now, though, the answer is that critical theory, according to Cox (1980, p. 129) "does not take institutions and social power for granted but calls them into question." This study, by focusing on the dominant discourses affecting leadership *within* the existing order, did not achieve that.

The second issue, which is closely related to the first, is encapsulated in the following question:

> What are the defining or distinguishing features of a piece of "praxis-oriented" research, and in what ways does this particular study have legitimacy to claim to be of this type?

If a study is to be critical theory as described by Cox (1980) then praxis would be as Grundy (1993) described, "action in the world." A re-reading of Grundy's (1993) work shows that when she talked about emancipatory praxis having a "propensity for critique which is constantly entertaining the possibility that things could be otherwise" she is speaking more about the justice and equality that can come from freedom from domination of power relations rather than being freed from something such as a dominant discourse of managerialism. I interpreted Grundy's (1993) "action in the world" to be the day-to-day world of these principals and that their sites of contestation on the managerial discourse of production were the school sites and local scenes. However, if praxis involves action on a broader front, that would entail radical political action on the national scene and the principals calling "into question the social and power relations" (Cox, 1980, p. 129). Praxis as defined within critical theory was obviously not the theoretical paradigm in which I was working.

However, Grundy (1993, p. 173) also outlined ways in which the facilitator of emancipatory action research would operate and these did inform my practice. In short, they were: "...providing access to critical theorems for participants in reflection; ... ensuring symmetrical communication; ...providing an institutional and social context for the work of the group." On pages 226-245 of the thesis report I have described the multiple roles I undertook as I facilitated this research process.

My use of a smorgasbord of theorists' interpretations of praxis (e.g. Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Duignan, 1989; Grundy, 1993; Lather, 1986) is what had caused the concerns to be raised and will cause difficulties for readers to ascertain what domain my study is actually in. I felt it was praxis-oriented research because as an action researcher, I would carry out an action, reflect on that action, analyse the findings, delve further into the literature and then plan my next move. The principals were involved in similar procedures planning their actions in their school development, therefore "conscious reflective, intentional action...[was]the bridge between theory and practice - [and] between reflection, analysis and action (Duignan, 1989, p. 77). I believed that the principals would achieve this as they reflected with their partner about past and future actions, as they read articles, as they planned action steps, as they received evaluative feedback to assist in analysis, as they read chapters and articles I had written about their processes and leadership practices.

I claimed this to be "research as praxis" because I designed the model to consciously use the research process "to help participants understand and change their situation" (Lather, 1986, p. 263). This was not just a data collection exercise but an "intervention"

(Rowan, 1974) - a deliberate attempt to transform the behaviours of these principals through the reciprocal relationship of theory and practice. I knew my research was not neutral, but I did not become the "critical narrator telling the story from a particular vantage point" that Smyth (1994, p. 2) said is so desperately needed in these education times nor did I or the principals "stand apart from the prevailing world and ask how that order came to be" as Cox (1980) would have expected within a critical theory study. Using critical theory terms like "praxis" was therefore dangerous.

On page 75 of my report I have used Carr and Kemmis' (1986, p. 190) definition of praxis to support my position. They distinguished "between practice as habitual and customary, on the one hand, and the informed committed action of praxis on the other." They went on to say;

> Praxis has its roots in the commitment of the practitioner to wise and prudent action in a practical, concrete, historical situation. It is action which is considered and consciously theorised, and which may reflexively inform and transform the theory which informed it.
>
> (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 190)

I had been influenced by what Carr and Kemmis (1986) stated when they said "The action researcher sets out to improve particular practices, understandings and situations by acting in a deliberate and considered way in which understandings and values are consciously expressed in praxis" (p. 192). As I said in the conclusions to the research study (on page 275) although the process of collegial coaching took a long time to enable change in leadership behaviours to occur, it was obvious that such a programme could be used to work towards a particular style of leadership, such as emancipatory leadership (Grundy, 1993) or democratic leadership (Schmuck & Schmuck, 1986). Would this then constitute a critical theory if the model was used in this way in which I was acting in a "deliberate and considered way" to change the practices of these principals to those which would have as their basis a social justice agenda as democratic and emancipatory leadership do? Again, we must return to Cox (1980), and again the answer is in the negative. For praxis to occur in the critical theory sense, the whole must be considered. As the reader will discover, only rarely did the principals in the study climb the tree to view the jungle. For the most part they were concerned with their own schools and did not penetrate the greater social order.

The third issue was about the claim to reflexivity stated in the study and whether this was achieved in the way Gouldner (1970) defined it. He stated that for a study to be reflexive, the beliefs of researchers have to be constantly reviewed and be made known to the reader and the group. He said too, that it means acknowledging that this "truth" is only the researcher's construction, and that most importantly the participants in the study would need to research the researcher to explore the relationship between the researcher

as researcher, and the researcher as person, and there would need to be adequate evidence in the findings to indicate that this had occurred. As Watson (1987) stated, more studies claim to be reflexive than ever achieve it. Was that the case in the present study? It is apparent with hindsight, that with this full interpretation from Gouldner's (1970) work on what it takes for a study to be regarded as reflexive, this report must withdraw from that claim, as will be discussed further in the epilogue. Giddens (1976) described reflexivity as simply "self-awareness" and perhaps this is the degree to which reflexivity has been shown to be achieved in this study.

Where I mentioned values and beliefs on page 137 of the thesis report I was referring to the points that "to acquire the ingrained habit of viewing your own beliefs as you view those held by others" and that "to know others you cannot simply study them but must listen to and confront yourself." I felt that this research moved towards being reflexive because of the manner in which I chose to conduct my research - constant dialogic encounters; openness and honesty with propositions and writing; action, reflection, analysis to decide the next action; negotiating developing theory. I had thought it was a reflexive approach throughout the study as I was changing my approaches and reflecting on those changes to make decisions about future actions. However, I must withdraw from a claim of achieving reflexivity as defined by Gouldner (1970).

I acknowledged my stance within the research to the principals and as Lather (1991) stated "such a stance provides the grounds for both an "openly ideological" approach to critical enquiry and the necessity of self-reflexivity, of growing awareness of how the researcher values permeate enquiry" (p. 2). I felt I was open with my predispositions (see pages 16,17 of the thesis report) and in stating the reasons to the principals for why I wanted to develop the partnerships (see pages 306, 307 of the thesis report) and my fears and concerns throughout the study (for examples, see page 131 and page 136 of the thesis report). But I have not brought this out clearly enough in the report and the reader would have to search for examples, which are few and far between in the reporting.

Gouldner (1970) says that reflexivity is a deepening of your own awareness of who and what you are and how your personal praxis affects your work. This research has certainly made me more aware of who and what I am, especially when working through these issues in relation to my positioning in the study. The way I work with students in the leadership programmes in my university has changed because of this research. I now place much more emphasis on getting students to position the theory in the social and political context in which it has been developed, and also devote time to the critique and discussion of current policy and documents that are being published. As a result, some students' assignments have formed the basis of submissions to Government and the Ministry of Education on the national draft documents for school leaders.

I read (again) with interest Watson's (1987) article in which he states that reflexivity is often espoused but not achieved. I tried to show that was not always so, especially in action research in a community of researchers where there was openness and reciprocity among the group. Watson (1987, p. 35) stated that "in my opinion, an adequate display of reflexivity would entail, minimally: 1. that the writer be aware of techniques used by others to (a) establish their authority and (b) achieve the appearance of a separation between their objects of study and their methods of studying them; 2. that the writer be aware that he (sic) is probably using the identical methods for identical purposes; 3. that the writer ensure that his (sic) readers are fully and continuously alerted to these. Readers of the thesis report can keep these principles in mind as they work to understand the study in question.

Lather (1986) said "constant dialogic encounter is required if we are to invoke the reflexivity needed to protect research from the researchers' own enthusiasms." The interviews, the sharing of articles, the group discussions, developing the theory as a group, the cassette and written reflections, my reflections to the participants...these were my dialogic encounters (see page 128 for the outline of these in the first six months of the research). The critical aspect of reflexivity is the extent to which the participants researched the researcher (Gouldner, 1970). This has not been brought out in the report and therefore I must withdraw my claim that what is reported here is a fully reflexive study.

I have now outlined the issues in my theoretical positioning and the reasoning behind such a position as I understood it to be at the start of this study. In describing the false turns and blind alleys that I ventured into, the scene is now set for the journey to continue, with readers alerted to the places which may have been visited in error. Such is the experience of almost any researcher who gets involved in action research. A final revisitation of the issues discussed here appears in the epilogue.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This report describes an action research study conducted between 1992 and 1995 with 12 New Zealand primary school principals. The aim of the study was to develop a model of professional development which would not only provide these principals with challenge and growth but also offer them a level of support and guidance in their daily practice.

The purposes of the study are outlined briefly in this first chapter and the social and political context in which the principals were operating is described. To this end, the chapter first outlines many factors that led to the reform of education administration in New Zealand in 1989; secondly, it studies the principles of the reform and how it was implemented, and thirdly, it describes the research context in the light of these reforms.

Then follows a description of the professional development offered to school leaders since 1989. This includes some of the research and development in school leadership which has influenced the directions of the research described in this report. In this section there is outlined a research study (Robertson, 1991) which was undertaken during the first year of the administrative reforms to ascertain the professional development needs of school leaders and the ways in which these could best be met. A project for principals' curriculum leadership development which became a preliminary study for this research is also described.

Finally, the research questions are stated, my predispositions are declared and the organisation of the remainder of the report is set out.

PURPOSES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This research study explored the ways in which the use of peer partnerships could make a contribution to principals' professional development programmes. The case for the necessity for schools to have lifelong learners in their leadership positions had been well made (for example, Blase, 1987; Boydell, 1985; Buckley, 1985; Hallinger & Murphy, 1987; Mulford, 1984; Robb, 1988; Robinson, 1993; Robinson & Absolum, 1990; Wadsworth, 1990). It had also been a matter of personal concern that the professional development of New Zealand school principals often appeared to be ad hoc and unplanned. At the time of this research New Zealand principals were not required to undertake formal qualifications before attaining leadership positions and therefore much

of their learning about administration and leadership was picked up on-the-job. Many principals, after attaining their first position, had as their only professional development the attendance at an annual conference and the monthly meetings of professional groups (Wadsworth, 1990). Research has shown (for example, Joyce & Showers, 1980) that these experiences, while often enriching and motivating, did little to get participants to think about their own behaviours or to change their practice once back in their schools.

A model was needed that would assist the principals to implement new ideas and practices (Barth, 1986) and also provide the skills, challenge and support for these principals to be able to reflect upon their own practice in their schools. The model of professional development outlined in this report set out to provide the type of intervention that Argyris and Schön (1978) believed was important in the organisational learning process. They stated that it is important for leaders to be able to discover their personal theories-of-action, unlock them and learn a new theory which can help them address many of the dilemmas and issues they face. Outside intervention is necessary because a practitioner's theories-in-use must be constructed from observations of behaviours, not simply by questioning how a person would behave in a certain situation. Qualitative research was needed into the development of such a model to explore the thoughts, feelings and experiences of these school leaders.

However no research or development takes place in a vacuum. A knowledge of the context of New Zealand school leadership at the time of this research is particularly important to an understanding of this study.

THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The duration of this research coincided with a period of rapid social and political change in New Zealand as various groups in education and elsewhere pursued particular agendas. Prior to this study, major administrative changes in the education system in New Zealand had occurred. The following discussion of the reform of education administration has been presented within three stages of the change process: the initiation, the implementation and the institutionalisation (Fullan, 1985).

A) THE INITIATION OF THE REFORM—1970-1988

Before the Tomorrow's Schools reforms (Lange, 1988) the New Zealand primary school education system was highly centralised. Although there was some participation at the district or local level through the Education Boards, the central Department of Education, located in Wellington, held the final power as to the directions taken and decisions made, not only in education nationally but also at the local school level. There

was very little input from the local community about the goals and content of the school's curriculum. There were growing community concerns about the education system and pressure for better administration and community involvement (Department of Education, 1987).

There were many calls for the necessity for administrative reform of the education system in New Zealand particularly during the 1970s and 1980s and there was much dissatisfaction, from within and from outside the education system. Doubts had been cast on the effectiveness of the schooling system to achieve the egalitarian and democratic society that was thought possible in the 1960s with the Currie Report (Department of Education, 1962). Many of the challenges came from the Treasury and the Business Round Table, and State Services Commission, as well as from groups such as women (for example, Department of Education, 1976) and Maori (for example, Waitangi Tribunal, 1986) who felt disadvantaged by the education system which they felt was controlled by white, middle class males.

In the 1980s these calls for reform coincided with an economic downturn in New Zealand amidst worldwide trends of monetarism in which there was restructuring and decentralising of public and private enterprise. New Zealand was grossly in debt and the government saw restructuring as a process to bring more cost efficiency to the local level. The State Services Commission was looking at public sector reform and advised the Government to restructure many Government departments including education to achieve a smaller, more effective centralised unit with more agencies regionally to localise decision making. The Treasury briefed the incoming Labour Government in 1987 on the lack of accountability in the education system and declared that value for money was not being achieved (The Treasury, 1988). The Treasury also argued that New Zealand education inputs were not producing the necessary outputs, that education had been captured by the professionals and that parents should have a greater choice in which schools they selected for their children's education.

Increasingly the opposition political party used education as an attack on the government in the lead up to the elections. In the 1987 election campaigns, the education speaker for the opposition proposed a voucher system to give parents a wider choice of the schools they sent their children to and argued for local control of finances. These radical challenges from the New Right added to that of the strong left-wing criticism of education in New Zealand at this time. Within this climate, ideas began to develop about new administrative structures for education in New Zealand.

On Labour's re-election for a second three year term, the then Prime Minister, Rt. Hon. David Lange selected the education portfolio as his responsibility and he became the Minister of Education in 1987. On his initiative, three committees were set up to review

and develop policy for early childhood, primary through secondary education and also, tertiary education. Three policy documents were produced from these reviews.

A committee under the leadership of Mr Brian Picot, a company director, was set up to recommend measures for the reform of educational administration in primary and secondary education. Treasury officials also sat with the Picot Committee during each of their sessions as did those from the State Services Commission. According to Ramsay (1988, p. 5), who was one of the committee members, these latter two bodies had "...their tentacles well and truly entrenched in educational decision-making."

The Picot Committee worked on their brief for nearly one year and received over 700 submissions during their consultative process. The Picot Committee's response *Administering for Excellence* (Taskforce to Review Education Administration, 1988) had as its foundation stone an educational partnership between parents and teachers and communities and Government. This document produced by this taskforce in April 1988, and commonly referred to as *The Picot Report,* set in train the most radical change to the administration of schools in New Zealand this century.

A lessening of bureaucracy was to be achieved by giving individual educational institutions autonomy and control of their resources. Many of the recommendations made by the taskforce were accepted by the Government but, as will later be discussed, the compromises and issues created by later legislation, future Government directions and the speed of the change, were to cause some difficulties for school principals throughout New Zealand. Schools were entering the marketplace which was not the intention of the Picot Committee. Many of the submissions that the Committee had received sought to implement a user-pays, free market philosophy into education. There was also pressure from Treasury members, but the Picot Committee stated very clearly that they rejected such a user-pays notion and that education should remain a state provision (Ramsay, 1992).

The Picot Committee was dedicated to four major goals. They wanted to create an administrative system that was more efficient and responsive to those who used it; they wanted to encourage greater local decision making which was collaborative both within schools and between schools and their community; they were committed to the goal of equity and fairness, and their fourth goal of efficiency savings did not advocate cuts of expenditure for education but the money saved being reallocated to where it would have the greatest benefit to students in educational institutions (Ramsay, 1992).

It was also based on four core values: of consumer and provider choice and opportunities; of consumers being involved in the running of schools; of the necessity of clear objectives for schools, and for schools to have "more control over their activities and resources" (New Zealand Department of Education, 1988, p. 4). However, Grace (1990)

and Ramsay (1992) both later stated that this taskforce report was a complex compromise between all members of the committee. The different values of the educationists and the business people alongside those of Treasury officials were difficult to reconcile. These same values were to be found in the communities of individual schools. It would be predictable that they would be equally difficult to reconcile in the development of policy at the local level.

The title of the Government's blueprint and policy statement for the administration of primary and secondary schools in the future, *Tomorrow's Schools* (Lange, 1988), was indicative of the changes that were going to be required. Lange was regarded as "a 'neo-liberal' as distinct from either radical-left or New Right. He was clearly hoping to draw the string from both groups...he favoured 'equity', for example, but this was to be counter-balanced by a concern for 'standards'" (McCulloch, 1990, pp. 64, 65).

These counterbalances and complex compromises led to marked dichotomies and dilemmas for the principals of schools in New Zealand (Robertson, 1991). The central features of the administrative structure outlined in the white paper *Tomorrow's Schools* (Lange, 1988) were not argued with by either the Left or the New Right. They were features that many who had critiqued the previous system were calling for: simplicity; decisions made at appropriate levels; co-ordinated decision-making; national objectives; clear responsibilities and goals; control over resources; responsiveness at the local level and accountability and openness. The white paper was accepted by the Government, legislation followed and the implementation of the new administrative structure began amid much academic criticism at the time (for example, Codd, 1989; Lauder, 1987; Openshaw, 1988). It was the underlying ideology that was causing concern as many felt that the new system had "...the potential for being exploited and extended for more radical and divisive ends" (McCulloch, 1990, p. 66).

B) The Implementation of the Reform—1989

By the beginning of 1989 a Director-General of Education (who had a non-educational background) had been appointed to lead an Implementation Unit which was established to assist educational institutions to implement the total policy by October 1, 1989. The new Education Act came into effect on the same day that schools took over the administration of their schools. Further changes (to the already many changes) were made and legislated (Education Amendment Act, 1989). The legislation had a very tight time frame and therefore much of the 1964 Education Act remained in force until the Education Amendment Act, 1990. This was confusing for school principals trying to find information on the many legal issues for which they were now accountable.

The mechanism to achieve the partnership between community and school was a Board of Trustees for *each* school in New Zealand. The regionally-based Education Boards were dis-established in October 1989. Each school community then elected a Board of Trustees made up of five members. Boards could co-opt up to four more members either to provide necessary expertise or to meet the representation requirements of gender and ethnic groups. The principal, a staff member and in secondary schools, a student, were also all part of this Board of Trustees. The role of the Board of trustees was to govern their individual school.

Each school was responsible for the full decision-making and roles of: curriculum management; financial management; property management; personnel management; school programme development, evaluation and review; parental and community involvement and the total school improvement. The Board of Trustees were responsible for the appointment of staff to their school and for buildings and grounds maintenance. The principals would be responsible for teacher supervision and appraisal. The decision-making was now effectively school-based. Every school received its own bulk grant for the running of the school. This grant was to cover all school expenses apart from capital works and teachers' salaries which were still administered centrally. Each school, in consultation with its community, had to develop a charter which would set out the school's mission statement, local goals and objectives within the overall National curriculum guidelines. This then became an undertaking between the community, the institution and the Minister of Education that these goals would be met.

The Education Review Office was established to carry out assurance and effectiveness reviews to ensure that these obligations were fulfilled. Many people argued that there was not the opportunity that they had expected for individual schools to develop their own charters and hence local curriculum and they debated the actual degree of school-based decision making now available. They felt that the Ministry had issued schools with a tight charter framework which in effect stated what schools were expected to achieve in non-negotiable, compulsory requirements. Here began the era of contradictions which will be discussed more fully in the next section. Some schools refused to sign their charters at the end of this initial process because they felt that the Government was not only too directive in what they could and could not do in their schools, but was also not fulfilling its responsibilities to the partnership (see Codd & Gordon, 1991). All schools eventually did sign their charters as funding was withheld until they had.

The speed of change in the reform of education administration was unrelenting. Research during the first year found that principals had felt that the process had been "rushed and contradictory" (McConnell & Jeffries, 1991, p. 5) and this was the context at the beginning of the present study.

C) THE INSTITUTIONALISATION OF THE REFORM—1990-1995

The Research Context

An era of contradictions, compromises, dichotomies and dilemmas

There were constant changes and contradictions in the information disseminated which led to a lack of confidence in providers and receivers alike. Charter frameworks changed three times. School principals were thrust into new roles and responsibilities for which they had little prior knowledge or training. It was difficult to get the answers to simple questions or even to know what questions to ask.

Unfortunately, too, the sources of greatest support service to schools, the Department of Education and local Education Boards along with the Inspectorate, had been disestablished. Ministry of Education personnel were in new roles and responsibilities. The Colleges of Education were given the task of training for principals and Boards of Trustees and did not have the necessary information or knowledge of the new roles, or the staffing, to effectively carry out the training. The Education Review Office was also being established and developing new roles. All aspects of the administrative system were undergoing drastic change simultaneously and therefore there were very few support links or services for the schools at this time.

The school principals often seemed to be placed in positions similar to that described by Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) as *middle managers,* having to take educational leadership roles to implement changes that they had not initiated and therefore did not necessarily believe were important for the improvement of education in their school. Although this was not new, there were a great deal of educational changes and principals often did not have the specialist knowledge to deal with the changes effectively. The managerial thrust on school leaders was dominant (Codd, 1990) and the principals were faced with increasing difficulty in being able to focus on the educational aspect of their role (Robertson, 1991). These factors all impacted on the research of a professional development model for school leaders at this time. Grace (1990) called for research at the macro level of the social, cultural, economic and political level in New Zealand education but also asked for engagement in "sensitive, complex, and qualitative studies of school processes" (p. 39) which was what this research set out to do. Such a model would need to develop critical, reflective school leaders who could critique government policy and continue to lead for an education system which would "be seen to contribute to the formation of citizens (as opposed to consumers) and...be seen to contribute to the public good" (Grace, 1990, p. 39).

Many of the new roles that the principals were required to carry out were not related to learning and teaching programmes within the school but were duties such as building

maintenance and the establishment of new procedures for jobs once covered by the local education board such as ordering of supplies or obtaining relief staffing or obtaining the most cost-effective plumber for a broken water pipe. All of these administrative tasks increased principals' workloads. Evidence from research on the first year indicated that principals and Boards of Trustees were suffering from a deluge of paper and the learning curves for the new roles and responsibilities were too great for many (see McConnell and Jeffries, 1991; Ramsay, Harold, Hawk, Kaai, Marriott & Poskitt, 1990; Robertson, 1991; Wylie, 1989). Principals felt their workload had been too heavy (Wylie, 1989) and that "there was an increasing emphasis upon the management role of the principal with a corresponding decrease in professional leadership" (McConnell & Jeffries, 1991, p. 5).

At the end of the second year of the reforms, research showed that paperwork and administration were sources of least satisfaction for 63% of principals. In 1993 this had dropped to the most cited reason for dissatisfaction for only 39% of principals. Did this indicate as Wylie (1992, p. 70) believed, that principals had begun to adapt "to the increased managerial and administrative emphasis in their work" and had also begun to delegate administrative tasks to other senior staff? Constant policy changes, funding and budgeting, along with the general direction and politicisation of education, were new sources of dissatisfaction being identified (Wylie, 1992). There were new roles to be practised. Principals needed to be statespersons, connoisseurs of the knowledge base, and entrepreneurs (Robertson, 1991). As Grace (1993, p. 365) said:

> Those head teachers who are drawn by the image of managing director, or skilful player of the education market place, will experience the excitement of new roles to be practised...those for whom the professional aspects of headship were especially important, particularly in the cultural, pedagogic and pupil relations sectors, have to fight the challenge of adjustment or flight from the field.

A New Zealand Principals' Federation survey (New Zealand Principals' Federation, 1995) showed that 400 principals resigned in 1994 which, they stated, was twice as many as in any preceding years. Other research at this time found that principals were, by their account, "beginning to show signs of strain in maintaining the higher workload involved in school self-management" (Wylie, 1994, p. 66). The conclusion of this research also stated the cost had been extremely high in terms of additional workloads and teacher morale and that "it is not clear whether New Zealand education can continue to rely on people carrying such loads without some relief" (Wylie, 1994, p. 140). It was hoped that the model of professional development developed in the present study would go some way to providing this relief for the 12 principals involved in the research.

Some of these pressures and causes of tension were the dilemmas with which the principals were suddenly faced (Robertson, 1991). Although *Tomorrow's Schools*

emphasised that the principal would be "the professional leader of the institution" (Lange, 1988, p. 10) and that "principals will be expected to work in a collaborative relationship with their staff" (Lange, 1988, p. 11) much of the booklet's definitions of what the principal would actually do defined a managerial rather than a professional leadership role and focussed on efficiency rather than effectiveness.

The Implementation Unit set up for the first year to assist with the administrative changes, set out to clarify the roles of the principal and the Boards of Trustees. It was stated that one of the three basic changes at the school level proposed by Tomorrow's Schools was a much clearer focus on the role of the principal. Principals were described as the schools' professional leaders who would have three main functions. The first leadership function was to contribute to and implement the policy of the Board of Trustees to achieve the objectives set out in the charter. This was the principal's executive function. Secondly, the principal was expected to lead the staff of the school in the implementation of school programmes. This was the instructional leadership function. The third function was to report on the achievements of the school.

At the end of the fourth year of the reforms the principals felt there was still a greater emphasis in their workload on the administrative component, but 41% of principals said they were also undertaking more educational leadership which indicated that "high workloads [were] inescapable" if school-based management was to work (Wylie, 1994, p. 139). The biggest concern principals had was that the administrative workload requirements made it difficult for them to be as innovative as they would have liked in the addressing of students' needs (Wylie, 1994). But in the midst of all this tumult and sometimes chaos, some researchers found exciting innovations and initiatives (Ramsay, et al, 1990; Robertson, 1991). Principals had the attitude that Tomorrow's Schools were here to stay and that they would remain positive and make it work (McConnell & Jeffries, 1991). The financial independence that schools enjoyed led to increased flexibility and responsiveness to local needs. There was more parental interest in education and a greater focus on equity issues and fairness in education since the reforms (Ramsay, 1992). Within the equity objectives of the Charter, schools were asked to honour the Treaty of Waitangi and also ensure that the children in New Zealand schools recognise and value their dual cultural heritage. This was an area in which the Government had chosen to take a central role and there were many objectives and goals hardwired in to the Charter framework for schools. These were seen by school leaders as the positive effects of the reform (McConnell & Jeffries, 1991).

Research showed that although principals were more positive about the effects of education administration changes than teachers or parents, 54% of principals indicated

that their concerns outweighed the benefits on New Zealand education as a whole (Wylie, 1994). This then was the context in which the principals in this research were operating.

The administrative reforms and the new roles that the reforms now required school leaders to fulfil had implications for their leadership training and development. Prior to the reforms regional inservice groups had organised professional development courses with the assistance of the departmental inspector. After the reforms the arrangements were quite different and school principals had to become more intellectually independent in deciding what professional development they required and establish ways of meeting their professional development needs and those of their staff.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR NEW ZEALAND SCHOOL LEADERS SINCE 1989

In 1989 the School Management Development Project (SMDP) was set up in each of the six Teachers' Colleges throughout New Zealand. Staff members from each College serviced and co-ordinated the support and training activities for school trustees, staff and principals in their regions. I became part of this liaison team and attended many of the initial planning meetings held by each cluster as they endeavoured to set the priorities for their professional development and training. The cluster then submitted their budget for expenditure to the Teachers' College and received their allocation of funds. Each cluster of schools was responsible for meeting their own professional development needs by contracting the appropriate providers. This was the first time that many principals had to make decisions about their own professional development. Much of the training in this first year was provided by Brian Caldwell and Jim Spinks, authors of *The Self Managing School* (1988) who travelled throughout New Zealand discussing the roles of principals and school boards, and also policy development, in self-managing schools. Information days were held and seminars, videos, training kits and a resource directory of providers of training and information were made available to schools.

There was a great emphasis in the first year to provide training which distinguished governance from management as principals and trustees struggled to understand their new roles. There had been advertising on television leading up to the reforms which had led parents to believe that managing their local school would be as simple as managing their own child. Their role, however, was not to be one of management but governance. These contradictions had to be worked through in the building of partnership within each school community.

Funding from central government for the SMDP ceased altogether at the end of 1989, but some Teachers' Colleges chose to maintain a commitment to the development of

management training for the schools of their region. In 1990, my job description included responsibility for the co-ordination of school management development. This heralded the beginnings of an Educational Leadership Centre at the University of Waikato. This Centre provided a consultancy service and seminars in areas such as supervision of staff, meeting equity objectives, principals' professional development and equal employment opportunity training. The Centre also developed a network for the school leaders of the region and facilitated forums to debate issues of current interest such as the role of the principal; bulk funding of teachers salaries; principals' performance agreements and how to develop a shared purpose within a school community. As director of and a consultant for this Centre, many of the interactions I had with school leaders also had an influence on the research for this study as well as the research having a direct influence on the interactions and training I was involved in with the school leaders.

At the beginning of 1990 most of the money originally allocated to clusters to buy professional development was still unspent. It had not been easy to meet the varied needs of the principals within the cluster. In an effort to ascertain these needs cluster conveners were surveyed about the type of professional development they would like offered in their region. Fewer than one per cent of the principals responded. This served to increase my motivation to make a more in-depth study of the roles and the professional development training needs of school principals so that appropriate training programmes could be established. This study (Robertson, 1991) greatly influenced the present research and is briefly described in the next section.

At about the same time, in May, 1990, *Today's Schools,* more commonly known as the Lough Report, (Committee to Review the Implementation of Education Reform in New Zealand, 1990) was released which reviewed the first six months of the process of implementation of *Tomorrow's Schools* (Lange, 1988). The committee found that although there was widespread enthusiasm for the decentralisation of responsibility there were considerable concerns about the speed of change and uncertainty over the appropriate roles for boards and principals within schools. The committee believed that principals should refrain from wanting to be instructional leaders of their schools. In their evaluation of the new administrative system the committee criticised the fact that principals were still trying to identify "as professional leaders rather than managers" (Committee to Review the Implementation of Education Reform in New Zealand, 1990, p. 18). According to the Tomorrow's Schools' policy document, professional leader was the role that school leaders were expected to take. The Lough Report reflects a further effort by Treasury to change this concept. The Lough Committee also found that some schools were struggling with the new administrative tasks and that there had not been sufficient training.

As a result of this committee's review and recommendations an Implementation Task Force, led by practising principals, was established which produced five documents to assist those in leadership positions in the educational sector. They covered personnel, financial and property management, governance and management of schools, and the development of an educational plan. These booklets were of great assistance to many principals and Boards of Trustees throughout New Zealand. Training courses were conducted by school principals in every region in New Zealand in 1990. The Taskforce Booklets (Principals' Implementation Taskforce, 1990) were initially only available through attendance at these meetings. The question was often asked "Why didn't we have these from the beginning?" There had previously been little knowledge or understanding of the type of document that would be most suitable to assist the administrative reform. New Zealand principals were pioneering full scale national reform of administration to education.

With the changing role for school principals came an emphasis on improved management performance in schools and leadership development. Research found that 88% of the principals had had some training for their work in 1992, slightly down on the amount involved in training in the previous two years (Wylie, 1994). There were many new initiatives for the provision of professional development opportunities to improve the management and leadership performance within schools. Diplomas in school management, diplomas in educational leadership, graduate papers and additional Advanced Studies for Teachers papers had all been further developed by tertiary institutions to assist school leaders with the administration of schools and have been highly sought after since the reforms. In 1990 75% of principals' training was on management and administration and nothing on educational leadership, but in 1993 there had been marked changes and up to 50% of principals' training was on educational leadership and only 46% on management and administration (Wylie, 1994, p. 52). Nearly all respondents wanted more training and 81% of these respondents preferred to train with other principals.

The Advisory Service continued to offer an extensive support system to schools and private consultants grew in numbers. Curriculum, school and teacher development in New Zealand had been contracted to outside providers by the Ministry of Education since 1989. The tertiary institutions had been some of the successful contenders for the contracts. One such school development contract for principals' curriculum and leadership development involved the development of school based appraisal systems as well as peer-assisted leadership development. This particular contract became a preliminary study for this research study. It is discussed after the description of previous research which informed this study.

ACTION RESEARCH STUDY 1990

In 1990 I carried out an action research study on the changing role of the New Zealand school principal within the new administrative reforms. This study explored ways to meet the principals' professional development needs (Robertson, 1991). The findings indicated that site-based professional development, based on outside perspectives on the concerns the principals were experiencing at that time, was the most valuable. From the findings of this, and other related research, the following principles for a theory of professional development were put forward (Robertson, 1991, p. 130). These have influenced the direction of the present study.

Principals' professional development programmes should acknowledge the realities of the daily practice of school principals (Murphy & Hallinger, 1989; Robinson & Absolum, 1990) and also acknowledge the philosophic, values and visionary elements in the principal's role (Duignan, 1987; Starratt, 1986). Therefore, they need to offer opportunities for values development (Duignan, 1987) and the resolution of value conflicts (Robinson & Absolum, 1990) and in so doing, have a strong emphasis on instructional leadership (Mulford, 1984; Robb, 1988; Snook, 1990; Stewart, 1990, Wadsworth, 1990).

The professional development programmes should encourage reflective practice (Duignan, 1987) and experiential learning (Kolb, 1984; Robinson & Absolum, 1990; Wadsworth, 1990) rather than offer a priori theoretical models. The programmes are therefore, needs-based, participatory and collaborative (Robinson & Absolum, 1990; Wadsworth, 1990). Programmes such as these focus on problem resolution and the resolution of leadership dilemmas (Robinson & Absolum, 1990) and are developmental over time to lead to completed action (Kolb, 1984; Robinson & Absolum, 1990).

There needs to be an emphasis on inter-personal skills such as communication, presentation skills, stress and time management (Mulford, 1984; Wadsworth, 1990) and an acknowledgment of the needs of individuals for stimulation, freedom, creativity and fun.

Professional development programmes should offer a variety of time options both in term time or non-contact time such as vacations and weekends (Alcorn, 1987) and offer release time for teaching principals and incentives for attendance. Last, but equally importantly, these professional development programmes should be provided by people credible to the field of education; often by practitioners and consultants in partnership (Bailey, 1987; Fullan, 1985).

Two of the study's recommendations also had a direct influence on the direction of this study. These were: a) that principals need to be trained in reflective practice which needs

to be formalised and structured through the organisation of, for example, peer-assisted learning, professional partnerships, study groups and action learning sets, and b) that outside consultants need to be made available to principals to assist with their professional development and to help them in problem-solving, managing change and school development generally.

One principal's statement in particular in that earlier study led to the present research. I had asked all of the principals what they would do if they could have a whole week for their professional development where there were no holds barred. One urban primary principal advocated the type of aided-reflection espoused in models where principals expand their knowledge through reflective practice by forming professional partnerships (Bailey, 1987; Barnett, 1990; Robinson & Absolum, 1990). This principal commented:

> What I would really like to do is to talk to other principals and perhaps buddy with someone. They would spend a day or two with me and then I would say "OK, warts and all, what can you see in here that I am doing wrong—tell me. What things do you like? What things am I doing that I could do better?
>
> (Robertson, 1991, p. 89)

The idea for further research and development in this area took root. The present study researched a professional development model based on the formation of a Partnerships' programme which met the above principles and recommendations in the context of school leadership in New Zealand at the time.

Within the state of flux in education, many leadership theories seemed too orderly and neat to fit the reality of the principal's world. Sergiovanni (1991) suggested that scruffy theories were needed in order to account for a scruffy world and that reflective practice was the key to making scruffy theories work. Barth (1980) stated that although the principal was thought of as rational and one who initiates, in actuality what a principal was often bore greater similarity to a doctor on call in an emergency ward. This responding-to-emergency type role was apparent in the practice of school principals in New Zealand at the time of this research.

This did not mean, however, that school leaders could not become reflective practitioners, even when their job conditions were inimical to reflective practice. It has been shown elsewhere that specially designed learning experiences such as professional partnerships could be developed to stimulate reflective practice, thus increasing principals' professional knowledge base about administrative practice (Barnett, 1990). Professionals rely on informed intuition in their daily practice as their "...professional knowledge is *created in use* as principals think, reflect, decide and do" (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 6). I wanted to utilise the every day conditions in which a principal worked within a model of

professional development. Principals rarely have opportunities to interact with other principals about important matters relating to leadership (Barnett, 1989). I wanted to ensure that this occurred.

A Ministry of Education professional development contract, for school leaders' curriculum leadership development, was able to be utilised to develop some of these ideas further. This became a preliminary study to the research described in this report.

PRELIMINARY STUDY 1992

In July 1991 the Ministry of Education called for proposals for the provision of curriculum leadership development for educational leaders. The Educational Leadership Centre was successful in securing the contract and therefore I gained a valuable opportunity to work with a number of head teachers and principals from early childhood, primary and secondary institutions, on their leadership development. The model that was developed had two arms: one, the development of systems of staff appraisal in each of the schools, and two, principals' own leadership development and appraisal through working in professional partnership with a colleague.

During the preliminary study there were over 50 hours of face-to-face data gathering sessions with the 43 school leaders in either group or individual interviews and surveys. The group completed two questionnaires during the course of the study which helped to monitor and evaluate the issues and successes the principals had experienced (see Appendix A). The principals were each sent at least five letters throughout the year, reminding them of goals set from group sessions and prompting them to further action and reflection with their partner. At the end of the preliminary study all of the data gathered were furthered analysed in order to ascertain how successful partnerships could be established and maintained. In-depth interviews were conducted with five participants at the end of the preliminary study, to further saturate themes that would influence the selection and maintenance of principals' partnerships in the research programme. Overall, this required over 60 hours of analysis. The main findings from the preliminary study that set direction for the ensuing action research phase in the present study were:

- that most principals viewed the partnership concept favourably;
- that the principals needed improved training to carry out the processes more effectively;
- that one year was not sufficient time for the partnerships to develop fully;
- that the partnerships had been more successfully developed by the primary school principals;
- that respect, honesty and trust were important elements in a partnership;

- that the principals needed more in-depth outside support to assist with critical reflection;
- that regular contact between partners was necessary;
- that the principals' perceived lack of time for the programme was an inhibiting factor;
- that similar size and type of schools seemed beneficial to problem solving; and
- that the group sharing and problem solving was important.

THE PRESENT RESEARCH

This preliminary study, along with the previous research and other development contracts, led to the development of the research study described in this report.

This research study was carried out during 1993 and 1994. The research was guided by two research questions which were further refined after a study of the literature.

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Do partnerships assist in the professional development of primary school principals?
2. If so, in what ways?

PREDISPOSITIONS

Research cannot be value-free and reflection on my own values was important before undertaking the study. These values would exert an underlying influence on my explorations. Battersby (1981) insisted that researchers should make an honest assessment of their predispositions. Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 253) stated too, that because it is impossible to erase all the theory from researchers' minds before they start researching "the trick is to line up what one takes as theoretically possible or probable with what one is finding in the field."

This was important. I had developed strong beliefs about the desirability of a partnership between schools and universities in education, about the importance of equity in education and about the provision of a high quality moral education for children in schools. The development of lifelong learners was also important and I believed in the need for continuing professional and personal development for those in educational administration. Previous experience as a primary school principal was influential but being not directly involved or affected by the demands and influences that were acting upon principals in schools at the time of the research (Trider & Leithwood, 1988) there was an ability to distance myself from, and reflect upon the effects of, the changes on

principals and their practice in schools. This personal knowledge of the principal's role before the changes in administration took place gave me a baseline for thinking about the experiences of principals in their new roles. Principals appeared to have been sidetracked from their preferred role, that of educational leadership, and their administrative burden did not seem to be lessening.

It was important that this study was a professional development opportunity which would assist school principals to theorise about their practice, to transform it through critical reflection and to regain a focus on educational leadership (Giroux, 1983). There was a particular role to play in assisting school leaders to refocus on educational leadership and it would be both "a political and social action" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 152).

The definition of my role was understandably influenced by the position advocated here. I did not want to undertake an observational study but wanted the principals involved *in* professional development as they were assisting to develop a model *for* their professional development. This could be emancipatory action research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) in which the principals would become aware of the conditions which were shaping and constraining their actions. Processes of reflection had to be established so that the principals would not only find out more about themselves and other principals but would contribute to a wider social project for the principals in New Zealand. The theoretical underpinnings of the methodology are described in Chapter Three as is further discussion on the importance of reflexivity in research.

The remainder of this report is set out in the following way.

ORGANISATION OF REPORT

Chapter Two gives an overview of the current literature on school leadership and defines educative leadership. The literature and research on professional development for school leaders is critiqued and the change process literature is explored.

Chapter Three outlines the methodology and the theoretical underpinnings of the model of professional development developed in this study. It also outlines the methods of data collection and the method of data analysis.

Chapter Four leads the reader through the action research process over a two year period and ends with a detailed case study (Case Study 1) of how two teaching principals developed their partnership in this research.

Chapter Five identifies the main research findings. These findings include two detailed case studies (Case Study 2 and Case Study 3) of how two pairs of school principals used action research processes.

Chapter Six outlines the factors which influence the successful development of partnerships and the problems experienced in this research.

Chapter Seven discusses the findings in the light of current literature and outlines methodological, professional development, educational leadership and sociological implications of the findings. It also sets forth a substantive theory for school leaders' professional development, based on the findings from this study. In this chapter recommendations for further research are made, as well as some final conclusions and the thesis is presented.

Appendixes and references complete the document.

Chapter Two: Related Literature

This chapter contains a review of the literature on school leadership and on the professional development of school practitioners. The concepts of leadership, management and administration are firstly defined and then briefly sited with in the New Zealand educational and political context which has been more fully described in Chapter One.

A review of the literature on school leadership follows, presented historically and within themes, from a) the trait theories developed in the first half of the century, through b) the situational or behavioural theories in the 1950s, to c) the contingency theories of the 1960s and 1970s, to d) calls for leadership theories that related specifically to the school context and culture in the 1970s and 1980s, and finally to e) the theories of agency—the moral, ethical and emancipatory theories of the 1980s and 1990s.

The literature relating to adult learning and the professional development of school practitioners and how to develop critically reflective school leaders is then reviewed in the exploration for a thesis for school leadership development.

LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

DEFINED

Leadership, management and administration are terms that are often used interchangeably in the literature. Some theorists believe it is counter-productive to a theory of educational leadership to maintain a distinction between leadership and management functions (Duignan, 1987). At times, however, distinctions are made. These concepts need to be discussed to enable a greater understanding of this study which set out to develop a professional model for educational *leadership* development.

Administration is the umbrella term which involves both management and leadership practices. "*Administration* can be broadly defined as a process of working with and through others to accomplish school goals efficiently. The essential elements of this definition are action, goals, limited resources, and working with other people" (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 15).

All of the routine administration tasks of a school principal could also be termed management tasks. These could include: the dealings with parents, the culture building,

the public relations, the student discipline, the provision of resources, the financial and personnel issues. These are the 1001 things of a school principal's job and Duignan (1989, p. 74.) believed that ..".leadership within an organization is filtered, transacted and transformed through the myriad brief, fragmented, everyday routines or 'chores' that are part and parcel of complex organizational life." This definition could be challenged with "*if* there is any leadership taking place." Otherwise, doing all of these things efficiently could be good management, not leadership. Sergiovanni (1993, p. 4) described the managerial mystique in which the emphasis is on "doing things right, at the expense of doing the right things." In the management mystique the way of thinking is in management *controls* to overcome human failings and boost production, and the controls become ends in themselves. In this way of thinking school administrators are forced "to do rather than to decide, to implement rather than to lead" (Sergiovanni, 1993, p. 4).

School leadership cannot simply be reduced to a set of management techniques and considerations. School leadership is about values, moral and educational, and about professional principles (Grace, 1993). Leadership is a reflective values-based group activity which is an interactive process between and among individuals in an organization (Duignan, 1987). Leadership involves the hand, the head and the heart (Sergiovanni, 1992). Leadership is a different "way of thinking and feeling" (Mitchell & Tucker, 1992, p. 30). School leadership is more than a position held. Some people hold positions of power and do not display leadership, and conversely some leaders do not have a position of power (McConnell, Robertson & Strachan, 1994). The language of school leadership suggests innovation and growth and improved learning.

In summary, leaders are primarily committed to people and relationships within the school with a central focus on the quality of education. Managers are primarily committed to the institutional effectiveness and carrying out policy within budgeted guidelines and may not focus at all on the quality of education or the life chances of individuals within the school. School leaders act *on* the system, whereas those who consider themselves as managers may simply act within the system.

Managers or leaders—what do New Zealand schools need?

SIGNIFICANCE IN THE NEW ZEALAND EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

The management tasks are extremely important in New Zealand schools today but "...no management success can compensate for failure in leadership" (Covey, 1989, p. 102). Both management and leadership are necessary but management must be secondary to leadership. The emphases on each must be kept in balance and must complement each other (Sergiovanni, 1991). Principals must first and foremost think of their role as one of

educational leadership. The way in which principals conceptualise their primary task and their school will ultimately affect how successful their school is (Edwards, 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992; Southworth, 1993). This study was designed to help the principals to focus primarily on their educational leadership role.

Snook (1990) warned New Zealand principals to continuously work at maintaining this focus before the effects of the 1989 reform to educational administration in New Zealand had fully impacted. He said that a school principal must be a "leader in the ranks, not a manager outside them" (p. 7). He was quite explicit on how this should be achieved. He said "You must make leadership your priority and delegate as much as you can of everything else...to make light of the management burdens, and to grasp the added opportunity to be leaders" (Snook, 1990, p. 7).

Had New Zealand principals been able to heed Snook's words? In 1990, during the first year of the reform, a cluster of 11 school leaders who were part of earlier research (Robertson, 1991) felt they had already been temporarily diverted from the educational leadership issues in their schools, by role and work overload relating to their additional management tasks. As well as these additional management tasks that New Zealand school principals had been faced with, were the underlying philosophical assumptions in the political arena which continuously worked against school leaders being able to view their role as the educational leaders of their schools. The ideology of management had begun to dominate their consciousness and actions within their schools (Grace, 1993). Many principals could feel embedded in this management paradigm. Codd (1990) said back in the first year of the reforms that "the terrain of education is being subjected to an oppressive ideological onslaught" (p. 19). He said that this was the ideology of managerialism. Principals can find it very difficult to think about educational leadership when working on such managerial terrain (Robertson, 1991). They have had to negotiate the space between what they have traditionally done and the new ideas in a "trapeze-like process of letting go and grabbing on" (Deal, 1990, p. 9).

The terrain was no different five years hence at the time of this research (as described more fully in Chapter One on the social, political context of education in New Zealand). Contradictory discourses were abundant within the education reform (Codd, 1993). Principals were constantly being surrounded by technocratic, corporate language but were asked to be democratic, educative leaders. They were asked to be collegial and competitive. It was an era of contradictions. The documents principals read, Education Review Office and Ministry of Education requirements, individual contracts and conditions of employment, all served to move principals further and further away from working in the ranks to a them-and-us type situation of managers and the managed. A type of power-over school leadership was being advocated.

This situation was not unique to New Zealand. Simpkins (1994, p. 31) looked at efficiency and accountability and locally managed schools in England and found that there, too, the leaders were finding themselves "increasingly functionally separated from their staff as they address issues of 'corporate' effectiveness." The rhetoric of the reforms with words such as appraisal, efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, competition, chief executive officers, audits, achievement objectives and performance outcomes, all signified a power-over type of leadership which was in direct contrast to current school leadership theory and added to the contradiction of discourses (see Appendix B). Retallick (1991, p. 108) also feared these developments. He stated "we're getting too preoccupied with the technocratic language and neglecting community and the communicative sphere of life." One way for principals to counteract this dominant discourse is to be critically aware of the social and political forces and values operating on schools and hence, school leadership at the national level. Giroux supported this belief in his comments in the introduction of the book *Educational leadership: A critical pragmatic perspective* (Maxcy, 1991). He stated:

> Refusing to interrogate the values that not only frame how authority is constructed but also define leadership as a political and pedagogical practice, neo-conservative educational reformers end up subordinating the discourse of ethics to the rules of management and efficiency.
>
> (Maxcy, 1991, p. x)

Interrogation of values is then, an essential aspect of a leadership development programme and principals can be helped to do this through studies such as the one described in this report. The most recent theories of leadership do try to meet the challenges that Maxcy (1991) put forward. These theories move away from concepts of leadership as bureaucratic management of other people to concepts of leadership that are democratic and participatory and based on a sense of community. The current leadership discourse has been an attempt to divert attention away from a Weberian authority power-over approach to a power-to approach. The more recent concept of leadership is a dialectic between leaders and followers, where leaders are at times followers and followers are followers because they choose to be. Attention returns to a concept of educational leadership as a public good based on democratic, ethical and social principles of co-operation, caring and sharing of power.

Leadership is an elusive concept which has been much studied but is still problematic, especially when the discussion focuses specifically on the leadership of schools. I have defined the terms administration, management and leadership and I believe, built a case for the importance of New Zealand school leaders being assisted to keep their emphasis on educative leadership rather than management, or at least, to retain the balance between the two administrative functions.

The following discussion on leadership has been divided into five main themes which have been identifiable trends in the leadership literature. Although these have an historical aspect, none are exclusive to the time mentioned and all are still apparent in the literature today. These trends are: trait, situational, contingency, culture building and agency. Each of these is now described.

THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP

A) TRAIT THEORIES

These theories were developed from studies of leaders to find the psychological characteristics and behaviours which differentiated the leaders from their followers. These theories have been aptly called the *great man theory of leadership* (Hoy & Miskel, 1982, p. 221) as they were usually studies of men in leadership positions carried out by male researchers (Blackmore, 1989). Stogdill (1948) reviewed about 120 trait studies of leadership that were conducted between 1904 and 1947 and found that there were five general categories of traits: Capacity, which included such traits as intelligence, alertness and judgment; Achievement, such as scholarship, knowledge and athletic accomplishments; Responsibility which would include characteristics of dependability, initiative, persistence, aggressiveness, self-confidence and a desire to excel; Participation, involving sociability, cooperation, adaptability and humour, and Status, such as socioeconomic position and popularity.

Many trait theories are apparent today. It is often trait theories that are found in the improve-yourself-type books that line the bookshelves of bookshops. Others stem from recent research.

Blase (1987) in an in-depth and comprehensive qualitative study among teachers found that effective principals exhibited five people consideration activities (support in confrontation/conflict; participation/consultation; fairness, equitability; recognition—praise/reward; willingness to delegate authority) and nine task-related activities (accessibility; consistency; knowledge/expertise; clear and reasonable expectations; decisiveness; goals/direction; follow-through; ability to manage time, and problem-solving orientation).

There was much negative reaction to these theories and questions asked about whether leadership could be taught if such traits were then known or were they innate qualities that somebody possessed. Were leaders born or made was the question to which nobody had the answer. People began to argue also that the situation that leadership was carried out in

had an influence on the type of leadership that would be needed and situational theories began to emerge.

B) SITUATIONAL THEORIES

These theories were short-lived and in short supply. To develop these theories researchers tried to find specific properties of the situation that had relevance for leader behaviour and performance. Variables included such things as organizational climate, technology, and human factors such as characteristics of the subordinates and the role of the leader. These variables would then determine the appropriate leadership style.

There were then critiques that these theories did not allow for different personalities of leaders and that what works for one person may not work for another in the same situation. Empirical evidence for any such theories was sparse (Campbell, Dunette, Lawler & Weick, 1970). Next came the theories that stated that personality and situational factors were *both* important to leadership effectiveness which led to the contingency approach still prevalent in many leadership theories today. This was a merger of the trait and situational approaches.

C) CONTINGENCY THEORIES

These theories were built on the premise that there needed to be a match between individual traits and particular situations and a recognition that leadership was an action which involved other people. Researchers began to study the situation variables, such as task, power, attitudes of subordinates, which influenced the relationship between the leadership traits and the performance (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Fiedler, 1971).

Blake and Mouton (1964) developed a managerial contingency theory model which was used widely for training purposes in education. They postulated that there were two main dimensions linked to leadership—concern for production and concern for people—and it was the emphasis that leaders put on either concern that determined their leadership style. They developed a grid system with *concern for people* on one axis and *concern for production* on the other. People working through this model would answer a series of questions which would give them a co-ordinate on the grid which was then indicative of their leadership style.

Fielder's (1971) contingency theory is one of the most well known. He had some interesting findings. He found that in schools where the principal was well supported, a task-oriented approach was seen to be most effective; in schools where principals were less well supported, a relationship-oriented approach was more associated with school effectiveness.

Other studies found that under one set of conditions one style of leadership was effective and under a different set of conditions, a different style of leadership was effective (for example, Reddin, 1970). Leadership then, was viewed in these theories not as individual traits but a transactional process between those who lead and those who follow. Sergiovanni's more recent "bartering, building, banking and bonding" styles of leadership (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 123) were also based on contingency theories.

To summarise, all of these theories argued that there were certain attributes and skills that could be learned and used according to different contexts. The implication here was that these theories were gender and race neutral. Theorists have argued this was not so (for example, Blackmore, 1989). It was also implied that such theories were transferable across a wide range of organizational settings including schools. Handy and Aitken (1986) consistently tried to make the links to schools as organizations. They believed that every teacher was a manager (of a group of children) and every teacher was managed (by someone else). This was a power-over top-down approach to the relationships within a school. They believed that people behave as they do because they are told to do so and that someone else knows best. They proposed a knowledge of management that understood organizations from the students to the principals—a hierarchical conception of schooling.

Some theorists began to argue that schools were structured differently and that these models did not "fit" the school context. Discussion relating to these managerial models did not link to the quality of learning processes in schools. The oft-cited work of Weick (1976) pointed out that schools were loosely coupled organizations, which he said meant that the teachers and pupils were not bound and driven by rules and regulations and the belief that someone else knows best from within management systems. He believed it was the culture and norms of the school and the belief in what they were doing that were most influential on the way teachers work. Apple (1982) also found that teachers acted in a subversive manner to autocratic leadership in schools and that they were best guided by shared values and beliefs.

These sorts of findings had implications for the study, practice and development of theories of leadership. There was a recognition that the study of the leadership of schools was in itself an education discipline. Theories on the importance of school culture and theories of leaders as builders of school culture began to appear. Focus moved away from descriptions of schools as organisations to schools as communities. School leaders' main roles were now believed to be culture builders and builders of community.

D) CULTURE-BUILDING THEORIES

Many recent theorists write about the importance of school leaders being culture builders (for example, a Campo, 1993; Duignan, 1989). To be culture builders it was imperative that principals were transformational leaders who were able to motivate and develop staff committed to growth. Work by Saphier and King (1986) identified twelve norms of school cultures that they believed were conducive to growth and school improvement. They stated that if a school leader establishes these conditions then school improvement efforts would be more likely to succeed. However, some theorists believed that research has been unable to show that the principal, as the chief culture builder, has had a great deal of impact on whether the school was effective or not (for example, Maxcy, 1991). Or perhaps it could be better put that "good leadership is a necessary but insufficient condition for successful schooling" (Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 144). There is the matter of the team. Duignan (1987) said that team effectiveness was related both to the ability and performance of the team leader and to the personal values and commitment of the team members. He described this position:

> Leadership in schools should be regarded as an act. It should therefore be a shared experience, a communal act. The wisdom and skills related to the leadership act are not necessarily the monopoly of any one individual nor are they, necessarily, hierarchically distributed in an organization. Teachers, students, parents, as well as those designated as administrators, all have a right to play their part in the leadership drama.
>
> (Duignan, 1987, p. 20)

Other research has supported this fact that there are many leaders involved in the school development process. Hall and Hord (1986) found that effective principals did not work alone but were part of a team and that many people contributed to the process of education. Their research into the role of the primary school principal drew attention to the role of second and sometimes third and fourth change facilitators working with the principals to facilitate implementation of new curricula programmes. Purkey and Smith (1983) also concluded that while the principal was uniquely positioned to fulfil the role of leader in the school, groups of teachers were also able to provide leadership.

Sergiovanni (1993) continued to write on the importance of building community and defines community as "collections of individuals who are binded together by natural will and who are together binded to a set of shared ideas and ideals" (p. xvi). He goes further in his more recent writing by arguing that changing the root metaphor—from organizations to communities—will change the theory (Sergiovanni, 1994). Starratt (1990) agreed that schools were mostly too small to be regarded as organizations and the organizational talk and concepts were just as inappropriate to schools as they would be to discussions of family life. He believed that schools were not only closer to families in size

but also in "affect and in focus" (p. 3) and that everyone had a part to play. With so many dysfunctional families in many school communities today, perhaps this is even more reasons for schools to develop this type of caring community. These were then the types of theories for leadership - of caring families, building communities and democracies; being propounded (for example, Court, 1994; Maxcy, 1991; Noddings, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1993; White, 1982).

These same theorists, and others, were sometimes a little cynical and negative about whether such schools as communities would eventuate. Handy and Aitken (1986) stated categorically that "...it is naive to think that a school could be run like Alcoholics Anonymous, where everyone in the group has the same aim and voluntarily accepts a code of discipline and behaviour" (p. 73). However, their organization theory is of the type that recent theorists have been rejecting.

Building community, team leadership and collaborative cultures in schools requires an innovative way of thinking about leadership on the part of school leaders as it is a complex process. What is needed is "a leader of instructional leaders...responsible for making vision-building a collective exercise" (Fullan, 1992, p. 20). Some of the skills required in this task would be the ability to manage conflict and problem solving, to be able to draw out other people's values and concerns and to be able to give direction but be open at the same time (Fullan, 1992). Leithwood (1992, p. 10) believed that transformational school leaders were in more or less continuous pursuit of three fundamental goals: 1) helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture; 2) fostering teacher development; and 3) helping them solve problems together more effectively. It was important to consider which types of skills would be included in a professional development programme for New Zealand school leaders.

Court (1994) examined discourses of management and leadership in New Zealand. She looked at gender inequalities in educational administration. Alongside the current management discourse with its technical systems of controls and performance and outcomes she found from her study of women in management that there existed a strong belief in the importance of team building in leadership. She stated that "such teamwork requires the skills of affiliation, the ability to build and maintain relationships and a sense of belonging" (p. 46). Court, along with other researchers, reiterated that it required thinking about a different style of leadership that utilised a power-to approach rather than a power-over approach in the development of school culture (for example, Blackmore, 1989; Sarason, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1987). In affiliateship, leaders are only leaders when they are involved in leadership acts. At other times they may be followers. This increases the leadership density within a school. Sergiovanni and Moore (1989) found in their

work with school principals at Trinity University however, that participants in their courses (principals and administrators) were uncomfortable when they talked about the importance of "shared leadership [and] leadership density" (p. 221). To change people from thinking of a concept of leadership from a power-over approach to a power-to style, can be a difficult task.

Starratt (1990) using the metaphor of drama stated that people involved in schools should be aware that there is dramatic action taking place in the lives of all those who make up the school community. He said that a dramatic consciousness is required which "involves a gathering up of the loose edges of one's attention to a concentrated focus on what one is doing or witnessing" (p. 81). This focus on what one was witnessing was what Edwards (1994) was referring to at the New Zealand Educational Administration Society conference on equity in education, when he put out the challenge that at this time in New Zealand the leader is being asked a question. He said:

> If we live in New Zealand and if we truly see ourselves as educational leaders, we are being asked a question: 'What can we do?' The difficulties and challenges of equity and excellence are not just the problems of minority groups: they are our problems!
>
> (Edwards, 1994, p. 4)

To deal with these problems of inequalities and social justice requires a new type of school leadership.

There have been constant calls for new theories of leadership (Blackmore, 1989) or even for no theories of leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992). The new theories acknowledge that leadership is an action that has an influence on other people's lives and is a political act. These theories challenge the meaning of life, the society we live in, the purpose of education, the societal inequalities, the oppression of some groups, such as those in lower social class, women and those people of differing ethnic origins. These theories strive to put the ethic of caring back into school leadership. They look to social justice. These theories are based on the development of community and team building and shared leadership but seek to move one step further, and challenge the basis upon what such leadership is built. They aim to enable agency (Giddens, 1979) for individuals in the school community—pupils, teachers and parents—and have been categorised in this study as agency theories.

E) AGENCY THEORIES

Agency theories of leadership are those which seek to release the power within the individuals who are affected by the processes of that leadership (Davies, 1991). The concept of agency denotes that a person "could have acted otherwise" (Giddens, 1993, p.

81). Agency describes the state of an informed person with a sense of future and large-scale perspective acting *on* the system. The individual could then be empowered (Maxcy, 1991) or emancipated (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) or in a process of conscientization (Freire, 1973). In this research methodology (see Chapter Three) I have used the term emancipation to mean being empowered to take action, that is, gaining agency through praxis and conscientization.

Leadership development had to provide opportunities for the principals in this study to gain a large-scale perspective and a sense of their future, and then enable them to act accordingly. This was important for school leaders in New Zealand at the time of this research. They needed to feel empowered to act upon the system, if necessary, rather than continuing to act within it. The research described in this report set out to give the participants this sense of agency. Unless they themselves gained this sense of agency they would be unable to develop it in others. An examination, and educational use, of the power structures could lead to the empowerment of others. It could assist these school leaders to respond to the oppression of bureaucratic leadership through critical reflection on their leadership. To do this they needed to acquire a critical perspective on their position in education.

Exponents of critical theory (for example, Bates, 1982; Greenfield, 1986; Habermas, 1974; Kemmis, 1985) challenged the paradigms of scientific management and extolled the importance of reflection on practice and the examination of the values and norms that are at the basis of society (there is more discussion on critical theory in Chapter Three). These critical theories implied the type of leadership which led to an examination of the power structures in society and people's values and beliefs and how these factors affect schooling and people's life chances. While the dominant societal discourse in the 1990s has been based on choice, accountability and testing in education, there has been reaction to these more positivist views. The conception of leadership for market place schools would work against developing community and partnership and improving the educational life chances of individuals (Grace, 1993). There has been an increasing move by many theorists to write about leadership which is focussed on what they believe the real issues for school leaders should be, for example: what knowledge is taught and who decides; caring; illiteracy; sexism; racism; authority; unemployment; poverty and ethics. To achieve this type of educative focus needs a constant interrogation of the values that are important within education. This is what the current leadership theory espoused must happen.

The leadership literature of the 1990s has been influenced by theorists who write about: leadership as an educative practice (for example, Codd, 1989; Duignan & Macpherson, 1992; Foster, 1989; Southworth, 1988); leadership as critical reflection (for

example, Bates, 1986; Codd, 1989b; Dewey, 1933; Foster, 1989; Maxcy, 1991; Schön, 1983); leadership as philosophy in action (for example, Greenfield, 1986; Hodgkinson, 1978, 1983); leadership as a moral and ethical activity (for example, Duignan, 1989; Noddings, 1984, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1992); leadership as a democratic practice (for example, Apple, 1986; Maxcy, 1995; Rivzi, 1989; White, 1982); and leadership as a feminist action (for example, Adler, Laney & Packer, 1993; Grundy, 1993; Regan, 1990). All of these theories have similarities and are linked. For example, all could be classed as educative theories, all require reflection on practice, all believe leadership is a moral activity. The primary focus of each theorist is where the difference lies.

Leadership as an Educative Practice

The research in this study was influenced greatly by literature which described the importance of educative leadership. Educative leadership helps professionals to work with others to shape their purposes and what they believe their contribution to education is (Smyth, 1985). By adopting a critical approach to examining the power structures in relation to schooling moved "the debate away from the 'bureaucratic' to a more 'educative' view of what leadership might mean" (Smyth, 1986, p. iii). This can be difficult to achieve but needs a constant evaluation of practice and the chance to see schooling from a wider perspective than the individual school setting. This piece of research was focussed on developing educative leadership as it endeavoured to help these principals evaluate their practice and gain a wider perspective.

Foster (1986) defined educative as the enlightenment of individuals so that they come to see themselves and their situation in a new way. They can then change for themselves anything that they find repressive. This is agency. It is important that leaders themselves are involved in such educative practice. Until they know themselves and their situation in a new way, they will not be in a position to lead others to this new enlightenment. Foster (1990) summed this up when he stated that school leaders must be ones "who know how to analyse critically modern forms of discourse which disguise power relationships and who can bring to a specific site the ability to inform and educate" (p. 17) but he gives no empirical evidence to support his stance and does not suggest how this state of critical leadership will come about from the style of dominating, hierarchical leadership found in many schools.

Duignan and Macpherson (1992) also stipulated that the wisest approach to leadership in education was to take an educative approach as management techniques may be of no help in negotiating between competing values and what is important in education which they believe, is the basis of educative leadership. There needs to be an involvement in the politics of a school, and schooling in general, to focus on what is right and wrong and

justice and injustice rather than what is efficient. An educative leader would also challenge others "to commit themselves to approaches to administration and professional practices that are, by their nature, educative" (p. 4). Duignan and Macpherson (1992) later summarised their position by stating "Educative leadership should be, we believe, holistic, pragmatic, values-driven and cultural activity intended to enhance performance in the areas of learning, teaching and leading" (p. 184).

Macpherson (1992) reflected on these concepts in relation to the administrative reforms in Australia and New Zealand. He believed that self-managing schools must have educative leaders who can share power and "nurture learning about the moral arts of judgment making [which] requires a new policy myth for educational managers in a corporate managerialist and politicised world [that of] educative leadership" (p. 50).

To achieve educative leadership there seems to be agreement that there needs to be critical reflection on practice. Many theorists concentrate their theory building around this concept with the belief that educative, emancipatory leadership will be the outcome.

Leadership as Critical Reflection

Dewey (1933) was one of the first proponents of the importance of reflective practice for all educational practitioners. Schön (1984) wrote about leadership as reflection in action. He stated that reflection-in-action involved "on-the-spot surfacing, criticizing, restructuring and testing of intuitive understandings of experienced phenomenon; often, it takes the form of a reflective conversation with the situation" (p. 42). Sergiovanni (1991) considered that if principals took such a stance to their leadership practice they would greatly increase their chances of success in their schools. He did not state specifically what form this success would take but believed that involvement in reflective practice will help principals use the findings from theory and research and observation of practice to make sound and effective decisions about which actions to follow in the unique conditions that they faced.

More than this, principals involved in reflective practice will often describe a feeling of empowerment. Osterman and Kottkamp (1993) defined this empowerment as "a willingness and drive to act professionally and responsibly, grounded in a sense of self-esteem, competence, and autonomy" (p. 187). This is agency. The development of a reflective environment enables people to examine their theories in use. This was the fundamental aim of the research model in this study. Schön (1984) believed that until school leaders examined their theories-in-use they would be unable to make change in their schools because change involves behavioural change. Many other theorists support this premise (for example, Bates, 1983; Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993; Smyth, 1986).

There is more discussion on behavioural change as professional development in the next section.

The ability to become critically reflective leaders requires a knowledge of the skills and methods of critical thinking (Maxcy, 1991). This was also important in this research. The methods built into the professional development model would have to assist the principals to become critically reflective in their schools. Educative, reflective leadership almost foreshadows the necessity for leaders to have a philosophy of education.

Leadership as Philosophy in Action

In the move from philosophy to psychology as a basis for theory on educational leadership Hodgkinson (1983) believed that notions of ethics and values and moral leadership have been discarded. He propounded that philosophy should be the basis of leadership as "the unexamined life is not worth living" (p. 70). Codd (1989) agreed "that the practice of educational leadership is a form of philosophy in action, that it is an area of philosophical practice p. 157). He argued that an industrial management model of school leadership with its emphasis on efficiency and teachers as workers "diminishes their commitment to the values and principles which define the field of educational practice" (p. 159). These theorists did not examine or define which values or describe the extent to which these should be debated. They were also lacking in empirical research evidence and have none of the ideals grounded in actual practice situations. What does leadership as philosophy in action mean in actual terms?

Codd speaks of philosophy in an earlier article:

> The notion that leaders should be philosophers is not new. Indeed it can be found as far back as Plato but it has never been widely accepted ... leadership has been defined increasingly in terms of management, efficiency and productivity, but this is a view which does not value critical reflection, personal autonomy or collective deliberation. It is, therefore, a view of leadership that is particularly inappropriate to educational institutions because it negates the educational purposes of those institutions.
>
> (Codd, 1989, p. 157)

The emphasis in leadership as a philosophical practice is constantly on educative leadership and examining the purpose of schools. It requires critical reflection, collective deliberation and personal autonomy. Therefore, a prerequisite of philosophical leadership was that leadership must be a moral and ethical activity.

Leadership as a Moral and Ethical Activity

There have been some distinctions made between moral and ethical leadership but generally they are subsumed under the category of value leadership (Maxcy, 1991). Moral leadership is based on a covenant of shared values which, because differ widely from person to person and culture to culture, have to be examined and negotiated. "Whenever there is an unequal distribution of power between two people the relationship becomes a moral one" (Sergiovanni, 1991, p. 324). "When leadership practice is based on moral authority, teachers can be expected to respond to shared commitments and felt interdependence (Sergiovanni, 1992, p. 31).

Noddings (1984, 1992) wrote about the ethics of caring in education and said that schools should be organised for more caring relationships to occur. She believed the caring relationships stem from our interactions with those closest to us, and then extend from these in ever widening circles to the inclusion of the wider community. Leadership as an ethical activity would have caring as the number one ethic, and this belief would take the teaching profession closer to the community than the notion of professionalism.

Leadership as a moral and ethical activity would "raise teachers' consciousness regarding the connections between their personal motives, needs and values and the collective interests and welfare of the school's community" (Greenfield, 1987, p. 1). In this way then the leader is depicted as having moral authority and this assumption is concerning. Is the leader the person with the best idea of what the good life is? How much assimilation is necessary for minority voices in situations like these? Is there room for difference and variety? Is difference valued in school cultures like this? Autocratic or Hitler-leaders may emerge in such contexts—and who is to say whose moral authority is "right." On what assumptions are they based? Who decides?

Therefore the morals and values of all members of the school community need to be heard, shared and openly debated within the educational community. Minority groups could still remain unheard or outvoted. This leads then, to the discussion of moral and ethical leadership being performed as a democratic practice. Is true democracy possible and what does it mean for the leadership of schools?

Leadership as a Democratic Practice

Leadership as a democratic practice is non-hierarchical leadership. There is equality in the exercise of power and it is an empowering approach to the running of schools. It constitutes collaborative enquiry among teachers, parents and other educational professionals to find solutions to problems faced in the school and community (Berlak & Berlak, 1983). In other words "leadership...should be lodged in the collective

deliberations of those most affected by the choices under consideration" (Maxcy, 1991, p. 127). This type of leadership does not place a principal in a lone position of one with the moral authority but assumes that all people involved in the school community - teachers and parents and children - need moral skills and all need to develop moral leadership. Leadership and morals are not the sole preserve of principals although they should "be 'first among equals' in educational deliberations" (Strike, 1993, p. 268) as they are principally responsible for the quality of education in the school. Leadership as a democratic practice rests on the assumption that there are no authorities of the good life for individuals and that no individual has any 'natural' right to stand in power over others (White, 1982). Is it possible, however, to achieve a consensus in decision making in education when people's basic values may differ radically?

The argument for democratic leadership must also be an argument against professionalism (Strike, 1993). The notion of professionalism indicates that school personnel are set apart from those in the community, and democratic leadership cannot be achieved within such a framework. If collaborative enquiry is sought for the solution of school problems, there needs to be a rethinking of the bureaucratic control held by those in schools.

This means a constant critique of the power structures and the injustices not only apparent in society but also in the school. This would be leadership as emancipatory praxis.

Leadership as a Feminist Action

Emancipatory praxis, although not exclusive to, is an essential basis of leadership as a feminist action. It involves a "propensity for critique which is constantly entertaining the possibility that things could be otherwise" (Grundy, 1993, p. 171). These are leaders who experience agency and promote feelings of agency in those with whom they work.

Feminist leaders will view their leadership practice as inclusive processes (Regan, 1990). Feminist leadership is participative and democratic with all members of the school community being involved in the decision making processes. It is non-hierarchical leadership and aims to be transformative rather than to reproduce the status quo. This type of leadership constantly critiques the social situation for inequities and injustices and works to alleviate these. "Emancipatory practice involves taking action to bring about improved social justice and equity for both the teaching staff and the students" (Strachan, 1994, p. 7). The hierarchical bureaucracy of schools, and the societal expectation of such, can be inimical to feminist action occurring.

In sum, all of the leadership theories of agency are educative rather than managerial. They all require leaders to be involved in critical reflection on values, morals, beliefs and philosophies in the social, political and educational world. They do not hold that the principal is the key, or only, player in the leadership action. But they do require principals who are inclusive, participatory and emancipatory. These types of leaders perhaps could be developed through communities of researchers within emancipatory action research programmes (Carr & Kemmis, 1986).

Principals need to be involved in professional development programmes which help them to become critically reflective about their practice within the wider socio-political context. Principals need to become politicised (Alcorn, 1993). Careful consideration and reflection prior to administrative action becomes the hallmark of educational leadership responsibility (Hodgkinson, 1983). With this in mind, I reviewed the professional development literature which placed the leader in such a praxis situation with the primary emphasis on educative leadership and critical reflection.

The social and political context of school leadership in New Zealand influenced the following review of the literature on professional development. Leadership that entails an ethical response to power relations and oppression of some groups, requires principals to act at the socio-political level in their schools. They need to be able to be attentive to the pressures that are acting upon them, and the effect of their actions on students and the wider society, and work to forge a democratic community. Primary school leadership needs to be more carefully researched and rethought. Southworth's study found that the principals were "individually caught up in the managerial 'web' of ideas because they had never been offered a substantial opportunity to critically reflect upon their own assumptions about leadership" (Southworth, 1993, p. 83). It is imperative that opportunities are made for individuals to review how they are leading their school.

This then, would need to be the starting point in the professional development of educative leaders—substantial opportunities to reflect on their own leadership. Educational settings, more than ever before, need inclusive, reflective, educative leaders. They need leaders who will critique national and local policy and practice and reflect on their own leadership in the light of this critique. These leaders would be transformative by intent, and would feel a responsibility to correct social injustices. Through professional development programmes school leaders may even begin "to contemplate changing the way they lead" (Southworth, 1993, p. 85).

What type of professional development would best lead principals to a position where they were able to achieve the leadership described in the section above and critically reflect about their own assumptions about leadership? Theories of educative leadership

cannot be reduced to skills to be learned in a training situation. They involve unique school cultures and complex interactions with people (Lee, 1993).

The next section of this chapter begins with a definition of professional development and then outlines the literature on the change process and professional development, including a review of the literature on action research as a change process in schools as these two bodies of knowledge have had the greatest influence on the developing research model in this study.

CHANGE AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DEFINITION

Professional development infers new learning has taken place. Taken literally, it is to mean the development of the profession. If it is accepted that knowledge is socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Goffman, 1959; Gouldner, 1970) and if it is further accepted that "all learning is relearning" (Kolb, 1984, p. 28) then professional development can be defined as "the sum total of formal and informal learning experiences throughout one's career from preservice teacher education to retirement" (Fullan, 1991, p. 326).

AN OVERVIEW

This section of the chapter explores the research and literature on professional development for those in education. Decisions had to be made about which research and literature to review and present here. The focus has been kept on those professional development processes for educational practitioners which seek to achieve praxis, where informed committed actions "will be situated within a socially critical framework" (Grundy, 1993, p. 171), as an end result. With this in mind, I have reviewed that professional development literature which has offered most direction for the present study. The theoretical concept underpinning the methodology and the literature on professional development—praxis—will be discussed in Chapter Three.

There are four main themes recurring in the research and literature on professional development. I have utilised these themes as a framework in the following discussion. They are: 1) the importance of concrete experiences; 2) the need for reflection and observation on practice; 3) the opportunity to conceptualize in the abstract with the input of new ideas and perspectives, and 4) the need to experiment with the new concepts and ideas. These relate closely to the four cornerstones of Kolb's (1984) learning theory. He

stated that new learning was most likely when a participant moved through these four phases of the model. Each of these themes will be discussed in turn.

Attention will then turn to the factors which influence the learning process. The research literature also highlights several elements which influence the learning process such as: 1) the need for initiation and participation within the process; 2) the continuing support and pressure required within the ongoing process of professional growth; 3) the importance of change in behaviour and beliefs, and 4) ownership of the change process (Fullan, 1991). These will be discussed in this section of the review of literature.

Finally, an argument is put forward for school-based development which looks at establishing a culture of a learning community. The process of collaborative action research is reviewed as a method for establishing such a learning culture in schools.

UNDERLYING BELIEFS ABOUT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Several beliefs or predispositions underlie this review of the literature: 1) that principals are teachers by preparation; 2) that professional development should be a lifelong process, and 3) that people who are influential in education should have as their main priority a focus on educative leadership.

The first belief: that "principals are by preparation teachers" (Macpherson, 1982, p. 3) was important to the study of the literature on professional development particularly in New Zealand, at the time of this research, as the teaching diploma (a three year undergraduate qualification) was the only requisite that a teacher needed to be eligible to apply for school leadership positions. The research and literature for teachers' professional development and principals' professional development has, then, been presented as one body of knowledge. Although principals and teachers may have different development needs and foci, the same process of change is inherent in the professional development of both groups.

This, then, leads to the second belief: that the professional development of teachers should be a lifelong process. Although needs may be different at different stages in one's career, there will be a continuing need for "induction, renewal and redirection" (Burke, 1987, p. viii) within professional development processes. There will always be new expectations and roles which place challenges for new learning and, for these, induction-type processes will be necessary. There will also be a need to build on previous strengths and to branch out into new areas for development which should lead to renewal and then redirection of energies. "This is dependent upon change and change is an essential component of development" (Burke, 1987, p. x).

The third belief, that all teachers are influential, particularly school principals, and should have as their primary focus educative leadership, has been discussed in the first part of this chapter.

This section looks at the research literature which relates to professional development for better learning in schools. This is professional development which should lead to praxis which is the basis for educative leadership.

The key question here, then, is how do we facilitate the development of educative leaders? Work experience itself has great value in professional development. The transformation of their concrete, daily experiences can become new learning (Kolb, 1984). Professional development begins when the individual makes the most of an experience by considering it carefully and listening to feedback from others, and then combines his or her information with outside information to develop new principles and concepts and theories to use on the job. When the individual experiments reflexively with these new theories, new learning is likely to have taken place. Each of these aspects of the cycle of learning will now be discussed in relation to the research literature which supports it.

1) The Importance of Concrete Experiences

These refer to the daily tasks, roles and activities in which practitioners are involved in their institutions.

There is much literature that stresses the importance of experiential learning; that is, learning activities that are based on the specific work experiences of the participants (see Baird, 1991; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Pearson & Smith, 1985; Stallings, 1989). This type of learning is more likely to enhance intellectual independence and self-direction in the professional development process. Self-directed learning is "a form of study in which learners have primary responsibility for planning, carrying out, and evaluating their own learning experiences...and is the way most adults, including professional educators, go about acquiring new ideas, skills, and attitudes" (Caffarella, 1993, p. 30). Boydell (1985) agreed that adult learning should be a form of self-development which is to say, self-directed. He said it involved "personal change; new abilities, different outlooks, and new feelings" (p. 12) and he believed that it is each and every educators' personal responsibility to continue learning throughout their career.

Drawing on specific concrete experiences means also that the learners' prior experiences help with the construction of new meaning (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985). This then implies that professional development needs to be participatory where people are involved in their learning *by doing* and are therefore actively engaged in their

learning processes rather than sitting passively at a conference or a workshop listening to new knowledge and concepts being propounded. When people are actively engaged in their learning, it is experiential learning. They are interacting with their experiences. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991, p. 85) believed that this interaction with experience is the "foundation of new learning." They stated that experience, although an important teacher, in itself was not enough. Educational practitioners need more than just experiences to develop professionally. Many of their actions are subconscious and based on habit. Often they are unaware of the values and beliefs that influence the decisions that they make. Boud, et al, (1985) talk about the need for a processing stage which is the linking of the experience with reflection on that experience. The learners need to stop experiencing and critically reflect upon the actions that they have taken.

2) Reflective Observation

This stage involves acquiring different perspectives through reflection on observed behaviours.

Reflection and observation in and on action are common features of many models for change and teacher development (for example, Kemmis, 1985; Schön, 1987; Sergiovanni, 1991; Smyth, 1988; Stallings, 1989). Reflection is a political act because it is linked to our values and beliefs (Kemmis, 1985). When we become involved in critical reflection we begin to have our values and beliefs challenged and this should lead to a critique of dominant discourses and ideologies. Unless people become aware of the values and beliefs that influence the decisions that they make, they will be unlikely to change any of their behaviours (Kemmis, 1985). This would therefore be an important aspect of any professional development programme.

Conversely, Guskey (1986), in referring to management training, considered that attitudes of educators change *after* behavioural change, not before it. It is these attitudes, the values and the beliefs of those in education, which influence the decisions and actions that they take and Guskey (1986) believed that the new experiences would help them change their attitudes. These two theorists are too absolute. Reflection on previous actions often helps to bring learners to a state of openness in which they are prepared to try out new strategies and behaviours. There are times when people's attitudes and values need to be challenged before they will be conducive to changing the ways they act, and there are other times when new experiences will initiate a change of values and beliefs, and therefore future actions.

Candy, Harri-Augstein and Thomas (1985), researchers at the Centre for the Study of Human Learning at Brunel University, began in 1968 to develop a model of "learning to

learn" using a range of approaches which helped people to become reflective, self-organised learners. They said that to encourage reflection learners needed to be able to relive their experiences through careful prompting and questioning. "Once they have brought to a level of conscious awareness the strategies and values which were previously implicit, they are in a position to modify them and then to try them out again in another situation" (Candy, Harri-Augstein & Thomas, 1985, p. 115). Their work demonstrated that as people reflect upon their performance they open themselves up to the possibility of change. They found too, that this process of reflective observation often required the involvement of other people.

Many other writers stated that reflection and observation on practice are often made easier by the involvement of other people (for example, Argyris, 1976; Boydell, 1985; Heron, 1985; Mangierri & McWilliams, 1981) and this then meant that double-loop learning could take place which was paramount to professional development occurring (Argyris, 1976). Double-loop learning only happens when learners invite other people to confront their own views. When people are asked about what they would do in a certain situation, the answers they give are their espoused theories of action which influence their theories-in-use. Espoused theories and theories-in-use are not always the same and if people are not aware of the discrepancy or gap between their theories-in-action and their espoused theories they will not be open to new learning. Therefore, the only way these theories-in-use can be discovered, according to Argyris (1976), is through the observation of one's behaviour by others.

The review of the literature revealed many models of professional development which involve the observation of teachers' behaviours by others. Three such models are supervision (for example, Goldhammer, 1969; Smyth, 1988), coaching (for example, Joyce & Showers, 1982) and peer-assisted leadership development (for example, Barnett, 1990) and are more fully critiqued in a later subsection of this chapter as they were most influential in the developing model in this research. Practitioners involved in these models of professional development learn new ways of working with each other. Principals can learn how to give descriptive accounts of colleagues' practice rather than prescriptive accounts and this is not something that they always find easy as revealed by one principal in research by Kottkamp (1990, p. 202). He said:

> It is tough to learn to be a mirror for someone else, when we are so used to being the authority and the one with answers...but it is central to establishing the kind of caring, collaborative, open, trusting, participatory setting...essential to nourishing reflective practice.

There is also a need for quality evaluative feedback about that practice after the observation and description of behaviours has taken place. This is where different

perspectives are gained within reflective observation. These different perspectives then challenge the practitioner's own perspectives or ways of knowing. Joyce and Showers (1980) found in their research that if consistent feedback was provided many learners would then transfer their new skills and knowledge into their future behaviours. This feedback is the basis of effective appraisal systems.

Hallinger and Murphy (1987) considered that schools should use appraisal methods, not only to serve accountability purposes, but also to assist principals in their own professional development. They stated that self-development can occur following measurement of behaviours which indicate levels of instructional leadership.

Sergiovanni (1977) spoke of intervention by someone else in the learning process where "the evaluator is primarily interested in increasing understanding, in stimulating thought, and extending the experience of the teacher being evaluated" (p. 604). This denotes a type of commitment to the improvement of a colleague's practice but infers that the process of evaluation has not been initiated by learners themselves. This could make a vast difference as to how open learners will be to new ideas and challenges. If collaboration is mutual and learners are working together towards the same goals, the result should be self-improvement of both learners (Bryant & Haack, 1977). In certain parts of the United States of America, Leadership Assessment and Training centres have been established. Walker (1989) described a five-day leadership development programme in which the main component is feedback by peers. Two of the main purposes of the programme are to identify, practise and improve leadership skills and to increase the self-awareness of the participants. The greatest emphasis is on collegial exchange and the resulting evaluative feedback. These are all simulated workshop situations and the amount of transfer to on-the-job applications is debatable. The evaluative feedback given in such settings, which lack the building of trust and commitment between colleagues, could be devastatingly harsh for some principals. It is also challengeable as to how open to sharing real concerns these principals would be and would be affected by the political environment in education at the time.

However, collegial exchange is a very important aspect of new learning. Lack of fully developed collegiality and confidentiality, and whether employers have access to the evaluative feedback would all influence the learning process.

This collegial exchange can be achieved by working either in pairs or in group situations. Wideen (1992) found that "by generating 'focused professional dialogue', both paired and group collaboration can stimulate an individual's reflection more than would usually be the case when the person works alone" (p. 110). Although reflection may be thought of as a private, internal activity, which needs peace and quietness to occur, Knights (1985) believed that it was a "two-way process [and that] without an appropriate

'reflector' it cannot occur at all...reflection is most profound when it is done aloud with the aware attention of another person" (p. 85). Knights talked about co-counselling where both people have received training in the skills to counsel each other. The participants used active listening skills to place all their attention at the disposal of their partner while they reflected aloud about their practice. This study highlighted the importance of the school leaders acquiring the necessary skills to be able to work effectively collegially. Leadership counselling on a regular basis could have much merit in a tumultuous educational environment where school leaders were feeling effectively isolated from their peers and colleagues.

In the work of the Far West Laboratory in San Francisco in the early 1980s, the researchers found that their regular visits to the schools became a form of professional development for the school leaders. The researchers found that they were fulfilling roles of confidant, interviewer, consultant, consultant, discussant and researcher at the same time (Barnett, 1985). Their visits to the schools gave the school leaders the opportunity to not only reflect on their current daily concerns but also to develop action plans for future developments. Utilising aspects of this research model in a model for school principals' professional development, Lee (1991) found that the process of principals observing and interviewing each other about their daily work served as a stimulus for their professional growth. Others working in this field have also found that principals and teachers interviewing and questioning each other about their work increases the amount of reflection on practice (for example, Barnett, 1987, 1990; Blom, Kruger & Van Roozendaal, 1992; Gitlin & Smyth, 1989). They all found that good reflective questioning does not result in a sharing of ignorance and reinforcement of one another's ideologies, but that it raises more questions about the participants' practices to which they will then want to seek answers. Often these reflective interviewing sessions took place in workshop settings under the guidance of the researcher. Sometimes the interview occurred a considerable length of time after the experience, upon which they were being questioned, had taken place. Would there be more effect if the reflection followed as closely to the incident as possible and took place in the school setting? Are school practitioners able to formalise their interactions with each other to become critically reflective in the field or is there always the need for the outside facilitator to initiate these types of interactions? These questions would hopefully be answered in the present study.

What begins to occur as observation and reflection take place, and evaluative feedback and outside perspectives are given on practice, is the development of new concepts and theories of practice.

3) Abstract Conceptualization

This is the phase where practitioners decide on the meanings of new concepts and formulate new strategies and actions.

Linking theory and practice is important as the participants begin to formulate new concepts about their practice. Critical reflection should begin to take place when the learner is in this phase. When learners can free themselves from their taken-for-granted ways of viewing the world they may able to start "seriously entertaining and evaluating alternative possibilities" (Berlak & Berlak, 1987, p. 169). This process is abstract conceptualization in which learners can create a type of psychological distancing from the issues under reflection. The collaboration with others assists them in the deconstruction of the dominant, prevalent discourses and the effect they are having on their role (Foucault, 1977). This leads them to an awareness that others in their role are experiencing the same difficulties and dilemmas. This then helps them to deal with the problems rather than to deal with the lack of confidence in their own ability that they were experiencing before the psychological distancing and the collaboration assisted them to find solutions to shared problems (Berlak & Berlak, 1983).

The research literature indicates that abstract conceptualization can occur in many different ways: for example, through writing and/or conceptual mapping; through the use of film and/or videotape; through group problem-solving and oral reflection; through the reading of literature, case studies and research and through role play.

Walker (1985) believed that writing about a concrete experience not only captured it for further reflection, but provided an objectivity and a way of distancing oneself from the initial experience so that it could be more easily dealt with. Writing about the experience can lead to greater reflection taking place and can focus the learner on what actually happened during that experience. Further reflection on the concrete experience in the light of new information and outside perspectives is an important part of abstract conceptualization.

Weick and Bougan (1986) were more explicit about the type of writing they believed helped further reflection to take place. They believed that a person can become a "more sophisticated thinker" by writing down and then studying a previously implicit conceptual map. Unlike other theorists, they believed that reflection in this way did not need the assistance of an outside person. Who initiates the writing of a conceptual map if there is no one else involved in the process? The job conditions of school leaders in New Zealand seem to be inimical to such an event occurring unprompted and unsupported. However, Weick and Bougan (1986) went on to state that once the maps have been written they could be used successfully in a group situation which would then allow those involved to

"diagnose disagreements and manage those disagreements" (p. 130). The conceptual maps become the basis for group problem solving and again outside perspective are involved.

Sergiovanni's (1977) conceptual mapping and abstract conceptualization took on another form. Sergiovanni discussed the analysis of artefacts as a method of feedback. He talked also about the development of teacher portfolios with answers to questions similar to those used to build educational platforms (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1979) and also the viewing of videotapes of teaching sequences. All of these processes should assist in the development of awareness of beliefs and values which influence decision making.

Elstein, Shulman and Sprafka (1978) also used films in their professional development models. They found in their research into the training of second year medical students that there should be two main components in the training model to improve students' skill and effectiveness: that it was important that problem solving exercises which utilised films to simulate prior concrete experiences were used, and that the students received feedback from experienced physicians to check against their own solutions. Is education more problematic than medicine? Are there right and wrong solutions for the ethical dilemmas school leaders face?

Other educational theorists have also taken ideas from the medical profession and developed training programmes for the professional development of those in education. This professional development idea is called problem-based learning (for example, Bridges & Hallinger, 1991) and was developed to increase the relevance of administrator preparation by relating it to problems of practice. La Plant (1986) also utilised such a problem solving support group in his in-service model for principals. In his model a trained facilitator met each month with a group of approximately 10 principals and the collegial support group became a peer-review and resource panel with the main goal of improving principals' professional competencies so that they, then, improved learning programmes within their schools. This model deals with espoused theories only and does not incorporate the double-loop learning of outside perspectives and observation of theories-in-action. Although collegial exchanges would be increased, there would be no challenges or support when back in their own schools to initiate the improvement of learning programmes.

In New Zealand Wadsworth (1990) also utilised the peer group as a "platform for professional action" (p. 41). Within this peer group, reflection on experience and the sharing of ideas within a reflective environment were key features. His model went further than La Plant's in that it also incorporated some school visits and some observation of practice. There were challenges on issues such as evaluation, and an emphasis on the articulation of, and greater understanding of, the school leaders' values and beliefs. Wadsworth firmly believed that unless educational leaders were able to use their own

sound educational values more effectively in conflict situations, they would be faced with continuing dilemmas, inaction or conflict in their dealings with others in the school context. Robinson and Absolum (1990) agreed that any professional development must get "inside people's heads" (p. 87) to their values and assumptions and should not just consist of skills acquisition or professional competencies.

Levine (1989), as well as Murphy and Hallinger (1992), advocated group problem solving for leadership development and further reflection on practice and abstract conceptualisation. In these group processes, different perspectives and challenges to one's own way of thinking and believing were made available.

Alcorn (1985) proposed other methods for principals to become involved in abstract conceptualization. She suggested the study of literature, both fiction and non-fiction, as a method for allowing reflection on issues to occur. She also believed that principals should utilise specific case study research to compare and contrast their own cases. Most interestingly, she spoke of the need for principals to "encounter new experiences in which they are powerless rather than powerful" (p. 10) so that they can fully study the implications of power and their responsibilities towards the use of it. This could be difficult to incorporate in training programmes. A critical reflection on the sociocultural and political influences on schools and education in New Zealand generally could perhaps be as beneficial in the study of the implications of power and its implications. Role reversal situations can also be a good way to experience how different perspectives can be influential. This then acknowledges the context in which principals work. It is a complex environment in which conflict is inevitable through the clash of educational values. Principals need to be able to solve the daily problems that arise and "leadership training must prepare them to consider the conditions under which varying leadership strategies might be applied" (Hallinger & McCary, 1990, p. 103). A broader training agenda which emphasises "the 'everyday' sociocultural dynamics of schools" (Blase, 1987, p. 608) is therefore necessary and should involve such components as problem solving, team building, conflict resolution and interpersonal skill development. Principals need, too, to be comfortable in an environment of ambiguity and conflict.

Silver (1986) developed the use of case records for improving reflective practice of primary and secondary principals. These records described problematic situations, either resolved or still being dealt with. The principals recorded the nature of the problem, their strategies for dealing with it and their evaluation for their actions. These reflections were often starters for further reflection and the case records were used within a group situation to brainstorm a number of alternatives to the same problem. Osterman (1991) has carried on this work at the Silver Center for Reflective Principals at Hofstra University in New York.

The use of journals, written or cassette, has been used to prompt reflection in professional development programmes. These reflections help clarify espoused theories. As Kottkamp (1990, p. 190) stated "talking to yourself on tape makes explicit what might otherwise remain tacit." Two different types of diary were used by Barnett and Brill (1989) in their principal preparation programmes. One was an every day type journal where the participants keep a running record of their daily interactions, and the other was a "critical incident" journal where the participants selected particular events to document in more detail (p. 10). They found that these were important in prompting reflection on practice and could be used by the developers as a vehicle to then provide outside perspectives on the reflections made. These were used in principals' preparation programmes and were linked in some way to assessment for the course. Would this approach be successful where school leaders were asked to keep a journal within their day-to-day work for training purposes which had no assessment requirement attached? Would school leaders share anything of extreme importance in areas for development in a political climate where their job situation could be threatened? Diaries could serve two purposes in the research study; to aid reflection and as a means for gathering more data.

If observation of practice is not possible, contrived situations can also be significant in the learning process. Case studies and role plays are both contrived situations which prompt reflection on practice. They both offer a basis for examining different ways of acting and provide an outlet to observe some theories-in-use to compare with espoused theories. Contrived situations can help to take away the threat that direct observation on practice sometimes brings with it. Role plays and case studies also provide a vehicle for evaluative feedback to be given to members of the group by members of the group. People need descriptive reports of how their actions were experienced by others. These reports are the foundations for reflection. Kottkamp (1990) believed the outsider was very important in the process. Kottkamp used questions to aid reflection, particularly reflection of espoused theories, during the writing of administrative platforms: the values and beliefs which underlie one's philosophy of learning and teaching. Other theorists have developed the use of writing educational platforms (for example, Argyris & Schön, 1974; Barnett & Brill, 1989; Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan & Lee, 1982; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1979). Once espoused theories are written and discussed, observation of practice reveals the degree of discrepancy between espoused theories and theories-in-use and this is where the reflection and abstract conceptualization and potential for change enters into the learning process.

After abstract conceptualization learners may have the readiness to try new experiences. They should feel confident to actively experiment with different concepts and ideas.

4) Active Experimentation

This stage is the trying out of new concepts behaving differently.

This experimentation with new ideas has been based on the learning from reflection on previous experience and the abstract conceptualisation following that reflection. The experimentation becomes the new concrete experience as the learning cycle begins again. This active experimentation is, therefore, not uninformed action but praxis. When the participants are involved in such experiences in which decisions have been made based on prior experience, reflection on that experience and abstract conceptualization, then the reflection that they have been involved in is what Schön (1983) called knowing-in-action. "It is this whole process of reflection-in-action which is central to the "art" by which practitioners sometimes deal with situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflicts" (p. 50). Reflection-in-action is the essence of praxis. Schön (1983) said that this reflection-in-action "consists of on-the-spot surfacing, criticizing, restructuring, and testing of intuitive understandings of experienced phenomena; often it takes the form of a reflective conversation with the situation" (p. 242) and leads to the "knowing-in-action" which is so important in nonlinear conditions within a work context such as that found in schools. Principals who are reflective practitioners can then act with a degree of confidence in new situations as they make informed decisions about their actions.

The change and development process is cyclical and begins anew. It has no end point as neither should professional development. I have discussed in this first section how learning which is based on the reflection and abstract conceptualisation of concrete experiences is conducive to changed practices and behaviours.

The literature on the process of change in adult learning highlights many elements that are prevalent in different models of professional development. Fullan (1991) identified four main elements and these will be discussed in the following section. They are: 1) active initiation and participation within the process; 2) pressure and support to maintain the continuity of the process; 3) changed behaviour and beliefs which are paramount for changed behaviours to become institutionalized; and 4) the over-riding problem of ownership of the change process.

ELEMENTS PREVALENT IN MODELS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1) Initiation and Participation

Often professional development or new learning does not take place because the process of development is never initiated. Reflection and observation of practices seldom

takes place in educational settings and will not necessarily occur even if people are given the time for it. People need "prompting here, probing there, inquiring somewhere else" (Candy, Harri-Augstein & Thomas, 1985, p. 115). The literature highlights several reasons for the lack of initiation and participation of people in professional development which leads to new learning and practices: a) the relative isolation people in educational institutions work in; b) the 'dailiness' or routine-task oriented behaviours of educators; c) the need for others to be also participating in the process for critical reflection to occur, and d) the lack of skills necessary to enable reflective practice to occur.

a) Isolation

Teachers and principals often work in situations of extreme isolation in their schools (Lortie, 1975). The teaching profession is a lonely one when compared with the collegial interactions and a culture of shared experience within other professions such as medicine and law. Lieberman and Miller (1991, p. 95) stated "The neophyte teacher is left with degree in hand, high expectations internalized, a fistful of untried methodologies, and few adults with whom to share, grow and learn. Smyth (1989), in speaking about teachers being in isolation and "deafening silence," advocated that "teachers need ways of beginning a dialogue with one another so as to penetrate the habitual taken-for-grantedness of their classroom practice and developing robust theories about their teaching" (p. 223). There are few opportunities for principals to focus on their leadership and they work with the same degree of isolation, if not more, as that of their teaching colleagues. Those in positions of principalship need the same dialogic interactions to penetrate their habitual leadership practices. Although principals do learn experientially, the learning is dependent on the types of experiences they encounter in their daily practice. They may never experience challenges to their values or beliefs or about the ethical aspects of education if they remain in this state of isolation.

b) Dailiness

Along with the isolation that most educators work in is the fact that educators are often embedded in the "dailiness" of their schools and are seldom able to take the quality time needed for reflection (Griffin, 1987, p. 35). They are caught up in the routines and schedules of habit and do not think critically about their actions. Apple (1986) described the concept of the intensification of teachers' work and the characteristics that he identified could easily be related to the conditions that school leaders in New Zealand were facing at the time of this research. Anne Jones (1987) carried out a survey in the U.S.A. about what principals enjoyed and did not enjoy about their job, and their views on their own further professional development. She found that many principals in her

study had given very little thought to their own needs and had been more concerned about trying to meet the development needs of their teachers. They were concerned about their teachers' professional development more than their own. This also signals a belief that perhaps these principals felt that they had reached the top, or the end of their learning. Jones (1987, p. 113) also found that "many were working at survival level, pleased to get through the 'basic chores' of everyday existence." Hodgkinson (1983) called this "busyness" (p. 127) which he says causes principals to be reactive and non-reflective as there is seemingly no time in the day for critical reflection on their leadership practices or for their own professional development.

Barnett (1989) found in his research in the U.S.A (which led to the development of a peer-assisted leadership model for professional development) that principals seldom interacted with their colleagues on educative leadership matters. Their usual interactions were about "managerial matters such as budgeting, transportation and scheduling" (p. 46). Wadsworth's (1990) study with secondary school leaders in New Zealand also found that professional developers did have to acknowledge this reality of school leaders' daily practice. He found that the school leaders would not confront the educational issues with their colleagues unless he structured the right conditions for it. He brought the school leaders out of their schools into a group workshop situation which had "a focus on reflection on practice, personal refreshment and professional concerns and problems" (p. 107). Wadsworth found that without this outside facilitation the principals would have remained focused on systemic problems and would be reluctant to be critically reflective about their leadership practice. These findings highlighted the importance of including action with the research in this study. In this way there was a need for somebody else (in this research, a university lecturer), as well as the colleague, to be involved in the process of school leaders' professional development.

c) Need for Others

Another of Jones' (1987) key findings was the need to give principals the space and time to think by getting them together for discussions and reflection on the leadership of their schools. She believed that principals needed to be able to reflect upon the running of their schools so that they could make sense of what was happening. She felt that this group discussion time would help them to resolve conflicts, "feel personally more confident, and more able to take on strategic planning and external relations" (p. 113). Professional collaboration is as vital for principals as it is for teachers and when principals get together to discuss their role they experience many benefits (Fielding & Schalock, 1986). In their work with school leaders at Vanderbilt University Hallinger and Greenblatt (1989) found that senior experienced principals, as well as neophyte administrators,

valued the opportunity to share knowledge with colleagues. They believed therefore, that the most important goal in administrator training programmes was "to establish collegial exchange as a norm among the new administrators that will serve them throughout their careers" (Hallinger & Greenblatt, 1989, p. 73). In New Zealand, Alcorn (1985) also called for this collegial exchange. She said principals "must be critical and reflective of their own practice and they need help in beginning on this activity" (p. 11). These findings had an important bearing on the model presented in this report. In a later article Alcorn (1987) described six models for management training: mentoring; formal award bearing courses; intensive residential courses; support groups; principals' centres and school development. She considered that "flexibility and variety of provision [were] important, that genuine autonomy [was] likely to result in greater accountability than central monitoring and control" (p. 43).

Many principals' centres have risen over the past decade which give principals the opportunities for discussion and development. The principals' centre movement signals the belief in "school leaders as learners" (Hallinger & Murphy, 1991, p. 520) and reflects a norm of collegiality among school leaders. The isolation and dailiness that teachers and principals experience can be alleviated to a large extent when they work collaboratively with colleagues on the professional development of their teaching and/or leadership of the school. To be able to work collaboratively with others on their professional development, to observe and assist reflection on practice and to provide quality evaluative feedback, requires many interpersonal skills on the part of the practitioners involved in such exchanges. Attending such group workshops as those held in principals' centres can give the principals the experience of working collaboratively so that they may be able to transfer the skills learnt in such a process back in their own schools. The methods in this research model would involve such workshops for collaborative problem solving and critical reflection.

d) Lack of Skills

School principals do not necessarily have the interpersonal skills to provide quality evaluative feedback to their peers or to reflect critically on their practice in schools. Therefore, an outside facilitator is often required as a staff developer to assist participants to develop the interpersonal skills so that they can successfully take part in these types of professional development activities (Ramsay, et al, 1990). This finding was influential in the research described in this study. Educators have usually not been taught *how* to reflect critically on their practice at any stage of their training. It is difficult to change the habits of educators so that they become reflective practitioners and it cannot be done in a single workshop or by reading a piece of literature about the importance of it. Reflective inquiry

"becomes a habit through use and further reflection on such use" (Houston & Clift, 1990, p. 218). This means that professional development has to be ongoing and developmental over time. Ideally it should start with teacher education programmes. "If the conceptual tools of critical reflection are added to the tool kits of teachers then there may be some possibilities for cultural interruption to occur" (Sparkes, 1991, p. 11). Principals need assistance to develop these tools and then need to participate in peer supervisory sessions to practise these new skills. An outside facilitator can provide this help.

The outside facilitator does not just act as a professional developer but actually acts as an initiator of the whole process of development. Alcorn (1987) spoke of the importance of the initiation of the change process. She believed that if principals are critically reflective practitioners this will assist them to live with the "ambiguities and uncertainties" (p. 10) that must occur when dealing with people. The outside facilitator provides the challenges and conditions necessary for development towards becoming reflective to occur. It was an important component of this research study.

Just as the change process needs to be initiated and the participation encouraged in, as the process of change is developmental over time, there needs to be continuing pressure and support to keep the momentum going.

2) Pressure and Support

Killion and Todnem (1991) stated that because busy people do not engage in reflection they need to be "given some time, some structure, and the expectations to do so" (p. 14). The expectation provides the necessary pressure and the structure and time provides the support. The research literature revealed many ways that continuing pressure and support could be built into practitioners' professional development programmes. This would be an important ingredient in the model developed in this study. Pressure and support can be gained by collaborating with university academics in research and practice, and through peer coaching, supervision or peer-assisted leadership development programmes with their colleagues.

Cuban (1992) believed that a partnership between university academics and practitioners must lead to finding better ways of dealing with the dilemmas and situations faced in schools. But he has grave doubts that such partnerships will ever eventuate. "Whether my dream of communities of scholars and practitioners devoted to the study and improvement of teaching will become more than words, I cannot say" (p. 10). However, some researchers have established very effective communities of scholars and practitioners for professional development purposes (for example, Bailey, 1987; Wadsworth, 1993).

Bailey (1987) set up study groups for the purpose of building and then supporting such collaborative communities. He considered that even in the absence of any formal training, experiential learning through systematic reflection upon their experience would form the basis of managerial change but he felt that "principals need assistance to improve and develop the skills of working together on issues of common concern, to learn the processes of reflective practice to ensure that specific issues are taken up properly and professionally" (p. 61). His premise was that an outside facilitator, such as a university academic, could provide this assistance to groups of principals and hence, provide the necessary pressure and support.

There are many roles such an outside facilitator can take on in this group situation. Everard and Morris (1985, p. 265) list many such roles which are important in the facilitation of the change process. Some of the more influential ones are: pace-maker; resource investigator; catalyst/assumption challenger; discussion leader and process and learning facilitator.

In a study group at the University of Waikato, in Hamilton, New Zealand, Wadsworth (1993) found that the principals valued the role he played in "the creation and sustaining of an 'action research community' which had evolved from the relationship between the researcher and the university on the one hand, and the practitioners on the other." He found that both of the parties to the group "appreciated each other's reciprocal tasks and values" (p. 234). They gave each other both pressure and support. This support however was not taken to any large degree back to the school site.

Other New Zealand writers have argued against the value of traditional release courses where new principals are withdrawn from their schools and introduced to skills and techniques that could help them (Stewart & Prebble, 1985). Without adequate support back on the job these writers considered much of this training wasted and suggest that school development exercises which were site based are of greater value. They suggested, however, that school development may be difficult to pursue without training and the necessary skills and without the support of a consultant or catalyst. Again, Stewart and Prebble (1985) said that these necessities can be provided by partnerships with academics studying in the field of leadership and school development in nearby universities .

Sometimes these study groups result in action research collaborations between academic or outside facilitator and practitioner. The power of action research in the change process for professional development is fully reviewed in the methodology chapter and also in the final subsection of this chapter, but it is suffice to say here, within the discussion of the need for pressure and support, that action research can provide both of these ingredients, as well as alleviate the isolation felt by teachers and principals (Wadsworth, 1990). The collegial relationship between an outside facilitator and another

practitioner has been described as that of a critical friend (Costa and Kallick, 1993; Somekh, 1993). Such partnerships mean that the participants are able to regulate each other's involvement in the action research. The concept of critical friend infers pressure and support are key ingredients needed in this professional relationship.

Pressure and support can also be given through increased and improved professional interactions with colleagues. There has been a lot of research on teachers working in a one-to-one situation on aspects of their professional development. Sometimes these one-to-one situations are hierarchical models of supervision (for example, Goldhammer, 1969) or mentoring (for example, Stott & Walker, 1992); sometimes they are models based on a more equal partnership such as clinical supervision (for example, Smyth, 1984) or coaching (for example, Joyce & Showers, 1988) and peer-assisted leadership (for example, Barnett, 1990; Barnett & Mueller, 1989).

a) Supervision

Goldhammer (1969) was one of the first proponents of the supervision model for professional development of teachers and he stated "we require a supervision that is basically teacher-initiated and consistent with independent, self-sufficient action" (p. 368). Goldhammer then talked about the need to "administer" this type of training in the school setting (p. 369). His discourse is however, contradictory and political. He saw supervision as a hierarchical model and expected teachers to want to be counselled and disciplined on their practice by someone who viewed themselves as superior. Few educators would actively seek this hierarchical, supervisory type of relationship especially if it then impinged on their job security and a model such as this would have been infinitely untenable to school leaders in New Zealand at the time of this research. As Ellis, Smith and Abbott (1979, p. 426) stated "teachers are more receptive to supervision when they have helped to determine its purposes and procedures." They believed that the supervision should not be for evaluation and that the problems worked on should be "the teacher's problems as he/she perceives them" (p. 426). This concept is more fully covered in the section on ownership of the change process, later in this chapter, and was influential in the development of the model in this research.

Acheson and Gall (1992) described a less hierarchical type of supervision although it still sounds as though the supervisors cannot be the teachers themselves. They believed it should be a "dynamic process of give-and-take in which supervisors and teachers are colleagues in search of mutual educational understanding" (p. 12). This type of arrangement denotes mutual benefits and a degree of objectivity to the problems being studied and worked upon to gain better learning conditions for children in schools. This

model still seemed to depict a supervisor and a teacher in search of answers to educational problems that the teacher was experiencing.

More discussion on reciprocity in the supervision relationship comes through in Smyth's (1984) writing where he stated there should be a mutual commitment to improving and examining each other's teaching and working closely with each other with this purpose in mind. If there is a power control in this relationship at all, Smyth said there must be "an acknowledgment of the autonomy of the teacher...In all respects, control remains where it belongs—in the hands of the individual teacher" (p. 14). Smyth took the supervisory model one step further than Goldhammer and placed it in the hands of teachers and called it clinical supervision.

b) Clinical Supervision

Smyth (1984) claimed that often the theory of clinical supervision was quite different to what the practitioners actually experienced. Smyth believed that because the practitioners brought to the situations their own needs, skills and understandings, each and every case was different in the modification and development of new theories. In his research he found that "each of the case studies reflects the joys, frustrations, and problems of attempting to incorporate clinical supervision into practice (p. 1). Smyth stated that the researcher of clinical supervision is also the teacher of clinical supervision—that it is a constant ongoing process of support and pressure being given to the participants to lead them towards critical reflection on their practice. In this then, he proposes that there are links between practitioners involved in clinical supervision and the academic researchers who are researching and teaching the process and I could see how being involved in teaching principals how to work together in a clinical supervision model, would mean that I of necessity would become a teacher of that process.

Murray McCoombe, a participant in Smyth's (1984) research, reflected on supervision from the inside perspective. He has attempted to give the practitioner's point of view in case studies on supervision. None of the three case studies described appeared to relate to an equal partnership as Smyth espoused they should. The theory of supervision was not necessarily what was actually happening as Smyth surmised. The participants described them as mentor-mentee relationships and there were indications that there were only gains to be had for the mentee. McCoombe points out some weaknesses that come up when encouraging people to take part in supervision-type programmes. One of the weaknesses is that an equal partnership such as this assumes voluntary participation and the people themselves taking the initiative for establishing and continuing with the clinical supervision. It raises the dilemma of what to do when a teacher requires supervision but does not request it. Perhaps this is when the disciplinary procedures for ineffective

teachers move into action, not supervision. The other major problem they found was the amount of time needed to effectively carry out clinical supervision. Another area causing difficulty was when the teachers involved in clinical supervision were not well-versed in the necessary skills (Smyth, 1984). Smyth talked about experienced teachers being used as supervisors which still indicates a mentor-mentee relationship which is why the participants would have felt it was an unequal relationship. These dilemmas and difficulties might well be applicable to the model of professional development being developing in this present study.

Once again the importance of the skills of data collection, skill development and counselling have been highlighted as a necessary component of any model of professional development that utilises clinical supervision techniques. Other theorists have put forward collegial, models for the supervision of practice.

c) Coaching

Joyce and Showers (1982) called teachers working together in a mutually beneficial relationship, coaching and believe coaching reduces isolation as it increases support. These collegial partnerships help lessen what Lortie (1975, p. 134) called "the endemic uncertainties of teaching." The uncertainty and isolation from colleagues can often lead to teachers experiencing a lack of confidence in their abilities.

This lack of confidence can also lead to disillusionment. Sandell and Sullivan (1992) analysed the causes of disillusionment in the careers of teachers and found that good supervision can combat disillusionment as, depending on the teachers' stages of career, the causes and effects of disillusionment could be quite different.

Although Raney and Robbins (1989) described a coaching programme that appeared hierarchical as it was set up for new teachers by experienced teachers, their findings indicate that soon this became a norm throughout the school and that there were gains to be made for all involved, not just the new teachers. This is how they described the changed culture. They said:

> Feelings of isolation and passivity have given way to an environment of collaboration and professional growth. In short, the norm has changed from "What others do is not my business" to "What we do here at school is everybody's business, and business is booming."
>
> (Raney & Robbins, 1989, p. 38)

Bass (1990) agreed that these types of learning communities where principals and teachers can be assisted to reflect on their practice are vital to growth and development. Dean (1991) wrote about the importance of being able to shadow a senior colleague as a way of learning about that job and for induction purposes. He described the value of head

teachers from different schools visiting each other and seeing how someone else carried out the same job. "The opportunity to visit other schools provides teachers with a chance to see new ideas and consider their own ways of working in comparison with those of others" (p. 25). He was describing the power of learning vicariously from the observation of others in similar positions. His study was in some ways similar to peer-assisted leadership (Barnett, 1990) as he also incorporated questioning techniques with the observation of behaviours in the learning situation.

d) Peer-Assisted Leadership

Peer-assisted leadership (PAL) programmes (Barnett, 1990) which originated in the Far West Laboratory in San Francisco have proven to have had long lasting effects on the principals who were participants. Further research on previous PAL participants revealed that the programme had continued to influence their administrative actions, perspectives of their roles as school leaders, and collegial networking and support, for up to three years after their involvement in the leadership development programme (Lee, 1991). However, they found that the process of peer-assisted learning between principals does take time to work. Principals may pass through a stage of loss of confidence and "to reduce their fears and/or to overcome old habits, administrators need to experience several iterations or phases of the processes involved in peer observation" (Barnett, 1990, p. 6). In such peer-assisted leadership development, the principals act as consultants to each other. Macpherson (1982) in Australia and Wadsworth (1990) in New Zealand have also researched professional development models which used principals as consultants to each other. Wadsworth (1990) described the concept of using principals as consultants as a pot of gold that remained undiscovered. Principals understand the role and context that their colleagues are working in, and because of this can be valuable as consultants in the learning process. These findings were kept in mind when searching for the basic principles of a model of professional development for school principals.

There are many gains when educators begin to work collaboratively in more professional ways such as described in the previous review of research. "Professional recognition, professional involvement, and professional influence become rewards that keep teachers career-oriented and help them establish a high sense of efficacy" (Grimmett & Crehan, 1992, p. 57). This efficacy is professional accountability. Chrisco (1989) described Brattleboro's (USA) peer assistance programme and said that it made them aware of another type of "professional accountability...the kind that recognises our responsibility for helping each other grow and improve. We can help each other challenge our own limits, and we can challenge the isolation that imposes artificial limits"

(Chrisco, 1989, p. 32). In helping people to grow and improve beyond these limits, ultimately there have to be changes in behaviour and belief.

3) Changes in Behaviour and Belief

Changes in behaviour often follow an examination of values and beliefs, and professional development programmes can assist participants to become more aware of their values, beliefs and behaviour. Blase (1987) stressed the need for a broader training agenda for principals; one that emphasised those competencies directly affecting teachers' performance and the "everyday" sociocultural dynamics of schools. He believed that "training in communication, conflict management, problem solving, team development and interpersonal and group dynamics" would also be helpful and continued on to state that professional development experiences should be designed "to increase self-awareness of an individual's values, beliefs, and behaviour" (p. 608).

Barnett, Caffarella, Daresh, King, Nicholson and Whitaker (1992) developed a programme which was grounded in the belief that "unless leaders develop moral and ethical consciousness, they will find it difficult to make decisions and will lose a sense of purpose" (p. 73). This sense of purpose is so necessary to prioritising an emphasis on educative leadership. One of their five core learning experiences was understanding self: developing a personal vision for educational leadership. This enabled students to "develop an appreciation of their fundamental values and attitudes" (p. 73) and how they related to all of the issues in their school.

Nias (1989) found that behaviour in primary schools was governed by norms which had been greatly influenced by principals' beliefs and values. This is another reason why it was important that the belief and values systems of principals are studied, uncovered, articulated and understood, in a leadership development programme.

4) Ownership

Stallings (1989) found that teachers were more likely to own change and utilise new ideas when "they become aware of a need for improvement through their analysis of their own observation profile" (p. 3) and from observing in others' classroom and trying out ideas and evaluating the effects. She believed that teachers would then set their own professional development goals to work on. Principals who set their own professional development goals appear more intellectually independent than those who rely on others to do so. This necessitated an approach which would lead school principals to be able to identify their own professional development needs and programmes. Weindling (1989)

reiterated this. He also stated that teachers have to be actively involved in the learning experiences before they will see a necessity to change their current practice.

To summarise this section, four key aspects of professional development programmes have been discussed. These four things—initiation and participation, pressure and support, changes in beliefs and values, and ownership of change—can all be achieved from school based teacher development. This can successfully be carried out when school leaders build a school culture of a community of learners.

The review of literature and discussion now leads on to the establishment of cultures that are believed to be most conducive to professional leadership development. Finally, action research is reviewed as one method of school based professional development.

SCHOOL-BASED TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Community of Learners

Barth (1991) has always been a great proponent of building communities of learners. He worked to do this with groups of school leaders in the Principals' Center at Harvard University, and he sent these school leaders back to their schools with the mission to build learning communities there. He believed that all learning, that of students, teachers and principals, should be interlinked and should take place in the same context. He believed that:

> In a community of learners, adults and children learn simultaneously and in the same place to think critically and analytically and to solve problems that are important to them. In a community of learners, learning is endemic and mutually visible.
>
> (p. 42)

Therefore, rather than taking place on an island in some other sea, professional development takes place in context where there is the support and pressure of other colleagues to carry the process through. Sparkes (1993) in a later conversation with Barth hears Barth refer again to the powerful role models principals make when they themselves are seen as learners. He said "energy can be unlocked through learning. Again, principals release this energy by becoming sustained, visible learners themselves" (p. 19). Barth goes on to talk about the necessity for principals to "take risks" rather than becoming "at-risk" and that schools can provide many "growth producing opportunities" (p. 20). Barth then continued on to talk about some impediments that have interfered with principals becoming serious learners and this could have importance in the present study. He said that some principals have the view "that it is immoral to take the money out of the mouths

of babes and use it for principals' own development." Others feel that "the principal who doesn't know how to do something, who is learning, is thereby flawed" (Sparkes, 1993, p. 18). He believed that some principals "past experiences have been so dreadful that few have wanted more" and it "creates more work and principals feel they already have too much" (Sparkes, 1993, p. 20). For these reasons we need to be looking for new ways of promoting leadership development. He stressed that we should be looking at ways to promote leadership development within the school and school day. He stated:

> Peer visits between principals is one way to promote leadership—you visit my building for a day and I'll visit yours for a day. I'll then reflect back to you and your faculty what I see going on and some questions I have. You do the same for my building. There's a lot of risk and time involved, but I've seen these visits have enormous effect.
>
> (Sparkes, 1993, pp. 20, 21)

These words echoed with the same ideas as the principal in earlier research (Robertson, 1991) who stated "I'd like to buddy with someone." Carmichael (1982) was the first visiting practitioner to Harvard Principals' Center when Roland Barth was setting it up. She talked about the importance of such centres and the importance of principals being learners. "The irony is that we don't model change for those from whom we demand it, all the while wondering why our demands aren't met (Carmichael, 1982, p. 58). Barnett, Caffarella, Daresh, King, Nicholson and Whitaker (1992) also believed that preparation programmes for administrators should get principals involved in collaboration and collegiality and then they may be more likely to model these concepts back in their own schools. Schools have been described as "loosely-coupled" (Weick, 1985) and Fielding and Schalock (1986) believed that "one expression of loose coupling is that staff development is typically disconnected from any overall agenda for program and school improvement" (p. 11). In schools which are learning communities, this is not the case. Leadership is a key factor in school development (Duignan, 1986; Prebble & Stewart, 1984; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Sergiovanni, 1991; Southworth, 1990).

Jonasson (1993) also believed in the power of learning communities and felt this new perspective in regard to schooling and development was important in the global world. He believed "each school must become a community of learners and a community of leaders where everyone is a learner, everyone is a teacher and everyone is a leader" (p. 21). He also believed there should be strong links between "professional development, supervision, and student learning" (p. 21). Then as Bolman and Deal (1993, p. 25) stated "The organization becomes a way of life rather than merely a place of work." Joyce (1990) also expounded the importance of culture in the learning and professional development process. Wideen (1992) agreed that we have passed beyond the "in-

serviced" days when teachers "were seen as individuals without a context...we now hear that in good schools, teachers talk to other teachers about instructional matters" (p. 124).

Hargreaves, Hopkins and Leask (1991) also averred that the whole school staff should be involved in the development process and describe such a process as development planning. This process encourages teachers to ask four basic questions: "Where is the school now? What changes do we need to make? How shall we manage these changes over time? How shall we know whether our management of change has been successful?" (p. 3). It denotes a collaborative effort and a shared culture of learning and the importance of the continuing examination of learning processes. Shanker (1990) also stated that this continuous examination is integral to the improvement of practice and he believed that "school structures that support this are the key" (p. 98). He reiterated what so many others have also said: that the collaboration and collegial interactions between teachers help them to generate the type of practitioner knowledge so necessary for improved learning to take place. These same principles must also apply to school principals.

Lee (1993) believed, as Barth (1991) did, that the concept of a community of learners can best be developed by bringing school leaders together into that situation first. They can then act as role models to the teachers they work with, and they have a sense of the importance of community—a concrete experience of it—which they can then reflect on and transfer to their own school setting. Lee (1993) stated that when "professional developers bring into administrator professional development programs the kinds of experiences, processes and interactions that characterise a community of learners" (p. 5) they set the scene and create opportunities for principals to experience and then go back and develop their schools in this new image.

Leadership development that takes place in the context of the school where the leadership actions are taking place is therefore also important. Hannay and Bissegger (1993) proposed school based transformational leadership as the norm. Hallinger, Leithwood and Murphy (1993) believed that because of "the social construction of understanding and the critical importance of the setting in shaping practice" (p. x) there needed to be a clear understanding of the leadership context that the process of change and development is taking place in. New Zealand researchers also agreed that a significant component of any training provision for school leaders should be committed to implementing school based approaches (Robinson & Absolum, 1990).

Olivero (1982) said that training needs to be continuous and holistic to have a real impact on principals' behaviours in the workplace and that it should not be just a one-off but at least a two to three year programme of professional development.

Utilising coaching and clinical supervision is a way of developing learning communities in schools. Supervision has the potential for "catapulting schools into a new set of standards for excellence" (Snyder, 1981, p. 524). Teaching, then, becomes more than a job—teachers are committed to better learning and teaching as part of their developing professionalism. As Smyth (1984, p. 14) said "viewing the continuing professional development of teachers in this job-embedded way clearly necessitates a rethinking of what it means to act and be treated professionally as a teacher."

Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) talked about the importance of paying attention to the whole person when thinking about professional development programmes. They believed that teachers are the product of their skills, their backgrounds and biographies. Important to continuing growth in their career and fulfilment in their job are "their hopes and dreams, their opportunities and aspirations" and they described the influence and importance of their professional colleagues in the learning process. They could be "either as supportive communities who work together in pursuit of common goals and continuous improvement, or as individuals working in isolation, with the insecurities that sometimes brings" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992, p. ix).

Teachers working together in supportive communities towards shared goals is perhaps easier to espouse than achieve, when so much of a school's environment and teachers' workplace can prevent this occurring. However, action research is one process that could be used successfully to build supportive, learning communities within a school.

ACTION RESEARCH FOR SCHOOL AND TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Many theorists and researchers propound action research as a powerful means of building learning communities and influencing practice (for example, Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988; Lomax, 1989; Newton & Tarrant, 1992; Oliver, 1980; Wadsworth, 1990). One of the major benefits of action research is that the practitioners pose the questions and also search for and try out their own solutions (Oliver, 1980). This is development of the professional body of knowledge and the development of the professionals. In today's rapidly changing educational climate it is not enough any more for other people to study teachers' work: "they need to study it themselves" (Stenhouse, 1975, p. 143). Stenhouse believed that when teachers move into this role of teacher-as-researcher they demonstrate a particular type of professionalism.

Action research beginnings can be traced back to the sociological work of Kurt Lewin (1948). He also believed and espoused that it was not only important but, indeed ethical, that change and emancipation were the direct and immediate outcomes of research processes. Usually people involved in research have a desired outcome, an objective that

they wish to achieve. Although people were often very clear about the desired outcome and what they hoped to achieve, Lewin often felt that for many, the *way* to achieve it was not always so clear. This is where an action research process is extremely powerful in directing the change process. Lewin (1948) said that "Planning starts usually with something like a general idea" (p. 205) of what the researcher wants to achieve and that the first step is in data gathering and fact-finding about the present situation. From this stage there should be two outcomes—'an "overall plan" of how to reach the objective, and a decision in regard to the first step of action'. Lewin then described a series of phases which involved 'circles' of action, evaluation, reflection, fact-finding, modifying the original plan and planning the next action. He likened the process to a spiral staircase of these circles of steps, leading ultimately to the achievement of the desired outcome.

It was obvious that educationalists would very quickly see the imminent value of such a process for research and development in schools. Corey (1952) was one of the first writers to recognise that the processes that teachers were using for problem solving in their schools were not dissimilar and could be developed and expanded very easily into the type of action research that Lewin was describing. Corey (1952) believed the process of action research started with an hypothesis about the way something could be—a desirable goal—and also, indications of a procedure. He was at the very beginnings of the teacher-as-researcher movement that is current in the literature today. Corey (1952) recognised that there were always degrees in the quality of any research and that "educational research or research of any sort is not an absolute" (p. 484). In validating teachers' research Corey believed that all research can depart in quality along any one of many dimensions but that if the quality of each of the aspects of an investigation is high—definition, hypothesising, designing, evidence getting and generalising—then the research will be of excellent quality. Corey (1953) later argued that the findings from traditional scientific research had never influenced practice and that those scientific researchers had no intentions of doing anything with their findings anyway. He believed that the most important benefit of research should be the improvement of practice rather than the production of theory. He defined action research as "research undertaken by practitioners in order that they may improve their practices (p. 141). He did not believe this lessened the validity of the research as research. In fact, it was a paradigm shift to the belief that the science of education *was* the practice.

However there were some theorists at that time (and still some in the present day) who did not believe that action research was either a valid type of research (in the scientific meaning of the word) or in fact something that practitioners themselves could do well. Hodgkinson's (1957) statement that "research is no place for an amateur" (p. 142) was indicative of his belief that practitioners did not have the necessary knowledge and

techniques to be able to implement action research effectively in their schools. His greatest concern was that basically teachers were there to teach and did not have the necessary time to put into research, especially in the writing of the research. He did not see research as an integral part of professional practice—or that reflection on practice leading to new action, was valid research. He did not consider however, that the action research could be a collaborative process with a university academic who could have the necessary knowledge and techniques to implement action research effectively in schools. These academics could also be chiefly responsible for the writing of the research.

These early voices, then, of Lewin (1948) and Corey (1952), and the even earlier voice of Dewey (1938), seemed to be lost in the public arena within education until they became recognisable again in the writings on inservice work in the 1960s which infer, rather than state explicitly, that action research was an excellent *process* for teacher development. The writings focused on the importance of making schools the centre of inquiry and teachers being involved in that enquiry with the help of consultants. There began to be recognition that skills-based teacher development was often imposed from the outside and from top-down, and there was a changed emphasis to process-oriented and personal development as an important aspect of teacher and school development (Joyce & Showers, 1980).

In accord with this view on teacher development, discussion on action research processes arose again in the 1970s in the curriculum development work of Stenhouse (1975) and Elliott (1977). They were involved in many large scale curriculum development projects from which they concluded that research and development processes, utilised simultaneously, were important in the institutionalisation of change in schools, particularly in development of curriculum and implementing change in teaching style and curriculum content. If teachers could be involved in the data gathering of finding out what was already happening and then plan actions to achieve desired outcomes, and monitor and reflect upon their actions, they believed it was more likely the teachers would see a necessity to change and apply the findings of the research in their practice. Evident in these action researchers' research findings was that the value of the *process* was more important to the teachers than the resulting theory. This would negate Hodgkinson's (1957) concern that teachers were not able to write about their research thereby making it invalid. Action researchers were caught up in the debate on qualitative versus quantitative research as new views about research appeared. These researchers believed that action research and qualitative methods of data collection would more likely assist practitioners understand their settings and immediate problems (for example, Oliver, 1980; Stenhouse, 1970). In fact, they recognised that there was so much that was

changing in education and so much that was problematical, that a qualitative and action-approach would encapsulate the very conditions in which teachers worked.

During the 1980s and 1990s the value of action research really took hold. Rather than be concerned that practitioners did not actually have the necessary skills to carry out research, action researchers again believed that by taking part in the very process of action research the practitioners would become empowered and knowledgeable about the process. Oja and Smulyan (1989) stated:

> Action research would provide teachers with the opportunity to gain knowledge and skill in research methods and applications and to become more aware of options and possibilities for change. Teachers participating in action research would also become more critical and reflective about their own practice.
>
> (p. 9)

There are many writers that have been influential in my understanding of and subsequent development of action research as a research process (for example, Alcorn, 1986; Argyris & Schön, 1974; Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985; Caffarella, 1993; Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Cochran-smith & Lytle, 1993; Cohen & Manion, 1980; Ebbutt, 1985; Elliott, 1977; Fullan, 1991; Kember & Kelly, 1993; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988; Kolb, 1984; Newton & Tarrant 1992; Robinson, 1993; Smyth, 1991; Stenhouse, 1975; Wadsworth, 1990; Whyte, 1991; Winter, 1989).

There are guiding principles of action research that appear over and over in the writings. They are that action research is: an intervention; participatory; collaborative; self-evaluative; site-based and concerns-based; a process; emancipatory; and provides a link between theory and practice.

Firstly there is the understanding that action research is an *intervention* into the everyday life of the people involved. This then leads logically to an assumption that through the very process of being involved, action research is *participatory*. Action research usually relates to a group of people, so in this way it is also *collaborative* and involves different perspectives. There are often links and inferences that action research or the teacher-as-researcher concept is based on the principle of extending professionalism and *part* of the "general ideal of professionalism" (Winter, 1989, p. 4) rather than an addition to it. The *self-evaluative* nature of action research means there is an assumption too, that practitioners will reflect more upon their practice and are "capable of determining their own performance on the basis of self-reflection" (Elliott, 1991, p. 27). This is at the heart of the literature on adult learning theory (Caffarella, 1993; Kolb, 1984) along with the importance of the learner taking responsibility for their learning and being self-directed in that process. Practitioners involved in action research reveal a

continuing openness to the improvement of their practice and the continued belief in lifelong learning.

Another important guiding principle is that action research is *site-based* and *concerns-based* as it is carried out where the practitioner is actually working rather than on an island of teacher development some place removed.

There is seemingly little disagreement throughout the literature that action research is a *process* which is developmental over time and goes through a series of *stages*. These stages always involve reflection, data gathering, evaluation, and replanning, and move the participants closer to their desired goal. There is however, some dissension between the writers about where in the process one actually starts. Of whether the action researcher starts with a desired goal (for example, Lewin, 1948) or a problem (for example, Alcorn, 1986; Kemmis, 1985) or an assessment of current practice, or if, as Winter (1991) stated "does it matter which comes first? Do you start by implementing a change? Or do you start by analysing current practice in order to formulate a desirable change?" (p. 13).

Another underlying principle of action research is that it is *emancipatory*. That is, the process of being involved will lead people to a sense of enlightenment and agency and the desire to improve the conditions in which they are working or living. This involvement in the research and action results in the findings of the research being utilised by those very people that the research is about. Much of the current research findings never reach the wider audience, or more particularly, the practitioners in schools. Whyte (1991) agreed that the prevailing assumption about traditional research was that the researchers would discover the facts and figures and knowledge about relationships, and it is up to those people about whom the research is on, to "somehow make use of what social researchers discover" (p. 8). However, Stenhouse (1984) defined research as "systematic enquiry made public" (p. 77) and Ebbutt (1985) followed along these lines by stating "if action research is to be considered legitimately as research, then participants in it must be prepared to produce written reports of their activities" (p. 157). He went even further to say that if this condition of report writing and public critique was missing, then it was not research. This of course, is highly debatable and has been discussed at some length. If, as Kemmis and McTaggart (1988, p. 22) believed, action research is research which assists the participants to improve what they do, is there a necessity for it to be written up and the resulting theory disseminated? They stated that "action research provides a way of working which links theory and practice into the one whole: ideas-in-action" (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988, p. 6). The major benefit of action research according to Oliver (1980, p. 395), is "to promote a continuing process of professional development." Would this be the type of process the principals would eventually implement in their individual schools within their partnerships in this study?

However, the inability to meet some of the accepted ideas of rigorous scientific research and the fact they are limiting is one of two reasons why Argyris, Putman and McLain Smith (1985, p. x) preferred to refer to the process of practitioners seeking knowledge to inform action as action science rather than action research. The second reason is that action research has often been separated from theory building and testing and that the main aim of most action research is to solve a problem rather than test features of a theory. They also refer to Lewin and Dewey as two of the best known exemplars of action science researchers. However, many of the principles of action science are very similar to what other writers refer to as action research. Argyris, Putman and McLain Smith (1985, p. 37) defined the researcher as an "interventionist seeking to help client systems" and stated that the "practice of action science involves teaching others the skills needed to practice action science." They also talked about the reflexive nature of action science, in that the researcher and the methods used became just as much objects of inquiry as were the actions of the participants. Thus, the validity of the theory that ensues from action science or action research continues, in some quarters, to be the subject of much debate.

Hammersley (1993, p. 441) took the debate up again as he believed that teachers should concentrate on teaching and researchers should carry out research as he felt that if these roles were integrated "this is undesirable from the point of view of both research and teaching." He believed that the idea of communities of researchers conducting critical action research was "utopian in the sense of being of doubtful feasibility, but whether it is utopian in the sense of being desirable is another matter" (p. 440). Waters-Adams (1994) also cautioned about the collaborative nature of action research communities. He stated that the process of action research can appear to enhance peoples' confidence in their practice, but on the other hand "the act of making practice problematic can be very demoralising and it can raise so many issues of concern that confidence is severely damaged" (p. 205). Waters-Adams concluded his cautionary debate with the following statement:

> Maybe we all need to be wary of making too many generalisations which appear to prescribe the nature of the process we promote; we are all individuals and all situations are different. We can encourage collaboration, but we cannot dictate it.
>
> (Waters-Adams, 1994, pp. 208, 209)

This debate on theory versus practice then leads to the next guiding principle upon which action research is based, the *link between theory and practice.* In doing so, there needs to be a recognition of the credibility and importance of the professional knowledge, the theory, that practitioners create-in-use (Argyris, 1976; Schön, 1983; Sergiovanni, 1991). An important aspect of the development process in action research is a lessening of

the gap between espoused theories and theories-in-action and "transforming the situation from what is to something...better" (Schön, 1983, p. 147). It does not imply a rejection of all a priori theory, but an understanding that there must be theory and practice links for "both the advancement of science and for the improvement of human welfare" (Whyte, 1991, p. 8).

There seems little debate that action research or action science are very powerful processes for school and teacher development. As Fullan (1993) stated, it important that teachers not only have a strong value system on which their practice is based, but that they must also be change agents within their schools if schools are to become transformative rather than reproductive agents of existing social patterns. Carr and Kemmis (1986, p. 152) talked about the emancipatory power of action research and state that:

> from a critical perspective, the teacher needs to develop a systematic understanding of the conditions which shape, limit and determine action so that these constraints can be taken into account.

The task then of the researcher is to build a collaborative community of researchers (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) in which the participants will be involved in their own enlightenment and transform their own situations. The present study would aim to do this.

It meant that to establish the process of self-reflection with individual principals and between the principals, the partnerships' structure needed to be initiated and implemented, interviewing and observation would be necessary, and on-going discussion of the research findings would need to take place. The principals needed to be assisted with the process and skills necessary to successfully carry out the process of reflecting on their practice and acting in the light of their findings. Earlier research showed that school leaders appreciated collaborative professional relationships with university personnel (Barnett, 1990; Stevens, 1986; Wadsworth, 1990). Stevens (1986) looked at this type of collaborative action research in some depth. He saw it as an interactive process and a powerful way to assist school principals to gain insights into their practice. Would the principals in this study feel the same way?

To summarise, professional development programmes that assist reflection on concrete experiences, and provide a structure for outside perspectives and abstract conceptualisation have been shown to lead practitioners to praxis. School based programmes are important and action research provides a systematic structure for reflection on practice to occur. This study of the literature on school leadership and professional development of school practitioners led to the belief that a longitudinal study of principals working in peer partnerships for critical reflection on practice would help to answer many of the questions still to be answered about school leaders professional

development. An in-depth study of how principals worked together on their professional development was seen to be an area that was lacking in empirical research evidence. Enabling principals to become open to new ideas and experimentation and changes in their practice would be the ultimate challenge. It was important to develop a leadership programme that would lead principals towards feelings of agency where they felt they could act in alternative ways to their current practice. How would this be achieved? In what ways would professional partnerships assist in the leadership development of these 12 school principals? An 18-month study of school principals working together in their schools could begin to provide some of these answers.

This literature review has led to the selection of specific methodology and methods with which to conduct this research. These are outlined in the following chapter.

Chapter Three: Research Design

METHODOLOGY, METHODS AND DATA ANALYSIS

> Method refers to techniques for gathering empirical evidence; methodology is the theory of knowledge and the interpretive framework that guides a particular research topic.
>
> (Harding, 1987, p. 2)

METHODOLOGY

Research as Praxis

This research design, for the development of a critical theory for the professional development of school leaders, was based on the underlying theoretical principle of praxis. This study was a conscious effort not only to develop a theory of professional development for school leaders but in so doing, to provide professional development which would help the school leaders to understand and then change their situation. This, then, was research as praxis. Giddens (1976) defined praxis as "the involvement of actors with the practical realization of interests, including the material transformation of nature through human activity" (p. 53). He believed the notion of agency is directly related to the concept of praxis and defines agency as "*the stream of actual or contemplated causal interventions of corporeal beings in the ongoing process of events-in-the-world*" (Giddens, 1993, p. 81). The world is made up of a process of ongoing events and beings with agency have the considered or contemplated belief that they can act in an alternative manner.

This involvement with the practical realization of interests leads those involved in praxis to a consideration of the centrality of power in social life. This consideration can be achieved through critical reflection on the social norms or rules which can then lead to the knowledge that there may be differential interpretations of these norms. This knowledge or conscientization (Freire, 1973) often leads to emancipatory behaviours occurring through the actors being energised to transform their situation. Lather (1986) stated:

> ...praxis-oriented inquirers seek emancipatory knowledge. Emancipatory knowledge increases awareness of the contradictions hidden or distorted by everyday understandings, and in so doing it directs attention to the

> possibilities for social transformation inherent in the present configuration of social processes.
>
> (p. 259)

A key element in praxis is then, the transformative capacity of human action. As education is not a value-free neutral process (Freire, 1985) becoming aware of these hidden contradictions or distortions requires a deep probing and critique of the values and ideologies of those in positions of power. "The development of a critical consciousness which is the basis for emancipatory praxis is a process of enlightenment" (Grundy, 1993, p. 172). This leads to emancipatory knowledge. Emancipation is achieved when people can look beyond their own practices and find "ideological and institutional patterns which are to some extent responsible for maintaining these inadequacies and contradiction" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 180). The depth of this reflection and the ability to critique ideologies can be developed through research programmes such as the one described is this study. Kemmis (1985) stated that "a research programme for the improvement of reflection must be conducted through self-reflection: it must engage specific individuals and groups in ideology-critique and participatory, collaborative and emancipatory action research" (p. 152). These were important principles upon which the model of professional development developed in this study were based.

Ideology critique leads to increased consciousness and empowerment which can lead to *emancipatory* actions being taken. This is praxis. This is agency (Davies, 1991). Principals of educational institutions could, therefore, achieve praxis when they could look beyond their own practice and gain a large-scale perspective. Professional development programmes can assist them to do this. A group of school leaders involved in action research as a community of researchers is both participatory and collaborative. Involvement in emancipatory action research is, then, a commitment primarily to research as praxis rather than to the collection of data. It is part of a "continuous cycle of critical analysis, education and action" (Comstock, 1982, p. 387), a commitment to being self-reflective.

Such a self-reflective community could work together to create new understandings and to provide critical propositions and explanations about a model of professional development as well as utilise a critical approach to their own leadership development. In this way, the principals in this research could create knowledge about effective leadership practices and they use it to achieve praxis. The development of a theory of professional development through involvement in this research would support the principals in their educative leadership role when confronting educational, social and political issues. This would be the development of an education theory which was "oriented towards transforming the situations which place obstacles in the way of achieving educational

goals, perpetuate ideological distortions, and impede rational and critical work in educational situations" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 130).

The development of this kind of theory was particularly relevant in this research. Professional knowledge is often out of step with the changing situations of practice and particularly so, in New Zealand, at the time of this research. The search for an education theory for the continuing professional development for New Zealand school leaders, within a climate of rapid and relentless change and political and social demands, necessitated an approach which not only employed the interpretations of the leaders themselves but gave them support, as well as development, as they took part in the research. At such times existing bodies of knowledge or accepted ways of acquiring such knowledge are unable to handle "the complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and value conflicts" (Schön, 1983, p. 14) which are central to practice. The task of developing an education theory of professional development for school leaders is, therefore, complex. In order to accomplish this task a critical perspective to the development of theory is needed and in particular, one based on the notion of praxis, which draws the researcher and the practitioners to consider the connections between ideas and activity in their daily work.

This perspective to theory development is timely in situations where people are endeavouring to come to grips with new administrative structures as they were in New Zealand at the time of this research. There can be contradictory tensions. The challenges arising from contradictory tensions thus requires a body of knowledge which addresses these contradictions and tensions, and alongside this knowledge, a way of knowing which can flexibly cope with moving between the multiple conflicts which arise. This research model was designed to achieve this way of knowing for school leaders. A "form of educational research which was conducted by those involved in education themselves" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 156) gives the participants the opportunity to reflect on their own practices and coping strategies.

Critical research is grounded in the concerns and commitments of practitioners and engages them as researcher-participants in the development of education theory. Giroux (1983) says that the real value of such critical theory "lies in its ability to establish the possibilities for reflexive thought and practice on the part of those who use it and...it becomes invaluable as an instrument of critique and understanding" (p. 18).

The participants of such research become more self-aware. This critical perspective to theory development acknowledges that knowledge is not the sole preserve of academic theoreticians. It acknowledges that knowledge is incomplete and constantly changing and is located in the leader's own school. Smyth (1991) said that "one of the major suppositions of a critical perspective is that the experience of school practitioners...in

solving day-to-day problems is considered to be on a par with that of the theoreticians who try to explain practice" (p. xv). The experience of school leaders needs validation and peer-assisted leadership development carried out on the school site can achieve this.

School leaders' theories for solving the day-to-day problems are embedded in their discourse and practice. Principals can learn about their theories by articulating and justifying the actions they take or are about to take. They can also learn about their own educational theories vicariously through observations of the leadership actions of their peers. Smyth (1985) debated whether such peer supervision will just lead to the preservation of the status quo rather than reform and transformation. But change—leadership development—will be the desired outcome of emancipatory action research because it involves critical reflection in the search for the theories about learning and teaching. It also involves different perspectives which can lead participants to transformations of perspective as they "consciously confront their own circumstance" (Smyth, 1985, p. 8). It is important to have these outside perspectives to challenge habitual ways of knowing if emancipation is to be achieved. Smyth (1986) went on to explain:

> Emancipatory practice has as its basis a need for these different perspectives to challenge habitual ways of knowing and acting. Critical reflection on current issues and concerns, no matter how minor, leads to issues of greater bearing on education as a whole. By teachers starting with issues that have immediacy, relevance and practicality for them it is possible to bring to the surface larger questions for scrutiny that address the philosophical issues embedded in teaching practices.
>
> (Smyth, 1986, p. 42)

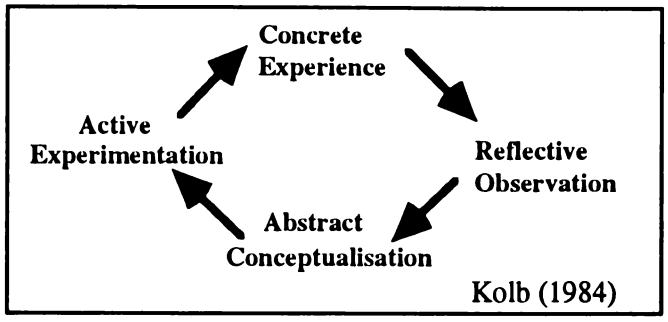
Starting with the issues of immediacy means conducting professional development programmes in the context where the issues are being experienced. The experience of school leaders is philosophy in action (Codd, 1989; Hodgkinson, 1978) and school leaders in New Zealand are professionals who often demonstrate strong educational theories both on how children learn best and what is important for the education of New Zealand's future generations. Codd (1989) stated that there are three distinct ways that school leaders form these theories throughout their careers. The first two ways are those which are most apparent—from their readings of the body of knowledge which exists in the profession, and from their own habits and actions from previous experience and common sense. But these two differentiated forms may well contain contradictory elements. Instead Codd argued for a third form—one which integrates the public and the personal. He called for a "philosophical critique of practice in which deliberate action is derived" (p. 168) from a combination of modes of inquiry developed from existing theory and common sense. This deliberate action is fundamental to praxis. Nielsen (1992)

said that this philosophical critique of practice and ideologies enables us "to determine what our true interests are" (p. 265).

Educative leadership requires that "true interests" are identified and articulated. This research was based on the premise that those in positions of school leadership who were involved in praxis would do so from an ethical, moral and educative stance (see Chapter Two). Therefore, school leaders need to understand and articulate their educational platforms (Duignan, 1987; Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1991) and critique how the myriad of daily actions they carry out, on the issues of immediacy, and the every day understandings that they have, either rest or fall from these platforms depending upon how great the gap is between the rhetoric and the actuality. The discontinuity between these and the non-fulfilment of their professional, educative goals, principles and values, can lead to stress and tensions within their daily practice (Duignan, 1989). An increased awareness of the discontinuity can direct attention to the possibility for social transformation. This type of research methodology can assist principals to not only understand their values and beliefs about how children learn best and what their true interests as principals of their schools are, but it can also assist them to develop the ability to be able to articulate their educational leadership values in their leadership dialectic.

This is a critical perspective to educational leadership theory development. It is important to set in place a structure that can provide school leaders with support and opportunities for exercising considered, deliberated educative leadership as part of their daily practice. This would, then, also assist them to solve the dilemmas in their own leadership practice, and, if necessary, change their practice, within the school. To exercise educational leadership a transformative capacity is needed. Transformational leadership is intentional action. Praxis can also be defined as "conscious, reflective, intentional action...and is the bridge between theory and practice—between reflection, analysis and action" (Duignan, 1989, p. 77). To achieve this conscious, reflective, intentional action, principals need many opportunities for discourse, observation, experimentation and reflection on their practice. The research programme that this report describes was designed to provide these opportunities.

Praxis is the desired outcome of Kolb's model of learning theory when all four aspects are given an equal weighting. Kolb (1984) described the processes of experiential learning as "a four stage cycle involving four adaptive learning modes: concrete experience; reflective observation; abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation" (p. 40).



In this study the researcher's processes were based on this model. The professional development opportunities for the research participants were also based on this model. Each of these learning modes was incorporated in the learning experiences, the methods, structured within the developing model of professional development in this study. There can be opportunities for the concrete experiences of leadership actions and methods before further development takes place. The principals can try out, or experiment with new actions or practices in their schools, for example, delegating more tasks to the Board of Trustees, and these would become new concrete experiences. They can have opportunities for reflection on their actions and their partners could observe them in practice and assist them to reflect further on their practice. In this way they are then able to conceptualise new approaches to leadership dilemmas and achievement of school goals. Abstract conceptualisation can be achieved through a searching or reading of the literature or discussion of the theory or other theories of practice with members of the community of researchers. Kolb (1984), when discussing human learning, said "knowledge is formed by individuals" (p. 99). These examples demonstrate how this knowledge can be formed by the principals as they are involved in their leadership practices.

If this is so, then participants' accounts of their practice are needed. This requires an approach which goes beyond and indeed rejects the positivist and interpretive theories of education because like other researchers, I believed that those theories do not adequately describe or understand the relationship between theory and the every day experiences of school leaders. In particular the positivist and interpretive research theories neglect to demonstrate how a research method might itself be used to mediate and inform the professional practices of educators. This is the thesis that I pursued—that facilitating a research method of establishing professional partnerships between school leaders can lead to the development of their leadership practice and that a careful study of this process can

lead to the development of an "education theory" of benefit to school leaders and those involved in their leadership development. As Carr (1982) stated:

> The only task which "education theory" can legitimately pursue, then, is to develop theories of educational practice that are intrinsically related to practitioners' own accounts of what they are doing, that will improve the quality of their involvement in these practices and thereby allow them to practice better.
>
> (Carr, 1982, p. 26)

It may be argued that this is the only legitimate and ethical way to conduct research in a rapidly changing climate. This was, therefore, "not research about education but research for education" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 155). The resulting theory was constructed in negotiation with the practitioners involved in the research. It was an interactive, dialogic process. Kemmis (1985) spoke of critical social science as conceiving its audience to be wider than the group concerned. Conceivably, there could be changes in national policy and professional development programmes based on the findings of this research.

In summary, it is a primary claim of this study that a true *educative* leadership of our schools needs preserving and principals' philosophies of education are strengthened through dialectical theory building and informed committed action which is praxis. The theoretical component of this research methodology was embedded and interwoven throughout the researcher's and participants' actions and interconnectedness. The interconnectedness and reciprocity between researchers and research participants, and between theory and practice will demonstrate how the research was designed to "consciously use our research to help participants understand and change their situation" (Lather, 1986, p. 263). This research was therefore practical and based on the needs and concerns of the practitioners involved. Involvement in the research would assist the principals to be able to distinguish "between practice as habitual or customary, on the one hand, and the informed, committed action of *praxis*, on the other" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 190).

Some interwoven factors relate to the achievement of praxis. The first of these is that reflection is the tool for achieving praxis. The second is that reciprocity is needed. The third is that reflexivity should be strived for. The fourth is the issue of the degree of reliability and validity that is attainable in such praxis-oriented research. Each of these four factors will be discussed in turn.

Reflection is the Tool for Achieving Praxis

The methodological principle of research as praxis and the development of leadership as praxis means that all members of a small community of researchers need to be involved in the essential property of reflection. Reflection is the tool for achieving praxis. There are however, different types and depths of reflection that are possible. Smyth (1991) drawing on the work of Habermas (1974) described three types of reflection: technical, practical and critical. The technical reflection deals with the day-to-day problem-solving; the practical reflection studies the values-dilemmas and judgements of ethical and moral rightness faced in daily work; and critical reflection becomes more concerned with the ideological distortions in ways of knowing and acting, and leads ultimately to emancipatory action in the light of these findings. These latter two types of reflection are those which many school leaders seldom reach without outside assistance. Research programmes for school leaders can be designed to provide that assistance. Research programmes can endeavour to assist school leaders to achieve emancipation through the critique of ideology between the group, within the group and in education nationally.

The research model is therefore designed to put in place methods that not only ensure that reflection takes place, but methods that ultimately lead to the improvement and development of the reflective practices of the principals to those of critical reflection. The research model will need to involve the educational leaders in engaging with uncomfortable questions like: "What am I doing? What are my reasons? What are the effects of my actions on my students?" (Smyth, 1991, p. xviii). This has been extended to "and colleagues" in this research. Leaders always have to work through and with others and therefore it was important that the reflection in this research took place within context, on specific interactions between the leader and others in the school community. A model which stresses reflection on the principals' own experiences, both within the process and within their leadership, emphasises the uniqueness of their practice (Sergiovanni, 1991). This highlights the importance of professional development for school leaders being not only concerns-based but also site-based where the management structures and processes are in place. Duignan (1989) saw these management structures and processes as "mechanisms for the expression of leadership" (p. 74). The methods in a research study for the professional development of school leaders need to be specially designed experiences to assist the school leaders to take time for reflection on and in the myriad of tasks they perform.

Barnett (1990) put forward the view that reflection was paramount to continuing leadership development. A major premise of his peer-assisted leadership approach, which has informed this work, was that "principals can expand and apply their knowledge of

administrative practice by reflecting on their own personal experiences as well as the vicarious experiences of other principals" (p. 67).

Therefore, to lead the principals to leadership as an art, and ultimately to praxis, the opportunities for reflection in this research design would be many and varied. These are fully described in the Methods' section of this chapter.

If we think back to the Kolb (1984) model of learning outlined in the previous section, reflection as a process is only one part of the learning cycle if praxis is to be the ultimate outcome. Turning reflection into action is not easy. There is often a gap between the principals' espoused theories and their theories in action and this gap must be closed if they wish to be transformative leaders. Argyris (1976) said it is the theories-in-use that are most important to discover as they are not always compatible with the espoused theories. The individual may not be aware of this incompatibility which is why others need to be involved in the process of helping to identify one's theories-in-use. This is the ethnomethodologist's position. The assistance of others is needed to bring principals to critical reflection.

Bailey (1987) agreed that principals need assistance to improve and develop the skills of working together on issues of common concern and to learn the processes of reflective practice. He described this outside assistance, and the method employed, as "stringency." He said "an openness to new perspectives and a combination of mutual trust and some stringency are essential to provide that blend of support and challenge likely to lead to personal development and effective action" (p. 61). It is paramount that the principals have the necessary skills to work collegially on their own professional development as these skills are utilised in the interactions between researcher and principal and in those interactions between principals.

The focus for the school principals involved in this type of research is on the improvement of their leadership practice within their school through critical reflection on practice and increased professional interactions with colleagues. Such interactive reflective processes between and within the research group would be more effective if reciprocity was sought by those in the community of researchers.

Reciprocity, therefore, should also be an integral part of a research design that aims to achieve praxis for those involved as this research programme did.

Reciprocity

In the type of research described in this report, the challenge of the tensions between researching and leadership, as well as between leadership theory and practices will necessarily arise. Although the concept of a community of researchers was being

developed, the role of university researcher was clearly distinct from the principals' roles in this research. Perhaps this is unavoidable - and needs to be acknowledged. In this relationship between more than two persons (researcher and practitioners) and more than two realities (researching education theory and leadership practice), it appears, as mentioned earlier, that knowledge can be created and, quite separately, knowledge can be used. How can this tension be resolved? The notion of maximum reciprocity within the research design provides the key. Lather (1986) defined reciprocity in the following way. "Reciprocity implies give-and-take, a mutual negotiation of meaning and power. It operates at two primary points in emancipatory empirical research: the junctures between researcher and researched, and between data and theory" (p. 263). This related concept of mutual benefits and responsibilities, and commitment to each other, and negotiation of meaning and power, is integral to this type of research. In the negotiation of power it needs to be constantly emphasised to the group that they should gain by being involved in this research. It is important to get away from what Reinharz (1979) described as the "rape model of research" (p. 95). The process of theory building should be mutually beneficial to researcher and research group participants.

Like other researchers I acknowledged my part in the research and recognised that it was impossible to stand outside of it. Lather (1991) stated that "such a stance provides the grounds for both an 'openly ideological' approach to critical enquiry and the necessity of self-reflexivity, of growing awareness of how the researcher values permeate inquiry" (p. 2). I went further than just acknowledging this involvement; I actively sought it. Within research as praxis it was not only important that the readers of this text were aware of my predispositions and position within the research, but as a member of a community of researchers it was imperative that the research participants were aware of those predispositions as well.

Examples of reciprocity at the juncture of the researched and researcher, and theory and data described in Chapter Four on the research process, will demonstrate that the concepts of reciprocity and reflection become inexplicably intertwined. Reflexivity or self-confrontation (Beck, 1994) is another principle which is important in the achievement of praxis, and has as its prerequisites, reflection and reciprocity. Where one ends and the other begins is sometimes blurred and the reader may argue that the following section still relates to reciprocity or reflection, which it does, but I believe that action research is, by its very nature, also reflexive in the processes that it follows. Therefore, this type of research process, with the underlying principle of praxis for researcher and praxis for principals, means a genuine intent to achieve this reciprocity between researcher and principals and, in so doing, strengthen the reflexive nature of the research process. It was not only important that the principals achieve self-reflexivity, the

self-awareness they achieved through critical reflection on their practice, but that I did as well.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity in research is often more easily espoused by researchers than actually achieved in their practice (Watson, 1987). Giddens (1976) described reflexivity simply as "self-awareness" (p. 17). Gouldner (1970) elaborated on what this self-awareness actually means in the research process for the search for knowledge:

> In a knowing conceived as awareness, the concern is not with "discovering" the truth about a social world regarded as external to the knower, but with seeing truth as growing out of the knower's encounter with the world...Insofar as social reality is seen as contingent in part on the effort, the character, and the position of the knower, the search for knowledge about social worlds is also contingent upon the knower's self-awareness.
>
> (p. 493)

Gouldner (1970) also challenged the sociologist in saying that in coming to this self-awareness there are key questions that need to be asked and answered to prove that reflexivity has been achieved. He said the sociologist-researcher should ask probing questions. Types of questions may be as follows: How has this research transformed you? Has it penetrated deeply into your daily life and work? Has it varied your self-awareness of your work as a sociologist? According to Gouldner, a researcher truly achieving reflexivity recognises that the knowledge of the world cannot be advanced apart from their own knowledge of themselves and their position in the social world. Berger and Luckmann (1971) spoke also of this social construction of reality. All of the time data is being interpreted it is filtering through the existing information, beliefs and experiences of the researcher. Critical inquiry which achieves reflexivity is, then, a mutually beneficial process for the development and self-awareness of both researcher and researched. It could, therefore, be argued that the very process of action research involving continual dialectical theory building, within a community of researchers as in this research, perhaps negates the importance of the issue of reflexivity as it is integral to the research process. In action research the researcher is constantly keeping diaries of reflections, sifting through the data, re-reading the literature to make decisions as to the next action, involved in continual discussions, all of the time becoming more aware of themselves and the processes they are utilising. Giddens (1976) says that reflexivity is "intimately and integrally dependent upon the social character of language" (p. 20). If the researcher is intentionally involved in a continual dialogic process with each of the participants throughout the research the outcome will be achieving reciprocity and a degree of

reflexivity. Watson (1987) described reflexivity as an intentional property which "is not merely something which one 'does' like engaging in self-reflection or seeking validity, but is, rather, an essential and inevitable property of all discourse" (p. 29).

The reflexivity through discussion and conversation can become an essential part of all discourse within a community of researchers and did in this research programme. Within action research the research purposes, the process and the findings, are always declared to and shared with the group being researched as they are discovered and written. Collaborative action research not only assists a research group to be more self-aware but it also provides the necessary conditions for the research group to be involved in theory building. If the researcher is utilising a collaborative action research approach, s/he will, of necessity, become more self-aware.

Gouldner (1970) said that the ultimate goal of reflexivity is "a deepening of the sociologist's own awareness of who and what you are and how your social role and personal praxis affect your work as a sociologist" (pp. 494-5). Researchers need to be increasingly aware of their beliefs, their values and how their research is affecting their practice. Reflexivity requires a persistent commitment to the value of that awareness. As Lather (1986) says "dialogic encounter is required to some extent if we are to invoke the reflexivity needed to protect research from the researcher's own enthusiasms" (p. 268).

This is where negotiation of meaning at the juncture of data and theory—dialogic encounters—are important and the reciprocity at this level becomes inextricably bound to the ultimate achievement of reflexivity. These principals would be helped to become aware of the obligation practitioners have to scrutinise the research methodology by which "findings, their own and others, are produced, and in particular to consider how the activities of the researcher may have shaped those findings" (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983, p. 236).

When the principals begin to be involved in self-reflection and in discussions on the wider issues relating to educational leadership, awareness will eventually be the outcome as praxis is achieved. Participating collaboratively on the critique of ideology, of social and political influences on the way they practice in their schools will lead naturally to changed behaviours. This is, in fact, praxis.

Reliability and Validity

Praxis-oriented research requires new ways of looking at reliability and validity than traditional empirical research designs. As some of the approaches in this research were influenced by reflexive sociology, it is worthy here to go back to Gouldner's (1970) statement. He said "there are ways and ways of conducting and reporting such studies" (p.

489). He talked also about subjective objectivity and he denied that there was any such thing as absolute objectivity, but rather, degrees of subjectivity. With this in mind then, this is how reliability and validity are attainable in this type of research. It entails a different way of looking at these concepts for this *way* of conducting this study.

Reliability is problematic in that the study is not able to be replicated, but if this is the only measure of reliability then only pure scientific investigations, in a clinical laboratory, would ever be deemed reliable. This type of definition would then demean all social science research, especially praxis-oriented inquiry as this was. The research process and findings chapters will demonstrate how reliability has been attained in this research. It has been attained through triangulation of data gathering and interpretation; it has been achieved through reciprocity and negotiation of meaning; it has been achieved through reflexivity, and it has been achieved through employing the voices of the research group in the telling of this research.

The triangulation of data was achieved by "using several data sources, the obvious example being the inclusion of more than one individual as a source of data" (Mathison, 1988, p. 14). There were a variety of ways in which this occurred. Previous data from interviews and evaluations were used to plan the full group sessions that were then evaluated. The principals were given opportunities to affirm or refute the emerging propositions. The successive interviews can also be seen as a form of triangulation used to improve the validity of the findings. This type of triangulation was described under the discussion on reciprocity in the negotiation of meaning. Triangulation of data gathering certainly occurred in this research method but it does not alleviate the fact that ultimately the writing of this research is still only my account of what occurred.

Ruby (1982) reminded us that in the construction of reality a mirror image will not be attainable—there will always be cracks in the image. But it is the recognition of this point, that assists in the validity of the research. Openness and honesty with predispositions and analysis of the developing theory leave the reader to consider the accurateness of the representation of data. This is the reflexive nature of the research. By sometimes providing conflicting accounts and letting the reader decide how to interpret the data is another way that has been used to overcome the possibility of false consciousness. Where possible the voices of those involved in the research have been employed in the telling of the research. Many of their quotes were used to support and build discussion, and in praxis-enquiry, this is an important form of reliability.

The validity of the research is also apparent in the degree to which these principals benefited and stated that they benefited from the research. It was valid in that it supported and assisted them in their role as educational leader in their school. Lather (1986) called this catalytic validity and says it "represents the degree to which the research process

reorients, focuses, and energizes participants toward knowing reality in order to transform it" (p. 272). The participants of this research should be its greatest critics of validity. They lived it, experienced it, and have negotiated the resulting theory. There was constant interaction between the researcher's academic theories and the practitioners' theories of action (Robinson, 1992). Reliability and validity were always considered important and not least, for the principals with whom this research was conducted.

In summary then, the aim of this research was to develop a learning theory for school leaders and the methodology encompassed the theoretical principle of praxis. In learning theory the combination of the principles of concrete experiences, reflection and observation with outside perspectives should lead to praxis being realised. Praxis and emancipation are inextricably bound. Indeed, emancipatory behaviours should be the outcome when praxis is achieved. The research was designed to not only develop a theory of professional development which assisted and supported these principals to develop professionally but also to become more critically aware of the educational, social and political environment in which they were practising. In this way, as they become more aware of their actions they would be able to make more informed choices about the most appropriate actions to take to improve learning in their schools.

The research programme, the process of which is described fully in the following chapter, would involve the school principals working in a professional partnership established specifically to assist with their school leadership development. The principals would observe each other in their own schools. They would interview each other about their actions. They would set goals for their professional development and work with their partner towards achieving those goals. They would seek outside perspectives on their actions. They would have many opportunities to reflect on their practice. The model would be site-based and therefore concerns-based. The researcher would play a key role in the initiation, implementation and institutionalisation of the partnerships throughout the programme.

The theoretical underpinnings of praxis, determined the methods used to gather data in this research. All of the methods were not only ways of gathering empirical data, but were also carefully designed opportunities to assist the principals to reflect on their leadership practice.

Each of these methods is outlined in the next section. The reader requires an understanding of each before moving onto the following chapter which describes the process of the action research which took place in this study.

METHODS

The research methods were established around the principle of the importance of reflection for firstly, self-awareness and ultimately, emancipatory behaviour through a greater understanding of the principal's role and the social and political influences on education in New Zealand. The methods in this research had to lead the community of researchers towards praxis and become an intentional bridge between theory and practice. If I, as one of the community of researchers, wanted the principals to develop habits centred on the value of informed practice and praxis, then I needed to see what praxis meant in terms of the research methods itself for my own practices and for those of the principals. As Carr and Kemmis (1983) confirmed "the study of praxis (informed, committed action) is always through praxis (action with and for the critical development of understanding and commitment); it embodies praxis in the form of an interest in improving praxis" (p. 192).

There were many methods built into the Partnerships' programme which were not only for data collection for the principals in the achievement of their professional goals, and hence their professional development, but also for data collection for the theory building. These methods of data collection for the theory building were necessarily qualitative as qualitative research method would best capture the voices, beliefs and values of these educational leaders (Bogden & Biklen, 1982). Qualitative implies a direct concern with experience as it is "lived" or "felt" or "undergone" (Sherman & Webb, 1988, p. 7). This was what I wanted to achieve so that other principals could think "I can relate to that" and be interested in learning more about the model. Greene (1988) went further than this when she stated that research of this kind cannot be carried out by researchers who see themselves detached or neutral as "the life of meaning does not present itself for examination" (p. 175). The search for this understanding or meaning required getting to know the principals in depth, over time, to gain an understanding of their relationship with their partner and within the community of researchers, their reactions and ways of responding, and how they learn and develop as educational leaders. Qualitative methods, rather than quantitative, were the obvious option.

There are three traditional methods of gathering data in qualitative research—observation, interview and examination of records. These three methods can, however, be used in ways which are non-traditional. I have used these three methods as a framework to present the method to the reader, but have worked to redefine them "to more interactive, contextualized methods" (Lather, 1992, p. 92) in the search for a greater understanding of how school leaders are best supported and learn throughout their careers. For example, I have included the use of cassette and written reflections under observations as I utilised these alternative methods as ways to gather and supplement the

visual findings as they were the principals recordings of their observations at the time of the event. Each of the methods of gathering data was used in different ways in different situations.

The development of the theory was inductive rather than deductive which meant that a large amount of data was continually gathered to support the ongoing grounded theory analysis (Explained in the section—Analysis of Data). Therefore, there were a multitude of written records to examine and re-examine throughout the analysis period. Each of these is described in full in the section—The examination of written records.

All of these methods will now be explained in full to give the reader the full picture of the comprehensiveness and consistency with which the data was collected throughout the research.

1. Observation

Observation included the principals observing each other, which was called shadowing; it also included the researcher observing the principals in action, which was called shadowing the shadower. Other observations were made through the written reflections the principals made to me either in full group sessions when they were prompted to do so, or when they wrote some reflections to me from their schools or homes. Yet other observations were recorded in my letters that I wrote to the principals which described what I had experienced in their schools when I visited or what I saw when I listened to their cassettes or read their written reflections. All of these were forms of gathering data of observed behaviours—either data for informing future action in the schools or for informing the research within the action research process, or data for the emergence of a theory of professional development for school leaders. They were often different accounts of the same event, which assisted in data triangulation.

1.1 Shadowing

The principal way in which observation was used was in the professional development model design itself in which the principals went into each other's schools and observed each other in action. This was shadowing. Observation of others enacting a similar role is an important predecessor of reflection. But it was important that the principals were taught how to shadow and observe a professional colleague and specific guidelines were developed for the process of observation. The principals were told "Shadowing leads to descriptive accounts of leadership activities, what and how things were done" (F/N:7/4/93). They were taught how to note down only observable events, to give descriptive accounts and not to make judgements or interpretations of the behaviours that

they had observed. They were told to summarise conversation if possible, and to note down some key words to prompt them when they read their observations back to their partner. Other suggestions for notes during observations included describing the physical environment such as the placement of seating and adding time notations especially for length of interactions such as "20 minutes on telephone with parent." The principals were told that names of particular people involved in interactions would also be important to note at times. The last main point in the guidelines was that the principals would take time after the observation to fill in further notes and also prepare any questions for interview.

The skill of observation constituted a major part of other methods in the research, namely, action research processes, individual reflections, goal setting, giving evaluative feedback and reflective interviewing. These other methods will be discussed later in this section.

1.2 Shadowing the Shadower

Shadowing the shadower was the way of describing my own observations in the field, observing the principals in action with their partners. This title was used to continue to portray the concept of a community of researchers carrying out similar roles. The principals were data gathering during their shadowing of each other for their professional development; I was also data gathering, when shadowing, for the building of theory. The guidelines for shadowing the shadower were the same as for those for shadowing.

As perhaps with all ethnographers, I believed that all the exciting data was being made when I was not present to collect it. At other times I felt that nothing was happening unless I was actually out in the schools observing it happen. The receipt of a cassette or written reflection from a principal was a form of observation in the field and it was a method by which I could listen to or read about their leadership practices through the principals' own observations of these practices.

1.3 Cassette Reflections

Cassette reflections were comments made by the principals onto tape and sent to me. These reflections could be made at any time during the research process, but the principals were specifically asked to make some reflections after a shadowing visit with their partner. It was discussed in a full group session that it was important to the research that the reflections were made. This technique was utilised because it was felt that it would be easier for the principals to reflect on cassette rather than in the written form. Initially there were no set guidelines as to how these reflections would be made. These were then introduced at the second session (see Appendix C). Two additional questions were

introduced at the third session as further cues for reflection. They were: What was the event? How did you feel?

1.4 Written Reflections

Written reflections were the thoughts and ideas committed to paper by the community of researchers, throughout the study. There were different types of these.

1.4.1 From Principal to Researcher

These were the reflections written on-site by the principals and sent to the researcher at times that the principal chose to reflect. These were substitutes for the cassette reflections for the principals who preferred to use the written form.

In the initial letter the principals were asked to keep a research diary but only two principals maintained chronological notes consistently through the research.

To maintain a consistent record of the principals' reflections and processes throughout the research, periods during which each principal was requested to individually reflect were integrated at each full group session. Some of these were "Unstructured reflections"; others had questions or sentence starters for prompting comments on particular aspects of the research process so they were called "Prompted reflections."

1.4.2 Unstructured Reflections

The full group session days usually began with music and a relaxing period where the principals were asked to write freely about anything they wished. These were called an "Unstructured reflection" period where there were just sentence starters on a piece of paper such as "At the beginning of today's' session..." or "At the end of today's session..." and the principals were asked to reflect individually with quiet music playing in the background.

1.4.3 Prompted Reflections

There were aspects of the Partnerships' programme that the principals were required to comment upon. To this end the principals were asked specific questions as part of their individual reflections during the full group sessions. These were called "Prompted reflections" as the principals were prompted to reflect and write on particular topics or questions.

There were many opportunities built into the six full day sessions for written and oral reflection. In this way not only was regular feedback on the process assured but many

opportunities were also made available for the principals to reflect individually. The topics for these "Prompted reflections" included: how they thought the partnership was going; what sorts of things they felt they could or could not talk about with their partner; goals they had for the future; and how they felt their partner could assist them in their school development plans.

Further reflections were also found in their evaluations of each group day which were also "Prompted reflections" as they were asked to comment under such headings as "The best part of the day's programme..." and "The part of the programme that was least useful..." Other prompted individual reflections were centred around such things as their educational platforms, visions and personal and professional goals and action plans to achieve the goals during the course of their professional development programme.

There were, therefore, many opportunities for the principals to reflect in this way. In a reciprocal manner, the principals regularly received reflections from me. These were in the form of letters which accompanied their transcripts from interview or cassette reflections they had sent.

1.4.4 From Researcher to Principal

Another form of the method of written reflections were the letters written to individual members of the group after an interview had been transcribed, or a cassette reflection received, or written reflections from the "Unstructured reflections" or "Prompted reflections" read. With each transcript a one to two page letter of my reflections in response to the principals' was included , along with the occasional article believed to be of interest due to the nature of our discussions. Regular form letters also went to all of the research group members with necessary information about the agenda of upcoming sessions and the research process. The form letters often contained short reflections on the Partnerships' process as a whole and these reflections were an important part of maintaining the dialectic with these principals during the period of time in the research when they were not at full group sessions or meeting with their partners.

To this end, the principals were also visited individually and sometimes with their partners, to interview them and discuss the programme and leadership issues they were facing.

2. Interviews/Interactions

The term interview was extended to include all dialogic interactions. Therefore there were the interviews in the traditional sense between researcher and researched; there were the 'context' interviews which the principals carried out when they first met together; there

were the reflective interviews conducted by the principals working together to achieve professional goals; there were goal setting sessions; there were the sessions where the principals met primarily to give and receive evaluative feedback; there were action research planning sessions and the full group sessions where the interactions often included outside consultants who assisted in the professional development process.

2.1 Interactive Interviewing

Each principal or partnership was interviewed regularly throughout the study, on average once per term. Oakley (1981) considered how the quality and depth of information may be improved through repeated interviewing and a breakdown of the hierarchical division between interviewer and interviewee. She stated that being responsive to respondent reactions to the interview situation will give a far greater depth of information from the interviews. This sort of research interviewing is described as "interactive." The principle of a hierarchical relationship between interviewer and interviewee is not advocated and "an attempt is made to generate a collaborative approach to the research which engages both the interviewer and respondent in a joint enterprise" (Oakley, 1981, p. 44). As a researcher I chose this type of collaborative approach and worked to develop a community of researchers. As an interviewer I assumed the alternative role that Oakley (1981) found was more effective. She said that:

> ...an attitude of refusing to answer questions or offer any kind of personal feedback was not helpful in terms of the traditional goal of promoting 'rapport'. A different role, that could be termed 'no intimacy without reciprocity', seemed especially important in longitudinal in-depth interviewing.
>
> (Oakley, 1981, p. 44)

As some of the principals were known personally this approach was very appropriate. I worked at establishing a rapport and intimacy with the new members of the group through repeated contacts and self-disclosing where appropriate. I was assiduous in adhering to the contract with the research group—that I should be of service to them as they were to me and that they should gain from this involvement in this research. The interviews centred around the professional needs of both parties to the research contract. In this way the research methods were interactive and reflexive. The principals were each interviewed at least twice in the first year of the research study and once in the second.

At the beginning of the study the interactive interviews were focused around building a relationship with each principal and gaining a knowledge of their unique school and the partnership as it was developing. During the first interview with the principals topics of discussion were: initiatives in the school; staffing and trustees; aims and visions, and ways

in which they felt their partnership was helping, or could help them, to achieve what they wanted. The aim was also to produce the widest range of substantive themes possible. (This process is described more fully in the section on Analysis of Data which follows this description of Methods). The principals were assured of the confidentiality of the information they had supplied, that what came to me from one partner was not shared with the other partner, and the principals were always given the chance to re-read the transcripts and delete or add any data from the transcripts if they desired. Copies of all transcripts were returned to each principal for perusal and to provide a potential opportunity for additional reflection and the basis for the interactive interviewing in the future.

During the second and subsequent interviews the questions were specific and related to the principals' leadership dilemmas or action research processes, and to the emerging propositions. These were interviews based around the experiences of the principals and most often the principals raised additional topics of interest to them and asked questions themselves. A description of *experiential analysis* by Reinharz (1983) indicated the approach that was taken in the interviews in this study:

> The researcher as student rather than expert must remember to convey this stance in personal, direct, colloquial speech, particularly in being open and 'owning' one's statements...frequently the orienting open-ended questions posed by the researcher have been addressed or redefined by the subject, additional topics are raised which are significant to the subject.
>
> (Reinharz, 1983, p. 181)

Phone calls to and from the principals were a very important part of the data collection as well. The phone contacts with the principals between visits were not always interviews but they were interactive and conversational. These interviews and interactions for information and reflection were firmly embedded in the principals' processes as well, which resulted in reflective statements about the model of professional development.

Within this community of researchers each participant was involved in the same methods of data collection for sometimes different, sometimes similar, purposes. The following two sections describe how the context interview and reflective interviewing processes were carried out by the principals and the researcher alike. This is indicative of how it should be in a community of researchers where the methods are shared by researcher and researched.

2.2 Context Interviewing

The context interview was the first field interview that the principals were asked to carry out in their schools. The aim was for the principals to become thoroughly familiar with the context in which their partners were conducting their actions.

The basis for the context interview was the first column of The Leadership Framework (see Appendix D) that had been discussed at a full group session and the principals had been given time to record some notes about the aspects in this column. The main areas for discussion were:

- Community
- Beliefs and Experiences
- Institutional Context, and
- Governing Bodies.

This context information included the principals' own educational backgrounds and philosophies, the types of communities they were working in and the particular aspects of their schools which made them unique.

The principals were given an outline to guide them through the context interview and to record their partner's responses or their own questions and comments. It stated:

> In the context interview you will use the information you have recorded for these purposes: To reintroduce yourself and your school to your partner; to provide your partner with necessary information before the first shadowing visit; to begin building a level of comfort and understanding with your partner.

The context interview directions were quite explicit:

> TASK: Share your context information with your partner; complete one entire interview, then switch roles; allow equal time for each person.
>
> STRATEGY: Interviewee: Use the notes you made to describe yourself and your setting to your partner. Interviewer: Listen. Ask questions to clarify or add information.

The principals were asked to carry out the interview and to also walk around their partner's school and visit classrooms and the school site discussing their leadership context as they did. The principals asked that I also conducted context interviews in their schools before I came and shadowed them so that I, too, was fully conversant with their particular contexts. Activities included having morning tea, walking around the school, visiting classrooms and observing building projects. I shared aspects of my own educational history and talked to the principals about their aspirations, issues and visions. It was

important that I became familiar with the context within which these principals were working.

Sometimes when I was talking to and interviewing the principals I found myself utilising the skill they had been taught to use in their partnerships to assist their partner to reflect upon their own leadership—the skill of Reflective Interviewing.

2.3 Reflective Interviewing

Reflective interviewing is a questioning technique that provides opportunities for the questioned person to explore his or her knowledge, skills, experiences, attitudes, beliefs and values (Lee, 1990). This was a key principle in this research model. The principals must take responsibility for their own leadership development. The questioning technique leaves the power for reflection and judgement in the hands of the person being questioned. It was important that the principals did not feel that a colleague was going to come in and tell them how to lead their school or that they felt they should tell a colleague how to run their school. This was, therefore, a most important skill to be learnt in this model of professional development.

There were three types of questions that the principals were taught to use to assist their partner to reflect critically on their practice.

The first type of questions were for the clarification of events, situations, actions, and feelings. These types of questions often started with "Tell me...what....when ...if...whether...who...how...why..." They were the sorts of questions used to make sure that the interviewer had all the information about the particular observation they had just made.

The second type of questions were used to clarify purpose, reasons, and intended consequences. They often started with "How...why...who...which" and were concerned with probing the reasons and intended outcomes that the principal had for the actions just taken.

The third level of questions moved the questioned principal into the area of exploring the basis or outcomes of his/her actions. These were called the linking questions...often called the 'So what' questions because they might be like the following two examples. "So what happened then?" "So what differences were there today?"

The principals were also given quite specific guidelines to put in place when conducting reflective interviews. These were:

- Base questions on the experiences of the respondent.
- Use non-judgmental, objective wording.

- Be prepared to follow up initial questions.
- Maintain a neutral tone of voice.
- Use active listening skills such as nodding, looking at the person, using a short question prompt like "What then?" but NOT breaking into conversation.
- Refrain from giving advice.

The principals received many opportunities to practise their reflective interviewing. After they practised this skill we discussed their experiences and built upon these experiences to develop advanced reflective interviewing techniques.

2.4 Goal Setting

Goal setting is an important skill of being able to look ahead and determine desired outcomes. These can be both personal and professional, individual or school goals. Goal setting was an important skill of getting the principals to focus on their specific leadership actions to achieve their long term goals. They first had to decide what it was they were wanting to achieve in their school, before they could work on action plans to achieve it. They need to understand how their daily actions ultimately impacted on how successfully their outcomes would be achieved. Guidelines were established for their goal setting. These were: that they were conceivable, achievable, able to be controlled and measured, and were desirable. The principals were given time at a full group session to reflect individually on what their professional goals were for the following year.

2.5 Giving Evaluative Feedback

Giving evaluative feedback was a method whereby the principals could get a colleague's judgement and professional advice on their leadership actions. It was important that there were guidelines for the process. These were stated and discussed and all the principals received a copy for further reference.

Evaluative feedback:

- Describes rather than labels behaviours
- Is specific, not general and sweeping
- Takes into account the needs of the receiver—leaves the dignity in tact
- Is well-timed
- Is directed towards behaviour that can be changed

The first step in the evaluative feedback interactions was for the principals to be able to set a focus for observation to take place. Sometimes this could be quite general "Please

watch me take a staff meeting" or quite specific "I'd like you to note my body language during a Board of Trustees' meeting." It was important that setting a focus took place before the shadowing event so that the principal being shadowed knew what was being observed and directed the type of feedback that they required. The second step then, was careful observation and the recording of behaviours as noted in the section which described the shadowing guidelines. One of the most important parts of giving evaluative feedback was the ability to be able to observe and then describe a principal's leadership behaviours. Just listening to how another principal saw them interacting - the body language they noted, the words they used, the suggestions they made—was one of the first steps to self-reflection. The first part of giving evaluative feedback then, was for the principals to assist each other to be aware of their actions. The principals did this by carefully observing their partner and writing down their observations, as described in the section on shadowing. Then, each principal took time out from the other principal to reflect on the interaction that had just been observed. The shadower filled out his/her notes and made comments for positive and negative aspects of the interaction. The principal who was shadowed carefully thought about her/his set focus and the things that s/he did well to achieve the set goal, and the things s/he could have done differently that might have been more effective or could be developed upon.

When the principals have reunited after approximately 10 minutes apart, the shadower describes the leadership behaviours that were noted during the interaction while the principal concerned listens. Then the principal self-evaluates, the positive and the negative while the shadower actively listens. The shadower then gives the evaluative feedback, first the negative and then the positive, while the principal listens and does not interrupt. At this stage the two principals may converse about the interaction, make suggestions, bounce ideas around and as they plan for the next interaction, set new goals.

Of key importance was that the principals were able to set a specific focus in line with their professional goals, for the year ahead or for the specific interaction that week. It was paramount to gain these outside perspectives in the action research processes.

2.6 Action Research Processes

There were two types of processes of action research in the method in this research. The first of these was the action research study of the whole piece of research carried out by the researcher as part of a community of researchers to develop a theory of professional development for school leaders. The second type of process of action research was carried out by the principals in their own schools to achieve their school development plans and to solve their problems.

2.6.1 Action research to develop theory

As Trow (1957) hypothesised in his oft-cited dictum, usually the "research problem under investigation properly dictates the method of investigation" (p. 3). This research necessitated an action research process. Both research questions—Do partnerships assist in the professional development of school leaders? If so, in what ways?—required research that not only took place over a period of time, but also involved research methods which enabled a careful study of how the principals actually developed their individual partnerships and the benefits they ultimately realised from their partnership. Most importantly too, action needed to take place. I was continually made aware of the isolation principals were experiencing and recognised the need for some type of support and development which would assist them to deal with the issues and dilemmas in their own schools and practice. There was a sense of urgency in being proactive in the provision of training and support for these school leaders. The principals had immediate needs to be met and I believed that it was an ethical consideration on my part that the principals involved in the research benefited from their involvement, at the time of their involvement. Therefore this research became an intervention into the functioning of the principals' real worlds. Cohen and Manion (1980) stated that action research is:

> ... a close examination of the effects of such intervention ... action research is *situational*—it is concerned with identifying a problem in a specific context and attempting to solve it in that context; it is usually...*collaborative* teams of researchers and practitioners work together on a project; it is *participatory* team members themselves take part directly or indirectly in implementing the research; and it is *self-evaluative* modifications are continuously evaluated within the on-going situation, the ultimate objective being to improve practice in some way or other.
>
> (p. 174)

In terms of process, action research involves the self-reflective cycle as described by Kolb (1984) and discussed in Chapter Two. Observation, reflection, planning and action occurred in order to improve the model of professional development being developed for these school leaders. The important part of the action research processes was in the constant analysis of the data in collaboration with the principals. This continuing critical analysis helped to sustain the discourse which would lead eventually to the process of enlightenment and then political action by these school leaders. Carr and Kemmis (1986) described it in the following way:

> The full task of a critical educational science requires participants to collaborate in the organisation of their own enlightenment, the decision-making by which they will transform their own situations, and continuing critical analysis in the light of the consequences of those transformations

> which can sustain the engagement of scientific discourse, processes of enlightenment and practical action.
>
> (p. 159)

It meant that the principals would see themselves as part of a developmental process of learning where they would not only find out more about themselves but would contribute to a wider social project in helping to establish a form of support and professional development for other school leaders internationally.

The development of a community of action researchers would constantly provide situations for the school leaders to be involved in discussions about their practice, both in their partnership and within the group. Action research is an essential vehicle through which this discourse can occur and was an important method introduced in this research.

Carr and Kemmis (1986) stated that collaborative action research takes this one step further—it requires that practitioners meet together to be involved in the discourse and the critique necessary to "systematically develop the educational knowledge which justifies their educational practices and the educational situations constituted by these actions" (p. 188). The full group sessions provided the opportunities for these principals to meet together.

2.6.2 Action research for school development

Carr and Kemmis (1986) also suggested that the two essential aims of action research are "to involve and to improve" (p. 165). People involved in action research feel ownership of the process and are empowered by the knowledge gained. Improvement is threefold: the practitioners understanding of their practice; the subsequent improvement of that practice and consequently the improvement of the situation in which the action took place. Action research then, was an important method to include in this model for the professional development of school leaders as well as for the development of a theory of professional development. Wadsworth (1990) considered that "action research by participants enriches professional development programmes. The literature is now advocating action research as the prime approach to administrator training" (p. 13). Essentially this method required reflection on actions with outside perspectives, formulating plans, acting and monitoring with further reflection and observation, and so on until goals were achieved or problems were solved.

With the full group working together, it would be possible to utilise the strength within the group and the experiences that they had had to demonstrate aspects of the model and the full group sessions became part and parcel of the overall professional development programme for these principals. It was also hoped that through discussion groups and workshops the principals would be able to work at solving individual difficulties with

assistance from the rest of the group. Bailey (1987) described the working of *action learning sets* and says that "each member brings to the first meeting a real management problem encountered at work...members of the group concentrate on insightful questioning in order to help clarify the nature of the problem, its origins and causes" (p. 61). In this way the full group sessions sometimes could have been regarded as action learning sets.

2.7 Full Group Sessions/Consultants

These were the days when the principals would come into the Educational Leadership Centre at the University to work together as a research group. The full group sessions were very important to the ongoing development of partnerships as much of the time as possible was spent either working in pairs or as a full group to develop partnership and community. Maintaining close contact with the members of the group during the intervals between the full group sessions meant that the agenda of the next full group session was able to be planned specifically around the needs that had been observed out in the field. The full group sessions became the next actions in the action research process. A new consultant was brought into each full group session as this also gave different perspectives for further reflection.

Each of the agendas of the full group sessions can be found in Appendix E at the end of this report. At this point it is sufficient to list the dates and the main area of focus that each session had. Further discussion on the full group sessions can be found in the next chapter where the research process is described.

7 April 1993

Consultant:	Ginny Lee; Far West Laboratory, San Francisco
Main Focus:	The Leadership Framework (See Appendix D)
	Skills of Shadowing
	Carrying out a Context Interview

3 May 1993

Consultant:	Jan Robertson
Main Focus:	Conducting Reflective Interviews
	Keeping cassette diaries

4 August 1993

Consultant:	Jane Strachan
Main Focus:	Giving Evaluative Feedback

14 October 1993

Consultants:	Christine Bear
	Ted Wadsworth
Main Focus:	Building Partnership and community
	Building educational platforms and articulating values

14 March 1994

Consultant:	Professor Noeline Alcorn
Main Focus:	Advanced Reflective Interviewing
	Action Research

1 August 1994

Consultants:	Jan Robertson
	John Law
Main Focus:	Reflections on theory development
	Emancipatory behaviours

These full group sessions were utilised for data gathering purposes by keeping field notes of reflections, getting the principals to write reflections and action plans, and these became records of the research process.

3. Examination of records

The written records included extensive field notes kept in the form of diary entries of my reflections, the action research processes and the interactions with the principals over two and a half years. The field notes also included one file of notes and examples of all of the aspects of the process, such as the letters which were sent, to all the principals and group activity worksheets. Another folder contained the preliminary research data. Also each of the monthly visits with the research supervisors was recorded and filed and became another valuable source of data through continual discussion on the key principles and issues arising from the research.

There were initial field data collected from each principal at the beginning of the research and transcripts of interviews and cassette recordings. There was an individual file maintained for each principals in the research. The bulk of the information in each file was in the form of transcripts from interviews or cassette reflections. The letters exchanged also formed a substantial part of the individual files. These individual files contained the principals' professional goals, their action plans and sometimes shadowing records or feedback notes from their partners. Newspaper cuttings and principals' personal files of information relating to their school, such as newsletters home, questionnaires to

community, minutes of meetings of Board of Trustees and Education Review Office reports were also filed. Over the whole research period, including the preliminary study, a file of newspaper cuttings which depicted the social, political context that these principals were working in was consistently maintained.

The written records also included a review of current literature kept filed on Hypercard and literature relating specifically to principals' goals which were kept for reference in their individual files after they had been sent a copy. Some written surveys were utilised as well, but mostly in the preliminary study. The final source of written record that was able to be examined was the writing that related to this research. The articles written for conferences and publications were given to the principals to read and their comments were written in note form down the side of the articles as they read.

3.1 Field Notes and Diaries

I kept research diaries in which regular reflections were made and always after my contacts with the principals' individual, partnered or group interactions. These diaries illustrate how decisions were made, and how the data collection influenced future directions in the research. They noted emerging propositions or when propositions seemed fully saturated. There were also tables of data showing how many phone calls had been made to principals and when, how many times the principals had phoned me, when articles had been sent to principals, the principals attendance at full group sessions, the dates on which reflections were received and transcripts returned. They contained my thoughts, values, ideas, feelings and attitudes throughout the study.

As well as these diaries, other files of field notes were kept. There was an individual file on each principal. This contained transcripts, letters and articles sent, and written sheets from full group sessions. There was another file of all letters sent and the agendas and activities for group days. The notes from all meetings with the research supervisors were also kept and filed and provided useful reference and direction, and grew in size as the study progressed. There was also a folder of all the preliminary data collected and collated from 43 school leaders in 1992. There was another folder which outlined the research process as it unravelled. I constantly read and reviewed these field notes and made decisions about future directions needed and the themes developing.

3.2 Initial Field Data

In the interest of developing a relationship with the principals I set out to find out as much as possible about their schools and the environments they were working in. In the gathering of initial field data (see Appendix F) questions related to staffing, trustees,

community and mission and goals for the school were asked. This questionnaire gathered data about their educational histories, their family commitments and about what they hoped their involvement in the programme would do for them. This provided an interesting base point from which to begin interviews and discussions and also to refer back to later in the research.

3.3 Transcripts

Every interview that was conducted was taped and transcribed. Each transcription was sent back to the principals for further comment, editing and reflection. While transcribing the reflections or interviews I was compiling a response. These responses turned into sometimes lengthy letters that were sent to each principal regularly throughout the research.

3.4 Letters

The letters, both form and individual, are fully described in the earlier section on written reflections from researcher to principals, but they are important to mention again here as they became a large part of the written records that were constantly examined for emerging propositions and themes. The most regular contacts that the principals received from me were through the letters that I wrote. In most instances these were personalised individual letters. Occasionally, perhaps just before a full group session as a reminder to bring something or to attend, a form letter would be sent to the whole group, not disguising that it was written to all members. A total of 133 letters were sent in the first year of the research and 39 in the second. An average of ten per principal in the first year and three per principal in the second. These letters formed a valuable part of the written records of the research process as they were written in response to the written or cassette reflections or were my reflections to the principals after visiting them in their schools and watching them work in partnership.

3.5 Newspaper Cuttings

During the time of the research I followed the social and political context these principals were facing with interest. A file of the newspaper cuttings relating to principals in New Zealand was maintained. This social political context is outlined in Chapter One. These newspaper cuttings formed an interesting part of the written records maintained during the research. Often in the local papers there were specific articles on the principals concerned in the research. Sometimes the principals sent these to me; at other times they offered me their personal files. One of the principals appeared regularly in the newspaper

throughout the year on a contentious issue which challenged all of his powers as an educational leader. He had maintained a full file on this issue of which he gave me a copy.

3.6 A Continual Critical Review of Research Literature

It was imperative that I kept reading the literature within this field of study over the two year data gathering period. New articles were appearing all the time; conference addresses had particular significance, and often I found myself re-searching for an answer to a query that I was facing. My own concrete experiences with reflective observation and the constants links to the theory helped me to form the theories and make new directions where necessary. For example, I realised that the principals were not carrying out the reflective interviews and in re-reading Barnett's (1990) study I noted that he always conducted these interviews well after the events and observations, back in the clinical setting of the seminar room. I began to question whether this was where they should take place; and query the time difference and what effect that would make; and how these principals in this research were dealing with the issues at the time they were occurring which was most important to them. Often in reading the current literature I could relate the theory to the practices I was observing and/or listening to the principals reflect upon. Therefore I was also able to send them articles or chapters of books that I thought they would find interesting.

3.7 Written Surveys

There was only one written survey in the action research period and that was the initial field data sheet filled out at the beginning of the research. However, during the preliminary study the school leaders filled out two surveys, one mid year and one at the end of the year. There was qualitative and quantitative data collected in these surveys (see Appendix A).

These surveys were extremely informative in assisting to set directions for the research study the following year. There were the views from early childhood, primary and secondary leaders, from those whose partnerships had developed successfully and from those who had not, and they contained a wide range of ideas and suggestions.

3.8 Article Writing and Comment

During the research period various articles were written relating to the research. These were then given to the principals to comment upon. Once I sent the article to the principals asking for comment and received seven responses either by phone, written or

cassette reflections. At the final full group session the principals were given two articles, plus the time to read them and make comments on them as they read. Their comments and discussion on the interpretation of the data were very important. Some of the principals were also sent sections of the final writing that contained their cases or leadership actions to gain their approval and/or comment that they were comfortable with the content.

All of these methods provided much empirical data. The analysis of this data was a constant part of the research process, beginning during the preliminary study and continuing for two and a half years.

DATA ANALYSIS

Grounded Theory Developed Through Action Research Processes

This qualitative research study used "grounded theory" data analysis techniques in which theory was developed from data gathered through observation, interview and document analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As the theory was constructed directly from the data, it developed during the research (Blase, 1987; Bogden & Biklen, 1982; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The data analysis techniques in this study were derived mostly from the techniques described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) but not in the strictest sense. Some of their suggestions were too positivistic for this praxis-oriented research. For example, such techniques as the minimising and the maximising of the differences and similarities of data through comparison of different groups of subjects did not occur in this study. Nor did the research start from a pre-determined set of hypotheses. These developed throughout the study as propositions which then described the properties within each category. Unlike the sociologist wanting to write formal theory about human behaviour, this educational researcher wanted to develop a substantive theory based on the data collected from one group of subjects. However, a diverse research group was selected and therefore there was a degree of maximising and minimising of difference and similarity *within* the research group being studied. Glaser and Strauss (1967) stated that the theory developed from studying only one group is "at most the discovery of some basic categories and a few of their properties" and that the theory that develops is "only the beginning of a theory" (p. 62). This may be so but as discussed in the next paragraph, all grounded theory is simply that—a beginning.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) also described processes of theoretical and statistical sampling. Some techniques of theoretical sampling were utilised in the latter half of the research when questions were specifically developed to saturate certain categories.

However, the techniques of statistical sampling, in particular, were not carried out assiduously as I believed they could limit the emergence of new categories as they followed pre-set agendas. Glaser and Strauss (1967) also talked about the need in the final stages of the data collection for the researcher to only dictate data about the categories already established. If this was the case, then no further categories *would* emerge as the researcher would be subject to tunnel vision. There is a flaw in their discussion here I believe. In this study, categories were being restructured and reformed and properties were emerging through constant comparative analysis even after the data collection ended. For example, the property of *unexpected professional interaction with university researcher* emerged in the latter stages as it became clear that this was at the basis of the substantive theory developing. However, Glaser and Strauss (1967) did describe this as a very real occurrence in the development of grounded theory:

> When generation of theory is the aim, however, one is constantly alert to emergent perspectives that will change and help develop. ..theory. These perspectives can easily occur even on the final day of study or when the manuscript is reviewed in page proof: so the published word is not the final one, but only a pause in the never-ending process of generating theory.
>
> (p. 40)

This describes the theory development in this research. I view this thesis as a beginning rather than a final word on principals' professional development. It will raise just as many questions as answers.

Another variance from the suggestions of Glaser and Strauss (1967) was that research questions were set at the beginning of this research. They would perhaps frown upon this fact but the questions gave the research a focus and the researcher a baseline from which to work. Glaser and Strauss (1967) conceded that "to be sure one goes out and studies an area with a particular sociological perspective, and with a focus, a general question, or a problem in mind" (p. 33) but they cautioned that the researcher should study an area without any preconceived theory that will dictate "relevancies" in concepts and hypotheses. The grounded theory must be simply that—categories and themes which arise from the data collected. There were no preconceived theories or hypotheses that I was setting out to prove or disprove but the preliminary study experiences and my prior reading meant that I had many views about the use of partnerships for the professional development of school leaders. The use of research questions rather than a set hypotheses would be less restrictive in the development of the grounded theory. There were many times throughout the research that the research questions were revisited for direction and inspiration. The research questions kept the focus on the main purpose of the study when

it would have been very easy to be transient and follow the many tangents of enquiry that presented themselves during the analysis of data and the construction of theory.

What then, *is* the process of analysis in grounded theory development? "In discovering theory, one generates conceptual categories or their properties from evidence; then the evidence from which the category emerged is used to illustrate the concept" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 23). In the examples from their research on death and dying in their book, Glaser and Strauss (1967) show how they started with a category:

"Social loss of dying patients"

then developed properties of this category:

"Calculating social loss on basis of learned and apparent characteristics of patient"

and finally, when the themes are saturated they develop hypotheses or propositions such as:

"The higher the social loss of a dying patient,

(1) The better his [sic] care,
(2) The more nurses develop loss rationales to explain away his [sic] death" (p. 42).

This process was followed in this research study through the systematic use of constant comparative analysis of the data gathered from studying one research group. This technique was particularly useful. The constant comparative analysis method is "concerned with generating and plausibly suggesting...many categories, properties, and hypotheses" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 104) about general problems, such as, in this case, how to effect educational leadership development. Glaser and Strauss described four stages in the constant comparative method: comparing incidents applicable to each category; integrating categories and their properties; delimiting the theory, and writing the theory. These stages form a framework for discussion of the analysis process in this research study.

Comparing Incidents Applicable to each Category.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) stated that "low level categories emerge rather quickly during the early phases of data collection" (p. 36). This was particularly evident in this study. The research analysis began during the preliminary study and some low level categories had already emerged, such as the need for 'trust'. The time of the first interview with the research group was very important:

> In grounded research the interviews at the beginning of the study are open-ended conversations during which respondents can talk with no

> limits. Later when interviews and observations are directed by emerging theory, direct questions can be asked based on categories.
>
> (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 75)

At the beginning of the research, after the first phone calls, the first interviews and discussions, further low level categories began to form. I began to code incidents in my field notes and diaries "into as many categories of analysis as possible, as categories emerge or as data emerge that fit an existing category" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 105). Notes were made down the margin of the field diaries as to which categories data supported and from time to time lists of direct quotes and data which supported particular categories were typed.

Here is an example of the analysis process followed in the research. An example of one lower order category that emerged in the early stages of the research was:

Reflection in leadership

Soon there were many incidents of data that emerged which related to this category. The data were all listed. Sometimes these were recorded or coded as direct quotes:

> • Reflection is not something I have been in the habit of allowing time for. This morning my mind is on the AGM being held tonight and the school audit on Wednesday for which I have work to do.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

> • I know that I should be reflective—but committing time to it is a problem.
>
> (F/N:1/12/92)

> • There is so little time for all principals have to do that reflection is probably confined to the trip to and from school. But I am always prioritising and that entails reflection—but reflection on the tasks to be done rather than how I do them. I should benefit from reflecting on my performance.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

and sometimes as propositions that I formulated from reading and reflecting on the data gathered:

- The principals find difficulty in prioritising the time for reflective practice
- The principals need to be taught skills to utilise to enable reflection on practice
- The principals value the opportunity to reflect on their practice
- Reflection on practice occurs when observing their partners' practice

At this stage of data collection it is a fairly "confused state of noting almost everything" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 39) because it all seems significant and there does not appear to be a consistent rationale for which categories are selected or which categories certain data will be placed in. At this stage of the research there are often conflicts in the emphases of thinking. Glaser and Strauss stated that in this process of developing grounded theory decisions on the relevance of the material, the saturation of categories, the emergence of new categories, the formulation of theory and the mood of the researcher are all factors which are in a continual process of change.

However, after much data has been collected, and the incidents and propositions have been formulated and compared, properties of the category begin to emerge in which the data can then be subgrouped. "This constant comparison of the incidents very soon starts to generate theoretical properties of the category" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 106). This was what Glaser and Strauss also described as "theoretical sampling" where the researcher/analyst collects, codes and analyses data and decides what to collect next in the light of the analysis of the previous data.

Examples of these theoretical properties that were developed within the above category were:

- Even structured interviews were not always easy to fit in
- Lack of time
- Lack of understanding of task
- Lack of skills
- Job conditions often inimical to reflection

The development of these properties and propositions is the early developmental stages of grounded theory. When a researcher "begins to hypothesize with the explicit purpose of generating theory, the researcher is no longer a passive receiver of impressions but is drawn naturally into actively generating and verifying...hypotheses through comparison of groups" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 39). Although there could not be a verification of hypotheses between groups in this study, I began to generate hypotheses and verify them between members of the group. Most important during the process of constant comparative analysis is the insistence of searching and re-searching the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The data was revisited consistently throughout the collection and analysis period. Sometimes I would just read and browse the field notes until the data became so familiar that at times, when new categories emerged I was able to begin to categorise previously collected data by memory to the new category. This strategy of comparative

analysis "puts a high emphasis on theory as process, that is, theory as an ever-developing entity, not as a perfected product" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 32).

The *process* of the development of theory *was* paramount in this research which is why the method of grounded theory analysis of data was selected. However, the way in which the process was carried out was quite different to that suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967). In this study, the research group themselves were involved in the analysis of data, as were the two supervisors of the research. In some ways they acted as the research team that Glaser and Strauss (1967) mentioned. They were my "teammates" (p. 107) and with them I was able to discuss theoretical notions and compare their ideas and knowledge with my own. In this research the techniques to develop the grounded theory were utilised in conjunction with the systematic reflective processes within collaborative action research. This is why the constant comparative analysis of emerging data was paramount. The two processes of action research and grounded theory development complemented each other and there was "joint data collection and analysis [and] multiple hypotheses [were] pursued simultaneously" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 39).

Collaborative action research and involvement in grounded theory development can be a powerful tool in assisting school principals and others in gaining insights into their on-the-job behaviour, how their schools function, and ultimately the ways these two characteristics interact. This is the basis from which praxis can occur. As the propositions emerged and themes were developed, these were given back to the principals to reflect upon and discussions based on these findings were held in later interviews and at the workshops. For example, using the aforementioned category of *reflection in leadership*, I specifically asked each principal in interview the following questions. "When does the most reflection on your practice take place?" and "What factors inhibit reflection on your practice?" Also built into workshop sessions were times for the principal to reflect individually and times to carry out reflective interviews in pairs, and then I used these concrete experiences to question the principals about the value of this type of reflective experience on their practice.

The research group became inextricably involved in the analysis of the findings in this research. This was where this research goes beyond the grounded theory development as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967). In this praxis-oriented research the developing grounded theory was assisting the participants *as* they took part in the research. It was not therefore simply the development of theory by the researcher for the researched. This is discussed more fully in the methodology section. The process of action research in this research study became a method for the analysis process as well as for that of data collection.

With the emergence of more and more categories as the data collection increases, the need arose to move to the second stage of comparative analysis—the integration of categories and their properties.

Integrating Categories and their Properties.

During the later stages of the research, the comparison of incidents changed to the comparison of properties and then categories. This was when the constant comparative analysis became more complex. There was an overlap of categories that had emerged and data seemingly 'fit' more than one category and duplication of supporting data occurred. Then higher level categories emerged which integrated the previous categories. Glaser and Strauss (1967) described this occurrence. "Higher level, over-riding and integrating, conceptualizations—and the properties that elaborate them—tend to come later during the joint collection, coding and analysis of the data" (p. 36).

At this time in the research, the theoretical sampling occurred with some regularity. This is where the researcher targets data collection in certain categories. With this in mind, during the second interview at the end of the first year, the questions were focused on specific themes as Blase (1987) described in his grounded theory research development. "Specific questions related to substantive themes analysed from earlier interviews...and theoretical ideas...were pursued more directly with each research participant" (p. 592). Following this approach, the types of questions in the second interview in this research study were:

- Do you carry out a 'formal' reflective interview each time your partner visits? Why? Why not?
- What causes you to do the most reflection on your practice?
- What is the most beneficial part of time spent with your partner?

As a result, much integration of categories and properties occurred as the theory began to emerge. In the example described previously the lower level category of *Job Conditions Inimical to Reflection* was subsumed in the first instance by the higher order category of *Factors Affecting Partnerships* and then the higher order category of *Problems experienced during this research.* Saturation of categories occurred when no more data could be collected that added to or refuted the initial analysis. One technique I used to achieve the saturation of categories was to return the propositions and descriptions of the data analysis to the principals for response. Sometimes they made comments down the side of articles or transcripts such as "Although I didn't say this, I certainly could

have." Or "Totally agree." Or "Couldn't have put it better." Sometimes the principals' remarks showed that they found the emerging theory very interesting with comments such as "Interesting to see the whole picture from another perspective" and "I hadn't thought about it in that way, but yes, that is what it is like." Often this type of data will not emerge without specific prompts such as questions or the reading of emerging propositions and analysis. At this stage of analysis the extent of the data was considerable. Decisions had to be made about the scope of the research.

To make these decisions, the recommendation that Glaser and Strauss (1967) made of taking "respites" (p. 72) from data collection and analysis was particularly useful. These respites (usually school holiday periods) were utilised to re-read the literature and write articles about the research. It was, though, most particularly when returning to the data after a respite that the new categories and themes would emerge and the process of checking for saturation of the new categories—and delimiting the theory—would begin again.

Delimiting the Theory.

Delimiting can occur at the theory level or category level. This is where the researcher begins to use fewer higher order level categories to formulate the theory. This occurred mostly in the second year of the research and particularly, right at the end of the data collection period. New higher level categories were developed after reading the principals' evaluations at the final full session. These final reflections provided a valuable insight into how these principals perceived their experiences and also helped to substantiate the most important categories. They were invaluable in the continuing analysis of the findings and the development of theory. This is where the "universe of data" was effectively "delimitated" (p. 112) with the decision to collect no more data and with the development of new higher order categories which effectively delimitated and then saturated the categories. Then a careful search of the data occurred again to be as sure as possible that there was a concise paring down of the properties within the categories and that no more data could be effectively added.

In this way the categories were also seen to be theoretically saturated. Glaser and Strauss (1967) said that saturation is reached when "no additional data are being found whereby the sociologist can develop properties of the category" (p. 61). As similar instances are seen and recorded again and again, the researcher becomes empirically confident that a category is saturated. The higher level categories that were being utilised at this stage of the research were:

- enhanced reflection on practice

- increased professional interactions
- educational leadership development
- a structure for achievement of goals
- role of the researcher
- factors which lead to success
- problems experienced in the research

These categories, then, became the theoretical criteria on which to spend time and effort and became the basis for the analytic framework from which to write the substantive theory.

Writing Theory.

Although the theory is developing throughout the research, and is being written, when researchers reach this stage in the process of constant comparative analysis they begin to feel they can publish their findings with confidence. At this stage a systematic substantive theory has been developed and it can be presented in many different forms because "the form in which a theory is presented does not make it a theory; it is a theory because it explains and predicts something. Grounded theory can be presented either as a well-codified set of propositions or in a running theoretical discussion, using conceptual categories and their properties" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 31).

The theory in this research study has been presented in the latter format, in a running theoretical discussion rather than a codified set of propositions. The principals were constantly involved in the negotiation of meaning at the juncture of data and theory development, and although I was the major player in the writing of the theory, the principals had a marked influence on the resulting theory. The research process in the following chapter describes in more depth how the principals were involved in the negotiation of meaning. It was hoped that this grounded theory style of research would be acknowledged and valued by others who would relate to the data offered by these school principals. This is the aim of grounded theory and Ramsay, et al (1990) elaborated by stating that the theory "fits empirical situations and can be understood by the sociologist and the lay person, alike, and further it provides people with relevant predictions, explanations, interpretations and applications" (p. 88).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) stated that a very important goal of grounded theory development is that "people in a situation for which grounded theory has been generated can apply it to the natural course of daily events" (p. 247). Important too, is the credibility of the discovered theory in the ultimate presentation to the audience. Glaser and Strauss

(1967) mention many techniques for achieving this credibility, most of which were utilised in this study. They say that it is possible to "quote directly from interviews or conversations" or "include dramatic segments of on-the-spot field notes" or to describe events or "offer accounts of personal experiences" (p. 229) to show how certain events impinged on the researcher as well—the reflexive nature of research. Sometimes a narrative will be unfolded. This research theory is enriched with the voices of the principals and "on-the-spot" research notes. It was important that much data was provided as evidence of the conclusions reached. The grounded theory paradigm treats the discovery of theory as a process. It attempts to show the real picture of the social interaction and the structural context of the subjects. The grounded theory paradigm is also based on the principle of praxis as it will help those involved in the development of grounded theory to move towards emancipatory behaviours.

In sum, research as praxis requires that the theoretical principle of praxis underlies the methodology, the methods, and ultimately, the analysis of data. Therefore, for grounded theory to be emancipatory, the research group needed to be involved in the theory development to lead them towards transformative action and emancipatory behaviour. The participants have to work collaboratively to improve reflection practices and self-awareness so that it becomes possible to look beyond daily practice to the wider educational situation. There needed to be methods in place to assist these school leaders to take the time to reflect more critically on their practice and to assist them to observe their own practice and that of their colleagues so that different perspectives can be gained. The methods of data analysis are as important as the methods of data collection, and were also designed with the ultimate outcome of increasing reflection on practice with the attainment of praxis in mind.

The research took place over two years and data collection was therefore ongoing and extensive. The reader needs a broad overview of the research study phases before continuing to read in depth, the actual processes carried out over this time. The following is a very brief chronology. A chronology in greater detail (which itemises each action recorded in the research diaries) can be found in Appendix G.

Chapter Four: The Research Process

CHRONOLOGY AND THE ACTION RESEARCH PHASE

This chapter begins with a brief chronology of the study which took place over four years. The research questions for this study arose after the substantive grounded theory had been developed from previous research (Robertson, 1991) and were further developed after reviewing the literature in the field of study.

A description of the action research phase of this present study follows the chronology. This research process is presented within Fullan's (1991) phases of the change process: initiation, implementation and institutionalisation, as these phases were clearly identifiable as the principals changed the ways they interacted with their professional colleagues. Therefore, readers will move through the cycles of action research and should gain a clear understanding of how this process evolved, and how the decisions that were made were dependent on the analysis of actions taken previously rather than based on a predetermined plan. In this way, hypotheses and hunches were tried and tested, and the model of professional development was altered and developed, as the study progressed.

This chapter concludes with a detailed case study (Case Study 1) of the development of a partnership between two rural teaching principals. The reader will see how a partnership relationship develops over time, the issues and successes faced, and have a clearer understanding of the concept of principals' partnerships for professional development as they move on to reading the findings.

CHRONOLOGY

In brief—

1990-1992	The exploratory phase
1993-1994	The action research phase
1993-1995	The analysis phase

1990-1992 The exploratory phase (Described in Chapter One)

1990	Masters Thesis research (Robertson, 1991).

What are the unmet professional development needs of those in leadership positions in schools? What strategies are available or can be made available to meet these needs?

1991 Study of the literature begins.

1992 Preliminary study—43 school leaders involved in curriculum leadership development contract and working in partnership for professional development.

1993-1994 The action research phase

1993 *February /March Initiation of partnerships*

- Criteria for selection of research group established.
- Selection of research group.

April/May Implementation of partnerships begins

- Two half day workshops with research group.

May-August

- Principals working independently in partnerships.
- Researcher interviewing and observing.

August

- Half day workshop with research group.

September-October

- Principals working independently in partnerships.
- Researcher interviewing and observing.

October

- Full day workshop for research group.

October 1993 February 1994

- Principals working together (excluding six week holiday break).
- Researcher phoning, interviewing and observing.

February 1994 Institutionalisation phase begins

- Fifth research group session—Full day workshop.

March-August

- Principals working independently in partnerships.

August

- Final (6th) full group session.

End of data gathering period.

August 1993-August 1995 The analysis phase

1993	Principals involved in negotiation of meaning and saturation of propositions through individual interviews and full group sessions.
1994	Principals asked to respond to specific sections of research writing.
1995	Principals involved in the reading and writing of case studies.

This brief chronology of the entire research process is now followed by a fuller discussion of the action research phase.

1993-1994 The Action Research Phase

At the end of 1992 reflection on the final evaluations on the preliminary study (described in Chapter One) was carried out and this analysis was the first phase of the action research phase in this study. This analysis identified many considerations to take note of in the initiation phase.

Initiation Phase Establishing the Partnerships

In 1993, the first step in the initiation of the partnerships was to select a research group who were willing to commit themselves to this project for a period of 18 months. Careful thought was given to the decisions that had to be made in light of the literature and the findings from the preliminary study and the following criteria were influential.

Selection Criteria

The principals were specifically targeted either because they were nominated as a prospective partner by one of the principals already selected, or they were approached to meet the following criteria that had been set for the establishment of the research group:

- size of research group
- experience in partnerships in preliminary study
- participant choice of partner
- representation of gender and ethnicity
- geographical location
- focus on primary principalship
- size and type of school

- teaching and non-teaching principals
- age and number of years in principalship.

SIZE OF RESEARCH GROUP?

The first thing that was evident from the preliminary study was that there were too many partnerships (21) to be able to keep detailed information about what each had been doing. Also the findings indicated that the partnerships had not been given sufficient personalised attention and support in the early stages of partnership development which had an adverse effect. It was important that the research group was diverse so that the model that was developed was grounded in a wide range of principals' experiences. Six partnerships would enable a representative group of principals and allow for a degree of anonymity within the reporting of the research findings.

EXPERIENCE IN PARTNERSHIPS IN PRELIMINARY STUDY?

At the end of the preliminary study there were many principals who had indicated they would continue with partnerships as a form of professional development without the assistance of an outside facilitator. Their strengths and experiences could be utilised in the building of a community of researchers. It was also important that research data, relating specifically to the initiation of the partnerships, could be gathered from principals who had not previously experienced working in a professional partnership. It was decided that half of the research group would be new to the partnership's concept at the beginning of 1993 and half would have had some prior experience.

PARTICIPANT CHOICE OF PARTNER?

The preliminary study and previous research (e.g. Barnett, 1990) had demonstrated the importance of the principals themselves being involved in the selection of a partner. I therefore talked with each principal about partner possibilities before the initial approaches were made to the other principals.

REPRESENTATION OF GENDER AND ETHNICITY?

Women and men, Maori and pakeha, were targeted for the research group as I wanted to study a group representative of New Zealand primary principals. So that the substantive theory developed would be inclusive of as many principals as possible. It would have been preferable to have had higher numbers of women and Maori than was achieved. However, a representation of four women and two Maori, although small, was greater

than the numbers in which they were proportionately represented in principalship in New Zealand at this time.

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION?

The research group needed to be located within close proximity to Hamilton for ease and economy of travel for the principals and researcher. The principals would have to travel to each other's schools and there would be travel to the Educational Leadership Centre at the University of Waikato for the full group sessions. As I was working full-time as a lecturer at the same time as carrying out this research the distance for travelling was limited to a 20 kilometres radius from the university so that the amount of time spent in schools could be maximised and fitted around teaching and administrative duties.

FOCUS ON PRIMARY PRINCIPALSHIP?

The partnerships were restricted to those principals in primary schools. In the preliminary study there had been educational leaders from early childhood, primary and secondary institutions but as reflexivity and reciprocity were important theoretical underpinnings of this research, I decided to utilise my own experiences, as a primary principal and 20 years of primary teaching, in the research by researching in primary education.

SIZE AND TYPE OF SCHOOL?

The research group, to be representative, needed to consist of a wide range of size and type of primary schools. There were two intermediate schools, five full primary schools, and five contributing schools. There were four rural schools, five urban town schools and four urban city schools. There was one kura kaupapa Maori (curriculum taught through the medium of Maori) and one school hoping to apply for kura kaupapa Maori status in the future. There was one integrated state school (Roman Catholic) and the rest were state schools. Four schools were situated in lower socioeconomic areas, two were in catchment areas of high socioeconomic status and the others drew pupils from catchments with a spread of socioeconomic status.

TEACHING AND NON-TEACHING PRINCIPALS?

It was important to trial this model of professional development with both teaching and non-teaching principals. There were four teaching principals in the research group who had school staff of five teachers or less which were classified G2 with around 55 and 70 children. The other principals were all from G4 or G5 status schools and had between 180

and 255 children. These latter principals were not only in non-teaching positions but, in some cases, they had non-teaching deputy principals as well.

AGE AND EXPERIENCE OF PRINCIPALS?

Again diversity within the group was the influencing factor. There were three principals who had had over 20 years of experience in principalship and four principals who were in the first three years of principalship. The other principals had an average of 10 years in the position of principal. One principal was aged over 60 at the beginning the research and retired at the end of the final year of the research; seven principals were aged between 50 and 60 and two of these principals took early retirement during the research; two were between 41 and 50 and two were under 40 years of age. There was, therefore, a marked difference in ages and experiences of principalship within the group.

Selection of Research Group

Although all efforts were made to select a representative group of principals, this study would ultimately produce a substantive theory which would only apply to the group studied. There was no intention to extrapolate findings from this group to generalise across other groups of principals, but even so, it was hoped that many other principals could relate to the grounded theory developed from these principals' experiences.

The eight principals from the preliminary study who had indicated in their evaluations that they would like to continue with a professional partnership, were telephoned and offered the opportunity to be part of a research group. Six agreed but two declined as they felt their work conditions were inimical to the type of commitment that would be required of them. Four of the six principals who assented wanted to continue with their existing partnerships and the other two principals expressed a desire to form new partnerships. They were each sent a letter which outlined the benefits and the requirements of the proposed research programme and that there would be a follow-up visit to discuss the contents of the letter (see Appendix H).

The selection of the remaining half of the research group followed. The two principals from the preliminary study each had a suggestion of whom they would like their new partner to be and the next step was to contact those two nominated principals and invite them to be part of the research. One readily agreed as he and the other principal were already collaborating on a curriculum assessment contract and he said that "I feel I need something like this to keep me motivated and provide some impetus in my life and career" (F/N:4/2/93). He could see real openings for professional development. The other nominated principal was a pakeha who had the initial concern that he would have

difficulty collaborating successfully with the Maori principal who had requested him as that principal and his staff communicated entirely in Maori. He felt there could be cultural and language barriers to their professional development and developing partnership relationship. However, after discussions with his partner, and after receiving the letter and an article outlining the research programme, his response two weeks later was very positive. "I don't need to talk further, but would love to be in it" he said (F/N:2/3/93).

An interview was conducted and this contact highlighted the importance of my being out in the principals' schools talking with them about the current issues. These types of reflections by the researcher, in this case highlighted during a visit to a school, became important predeterminates of future actions in the process. On this day the principal wanted to share his concerns of whether he should be marketing his school and soliciting pupils as one of the neighbouring schools was at this time. He felt that the Partnerships' programme would help him to "focus on aspects of my role that are the most important in leading for quality education in this school" (F/N:4/3/93).

The remaining two partnerships would be principals new to the concept of the Partnerships' programme. The next person selected was the principal of a large urban school who had made the original statement "I'd really like to buddy with someone" in the 1991 research which is discussed in Chapter One. He was approached to see whether he would like to be part of a new research programme which was exploring this idea further. He agreed and suggested the neighbouring school principal, who had also been part of the earlier research, as a possible partner. When this principal was approached she did not hesitate to be part of the group. She also stated that she was surprised that her partner had chosen her but said that she "wants to be a good partner and doesn't want to let him down" (F/N:5/3/93).

The representation of gender, ethnicity and teaching and non-teaching principals for the research group had still not been met. There was a newly appointed male Maori at a local rural school so I phoned him to discuss the programme. He established a partnership with a woman who had been a teaching principal at the neighbouring school for four years. The development of this particular partnership is described fully in Case Study 1 at the end of this chapter.

The six newly selected principals were each sent an alternative letter to that which had been sent to the six principals from the preliminary study (see Appendix I). The letter outlined the principles that the Partnerships' programme was based on, the research programme over the 18 months and the commitment required of the participants. It also outlined the benefits they would receive and my commitment to their professional development over this period of time. An article was also enclosed that had been published the previous year about the experiences of the principals in the preliminary

study. This was to enable these newly selected principals to read more about the Partnerships' concept before committing themselves to it.

The visits to each school were carried out within the next fortnight and any issues, concerns and suggestions were discussed. At this first meeting discussions were also carried out with each principal on the areas for professional development which they felt they would focus on in the forthcoming year. Each of the principals was also given two survey sheets of initial field data (see Appendix F) to be completed and brought to the first full group session on 7 April. At this stage 11 out of the 12 principals had agreed to be in the research group. Then began a period of synthesising and analysing the data gathered in interview and during phone calls.

The principals were sent personal letters thanking them for the visit to their school and the opportunity to talk with them. This letter was the formal invitation to the principals to join the research (see Appendix J). However, the principals also knew from this point of time that they could leave the research at any time if it did not meet with their expectations or requirements as the letter contained the following statement:

> You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time because I am working for you and want you to feel in charge of the input that I offer.
>
> (F/N:16/3/93)

The principals were asked to respond in writing that they understood the commitment required and that they had secured their Board of Trustees' support for their involvement in the research. I had previously offered my commitment to them as researcher, colleague and consultant, throughout the research period:

> Some of the greatest benefits for you are the opportunities to have my professional input as an educational consultant, plus my commitment to your continuing professional development. This will ensure access to overviews of current professional literature and research and opportunities to take part in workshops with internationally recognised course leaders and practitioners.
>
> (F/N:18/2/93)

This signalled my clear intention that there would be a "give-and-take" in this research. The principals would be required to "give" a commitment to trialing the professional development model for eighteen months, but during this time there would also be opportunities for them to "take." It was imperative that an interactive approach was encouraged. This letter heralded the beginning of an 18 month dialogic encounter with each of the principals. Enclosed with each letter was an individually selected research article which related to the particular area of professional development that the principal had discussed when I had visited his/her school. The final step in the selection of the group was to write a letter to thank each of the Boards of Trustees for supporting their

principal in this professional development opportunity (see Appendix K), and each of the teaching principals was offered a monetary resource to assist with securing three days release from their teaching and school to carry out shadow visits and/or attend the full group sessions.

During this "research" phase data was gathered during phone calls, interviews and individual visits to the schools. The analysis of these findings, along with further reading of the literature and discussions with research supervisors, led to the next major action in the research process—the first full group session. Throughout the action research the full group sessions formed the major identifiable "actions" in each of the action research cycles with many other minor actions, research, reading, discussion, reflection and analysis, occurring between each full group session.

At this stage the first full group session was two weeks away. In summary, each of the partnerships had been initiated and each of the principals had been provided with reading material about the research programme as well as research literature relating to their proposed professional goal. All of the principals made a phone contact with their partner before the first full group session, where the preliminary building and/or further development of partnership would take place.

Implementation Phase Developing the Partnerships

On 7 April 1993 the first of the six full group sessions was held. Based on findings from the preliminary study it had been decided that two half day sessions one month apart in the early stages of the research would be more beneficial than one full day. The reasons for this were: to capitalise on concrete experiences in the learning process; not to overload with too much information in one session and to provide more support and attention in this early stage of development. An international consultant in peer-assisted leadership, Ginny Lee, had been invited to visit the Leadership Centre to assist in the early training of the principals in peer-assisted leadership development. We jointly planned the programme (see Appendix E) in the light of the analysis of the data gathered previously and Ginny's own research experiences. Nine out of the twelve principals in the research group attended the session. One absence was expected as this principal had, the previous year, booked a school camp for her class on this day. One principal forgot, and his partner had another appointment.

The programme was focused around three content areas:

- the Leadership Framework (see Appendix D) in preparation for the Context Interview;
- training in observation;

- the overall programme for the year.

In preparation for the context interview the principals were given opportunities at this full group session to explore the factors which affected their leadership actions and student achievement in their school. They carried out a group activity in which they had to identify which parts of the leadership framework various aspects of leadership belonged to. Each principal made some notes about their particular leadership context during the session and they were then asked to complete notes in each of the aspects of their context before their interview. The principals were also given worksheets to assist them to carry out the context interview and they set the dates on which they would carry out this interview in each other's schools.

The principals practised the skill of observation during a role play of a principal interacting with a concerned parent which Ginny and I enacted. The principals found themselves making judgments rather than observations and also found it difficult to discern what was important to be noted. This was not a skill they used effectively or regularly. They were all asked to try an initial shadow before the second full group session so that it was possible to build on their first experiences of observing their partners' actions. The value of a concrete experience in the learning process (Kolb, 1984) was recognised and utilised. The principals were also asked to keep a cassette diary of their thoughts during the research and were each given a blank cassette for this purpose.

The overall Partnerships' programme, for the 18 month study, was discussed. Each principal was given a copy of this programme which outlined that there would be at least one full group session and at least one shadow visit to each school every three months during the research.

After this full group session, there was a month of data gathering, reflection and analysis. In the days immediately following the full group session I worked with the two partnerships who had been absent. Over the following month the principals all carried out their context interviews and were phoned a week before the next full group session as a reminder to attend the session and also to check on their progress with the set tasks in their schools. After analysing notes taken during the phone calls it was evident that there were three items of importance to the principals that needed to be included in the next full group session. These were discussed with my supervisors at our next meeting. The concerns were: the level of confidentiality within the group at the full group sessions; the rules or principles by which the principals would work together, and the last concern was about the reflections they had been asked to make. The principals seemed unsure about how to reflect onto the tape and what to reflect about.

The next half day session on 3 May 1993 was planned to meet these specific needs of the group. This time 11 out of 12 principals were present and the one absentee had called

in sick. The agenda and proposed outcomes were displayed and outlined at the beginning of the morning session (see Appendix E). The first thing the principals were asked to do was to practise reflection. The decision to incorporate written reflections into each full group session was made to further develop this skill as the principals were not used to making oral or written reflections. It was also seen as a valuable way to regularly collect and analyse data. The principals were asked to complete a written reflection on sheets that were distributed. They were given very few instructions. They were simply asked to write about whatever came to mind at that time. The sentence starter was "At the beginning of today's session..." and music was played quietly in the background while they wrote. These reflective sessions prompted many responses. Some principals reflected about how they felt at that moment. Others continued dialogues which had been started at previous interviews. Some examples include:

> I am impressed with the comfortable setting and the chance to deal with these issues quietly, away from the racket and pressures of the school.
>
> (F/N:3/5/94)

> The "trauma" of last week seems to have passed with the appointment of a reliever to the deputy principal's position.
>
> (F/N:3/5/94)

> Feeling disorganised, running late, outside influences impinging.
>
> (F/N:3/5/94)

The writing during these reflection times often provided the most valuable insights into the things which were foremost in the principals' minds at a particular time. The principals spent most of the time at this session working in their partnerships as it was important that they began to develop collaborative skills. We discussed their experiences from their context interviews. We talked about their recent shadow visits and they shared their experiences, the difficulties they had encountered and the successes they had enjoyed. One of the findings from the preliminary study was that the principals did not necessarily have the skills or the understanding of how to go about these shadow visits for professional development purposes. Therefore, in this research the principals were given set guidelines as to how to go about a shadow visit (See Methods—Shadow). For the first shadow visits at the beginning of the research I had asked the principals to try and carry on with a normal day while the other principal observed them. Most shadowing visits had begun in this way.

Our discussion during this workshop also centred around the reporting of observations of leadership behaviours and the principals noted the prompt for self-reflection that had occurred while listening to their partner describe their actions after an observed incident.

However, it became apparent at this full group session that the principals would achieve much more from the observation situation if they planned it to coincide with certain events beforehand so that the observations had a specific focus. Trying to shadow their partner on a "normal" day, and note observations generally, had proved difficult. With a specific focus their observations would then link to professional goals that the principals wished to achieve. It was decided that this would be a more satisfactory process for the shadowing aspects of the model for future interactions.

We discussed the types of situations that the principals would find most beneficial to work together on. One principal wanted her partner to observe her at a senior staff meeting when she was working through a potentially contentious issue; another principal wanted her partner to observe body language at a Board of Trustees meeting. I planned to observe four of the partnerships during their shadowing sessions in order to coach and tutor them while they were working in the field. The other two partnerships were not yet at a stage of development where they felt comfortable about allowing me to observe them.

As each of the principals shared their individual leadership concerns in their schools, and the issues they would like their partner involved in, a reference to the research ethics and the importance of confidentiality within the group quite naturally arose. A signed letter had been prepared which declared to the group my agreement to adhere to the research ethics as set out by the New Zealand Research in Education Association which were circulated. At the same time another statement had prepared for the principals to read and sign (see Appendix L). The group discussed the document and signed it.

A set of guiding principles for successful collaboration within partnership were then developed (see Appendix M). The principals were asked what guidelines they believed were important if they were instructing other principals how to work in the way the Partnerships' programme required of them. These were compiled and issues were raised and discussed.

At this full group session the principals also worked with their partners on learning and practising reflective interviewing. They were taught the three levels of questions (see Methods—Reflective Interviewing) and then there was a practice situation where each principal listed three professional interactions in which they had been involved in their school during the previous week. They then chose one of the three incidents and their partner conducted a reflective interview for five minutes based on that incident. In field notes I recorded the following comment:

> I was very impressed with the level and depth of questioning apparent—and the principals really worked at not giving advice, but asked a variety of probing questions.

At the end of the two reflective interviews the principals were asked to comment, on the sheets that had been provided, on the process of reflective interviewing. These "Prompted reflections" were specific questions about the reflective interview that they had just been involved in. The following example of these types of starter questions shows how specific data was collected after a concrete experience and how the full group sessions served to provide valuable data for the action research process. The prompts for reflection were:

- The reflective interview...
- How did it feel?
- What was your experience?
- Is it useful? How? Why? When?

One principal said he wanted to commit the process to memory so that it would come more naturally to him when he used it with his partner. Another mentioned that he found the questions a little stifling of his own natural instincts, but found all the same that he did use all of the questions taught. It was evident that this was a skill that was seldom used by these principals in their normal leadership practice and that more opportunities would need to be made for developing this skill.

Discussion then moved to the importance of being able to build time for reflection into their daily work. Four principals had brought their cassette tapes with some initial reflections. They shared how they had gone about the process of recording these reflections. I then suggested that the principals could use just two questions for prompts for reflection if they were unsure how to get started. They were: "What did you do today?" (An event of importance) and "How did you feel?" The importance of this group becoming a community of researchers was also reiterated at this point so that they realised that their reflections were needed to help guide the process of the research and also for the writing of the research. One principal suggested that I should become more familiar with each of their schools before further data collection was carried out. I agreed to do this. Being open to being researched was being willing to have the research process directed in such ways by the research group.

This suggestion was typical. The principals often had suggestions to make about the research process. The principals also had the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of each full group session. They often commented on these group sessions in later interviews and I discussed with them the ideas for future sessions which effectively involved them in the planning of the full group days. To consistently receive feedback and suggestions from the principals was intentional on my part in all oral and written interactions.

Before the principals left at lunchtime they were asked to set dates for their next shadow visit during which they would carry out observations and reflective interviews. Setting the dates for the next shadow visits was an important aspect of maintaining the commitment to the partnership.

During the next month the transcripts from the four cassette recordings that had been given to me at the previous full group session were typed. These were my reflections about this data collection method:

> There is something about the voices of these principals coming into my office and the research as I write...I feel quite humble at the amount of confidential information that these principals will reveal to me.
>
> (F/N:29/5/93)

The next day I wrote:

> I have realised as I type up these transcripts today the importance of me giving each of these principals an equal amount of time back.
>
> (F/N:30/5/93)

I made a decision then, to write a letter of reflections back to each of these four principals. All of the other principals were phoned and asked if I could visit their school and bring a fresh cassette tape out to exchange for the other one given to them on the first full group day. My motives were clearly indicated in my research diary:

> ...to see if I can come and "hang around a bit"—to see if I can bring them further "on board"—so that I can exchange their tape and give them another.
>
> (F/N:30/5/93)

During the week 30 May—2 June, contacts were made with every principal, prompting, encouraging and facilitating the development of partnership. One week later all principals were again written to and the guiding principles that had been established at the previous full group session were enclosed. They were also informed of the date of the next full group session. The rest of June was spent visiting each of the schools and conducting an interview with each principal. Each interview was then transcribed. Letters of reflections and thanks were sent to each principal. In this period I maintained the dialogue and developed further rapport with each of the principals in the group.

In these ways, through regular letters and visits, displaying my commitment to these principals, I was hoping for a reciprocal commitment to their partnership work. I constantly asked about their future plans, and on each subsequent visit I asked the principals what they had carried out and how it had gone. Visits were followed up with letters of thanks and reflections sent to the principals along with pieces of literature relating to their current leadership issues.

On June 1, my first shadowing visit was carried out (see Methods). This proved to be very worthwhile as was recorded in the field notes:

> I found this morning *most* beneficial—a real chance to see the process in action. It concerned me a little that [principal] kept stating she was following my "agenda" because I was there—not what she would have liked to do. She meant the three steps within reflective interviewing. She questioned her partner very carefully and got [partner] to articulate what he was doing.
>
> (F/N:1/6/93)

The principals were interviewed after the observation of the session. I shared my observations with them and asked for suggestions and reflections on the procedures they had followed. Often their studies, their investigations and their shaping of the research process went further than just making suggestions. They made comments to me about my ability as a researcher and my role model of the same methods that they had been asked to employ. The research process was consistent for the researcher and the researched.

These observations and interviews in the field assisted in the triangulation of data collection. What I had thought was happening and what the principals had told me they were doing, was not always what was observed when I visited them working in their partnerships in their schools. The principal told me that although he and his partner had been interacting for a year through the preliminary study, they had not been doing any reflective interviewing but usually just discussed the issues and concerns that arose during a visit. They found those types of discussions extremely valuable. This established that there was a dichotomy in this research method. The skills and interactions being asked of the principals were not their usual way of working together and they found it difficult to maintain the stringency set out in the model. When I was present therefore, they worked to "follow the agenda" but when I was not present it was obvious that they moved into more conversational modes of interaction.

Therefore I realised that I had to use my presence deliberately to help change behaviours. My concerns and my successes about the research process were often disclosed when interviewing the principals individually.

On the one hand, it was important that the partnerships developed in the ways that most suited the principals; but on the other, it was necessary to change the patterns of behaviour that these principals usually utilised. One of the ways to achieve this was to give them practices in the new way of interacting, at the full group sessions and every opportunity was taken to coach and tutor the principals in the school setting. The following example demonstrates how this coaching with the principals on an individual basis was carried out.

When visiting with a principal one day he told me that his partner was observing him at his staff meeting that night. My field notes unfold a narrative:

> I decided on the spur of the moment to talk him through a structure for tonight's shadow visit. I asked whether he wanted [partner] to give him some specific feedback on a particular aspect—he said he did. So I suggested:
>
> a) Pre-discussion before staff meeting—set a focus.
>
> b) [Partner] observes and records.
>
> c) Post-discussion—you reflect on staffmeeting, the positives and negatives; [Partner] reflects on staff meeting and describes behaviour, and gives positives and negatives.
>
> Then if they wish they could carry out a reflective interview on one aspect.
>
> (F/N:14/6/93)

It seemed at times so important to try and simplify the process for the principals as they became confused as to which skills to use when, and the procedure to follow. This principal later indicated that this was so in written reflections he had made after my visit that morning. He said:

> Jan has clarified for me the whole course of this partnership and I feel good about it i.e. being specific about what it is my observer is to do. I should reap from this "post-meeting" discussion, knowing full well too, that [Partner] will get a lot from it. It is making more sense to me now.
>
> (F/N:14/6/93)

He also gave me reflections that he had written after the staff meeting which described the process they followed and how he felt:

> [Partner] arrived ten minutes before staff meeting and we sat in my office and discussed what I wanted him to do. Tasks:
>
> - Watch how the meetings are run
> - Note how much time I talk
> - When do I speak?
> - Do I hog the meeting?
> - Do I make a decision?
> - Note staff reactions towards me in terms of body language etc.
>
> Post-staff meeting we got a cup of tea/coffee and went back to my office. I started discussion first and I said "I feel that the meeting went well. I

> achieved what I wanted to do. How do you think the whole thing went?" Then I shut up and my partner responded.

He then listed eight points that were raised and discussed. One example was:

> I praised a teacher for what he had done and it was well-received. [Partner] felt there were several other occasions that I could have done more praising. As a friend and colleague he felt the chance was there and I missed out on it. I thanked [Partner] for his comment and it is a pity that I missed out on the chance.

In his written reflection, this principal proceeded to set a goal for the future and made some reflections about how he could get the most from the partnership programme. He decided:

> There is a need for me to go round all the teachers at least once a week to: say hello to teachers in their workplace; say hello to children so as to be seen; find something to praise the teacher/children; say thank you for their work effort. The whole idea of partnership is now making sense to me. There is a requirement on my part to make it work by being honest, don't hold back, and sharing.
>
> (F/N:14/6/93)

This dialogue shared through the reflections, demonstrated that the shadow was a beneficial experience but that further practice of the skills was still necessary so that the principals would be able to link each of the individual method in the research model into a cohesive, worthwhile professional development programme in their schools.

In the light of my reflections in the field and from a re-reading of the literature, planning for the August session began. In Barnett's (1990) study of peer-assisted leadership, the principals carried out the shadows in each other's schools and then brought their shadow notes to the next full group session where they carried out their reflective interviews. In that study they were not being asked to conduct the reflective interviews unassisted. However, this again highlighted the importance of spending as much time as possible in the workshop setting practising and utilising the new skill so that it became more familiar and might then be more likely to be used in the field interactions in the future. I read more about self-directed learning and turning reflection into learning (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985). I continued thinking about my predispositions and the intended outcomes from this research programme. After reading Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) these reflections were made in my field diary:

> I'm reading Inside/Outside—it makes some excellent statements to inform my work. My approach is based upon the following principles:
>
> - the legitimation of the principals' practice;
> - the development of theory;

- the informing and changing of the principals' practice;
- the importance of operating at the interface of theory and practice;
- the need to provide support for principals;
- the need to set up a structure will which continue to help the principals after the research has ended;
- the development of a model that can be used by any principals anywhere;
- a belief in "principals-as-knowers"—the validation of them as theory makers;
- a desire to alter the traditional relationships between schools and universities.

(F/N:28/6/93)

The theory for the professional development of school leaders was emerging as I constantly reflected on my work in the field and the reading of the current research literature. Materials were organised for the next supervision meeting. These meetings were an important part of the action research process as they helped me to think about future actions and discuss and debate emerging concepts.

At this stage there was ongoing data analysis. There was cross-referencing of propositions to field notes and to the literature that related to them (see Chapter Three—Analysis of Data). In total 25 school visits had been conducted in this first six months of the research. I had sent 84 letters to the group—an average of one per month per principal and 24 articles, two per principal. Also 43 phone calls had been made, an average of three per principal over this first third of the research process. I was getting to know each of the principals personally and beginning to understand the reality of their daily work. Some sharing of personal concerns also occurred from time to time, relating to family sickness and death, work pressures and stress and special occasions. These exchanges seemed to be an important part of the reciprocity—the linking of the personal and the professional in this study of the professional development of educational leaders. Oakley (1981, p. 44) summed this up when she said "no intimacy without reciprocity."

As I visited with the principals and listened to cassette reflections it became quite evident that these principals needed guidance about to how to give evaluative feedback to each other in their partnership situations. These field notes indicate my level of concern, and the concerns the principals had:

> [Principal] wants to go in and tell [partner] how to go about improving!
>
> (F/N:8/6/93)

> [Principal] worries that he is inadequate to "judge"...he worries that he will get involved in deeper underlying issues that [partner] has...Worried about how to give negative feedback without causing a ruckus...insinuated that he found [partner's] actions to be disturbing on occasions.
>
> (F/N:9/6/93)

The agenda for the August meeting was therefore developed around further development of the skills of reflective interviewing and giving evaluative feedback (see Methods). Eight of the 12 principals attended the 4 August half day session. My field notes already contained four different matrices which outlined such things as the dates cassette recordings were received, when letters were sent and received, when phone calls and visits were made and so on. The attendance at the full group sessions was later included to see if there was a pattern of those who regularly attended.

We spent a lot of time on reflective interviewing on this day. We took time to discuss their field experiences and then carried out another reflective interview in the workshop setting. The principals were then asked to reflect about the process of reflective interviewing onto the sheets provided. The prompted reflection was as follows:

> Think back to the leadership experience that you were just interviewed about. In the light of the reflective questioning and discussion, in a similar future incident...
>
> What would you do differently?
>
> What would you do the same?
>
> Did the reflective interviewing highlight anything for you?
>
> Was it useful?
>
> In what ways?

In this way their concrete experiences were again utilised for reflective observation to occur (Kolb, 1984) as it was hoped that this would highlight to the principals the value of their carrying out these reflective interviews with their partners within their schools. This was metareflection; reflection about reflection. The process of reflective interviewing was then taught again, with further revision on the types of questions and how to move through the interviewing process to integrate it fully on their shadow days. One of the principals described how he felt after this process:

> All the teaching on interviews has now become relevant; earlier the need was still in the future. Now I can see how we could have improved reflections and will use this information to upskill myself.
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

A professional partner had been involved in my own professional development programme for the previous three years. We had observed each other's practice, we had carried out reflective interviews and had set different foci to receive evaluative feedback during our consultancy work in schools. My professional partner attended this full group session to assist in running a workshop on giving evaluative feedback. The workshop centred around the concept of how outside perspectives are important in the observation and reflection process.

The principals also recognised that now that they were becoming specific about their focus for leadership development and had developed a trusting relationship with their partners, they needed to learn the skills of being able to give evaluative feedback to their partner on the aspects of leadership that their partner requested. Being able to give negative feedback to a colleague was something that the principals said they did not find easy. The guidelines of giving evaluative feedback (see Methods) were shared and developed with the principals. They then observed a role play in which we demonstrated how we worked together in an evaluative feedback session would proceed and lead naturally into the setting of goals. The principals were then questioned about the uses that they could see for such a process. The principals were all given time to discuss with their partners how they would integrate this skill in their professional interactions which already involved the shadow and reflective interview.

The principals were asked to think about the goals they had set or could set for 1993/1994 for their own leadership development. As I knew what some of these goals were, they were used as examples to prompt the principals to be specific about what it was they were wanting to achieve. The principals were then asked to write their goals down on the worksheet handed to them for this purpose. The prompted reflection designed for this reflective exercise had the following sentence starters:

> Your personal and professional goals...
>
> Actions you will implement to try and achieve these...
>
> Set dates—remember set goals, review goals, reset goals...
>
> How you feel your partner may be able to assist best in helping you to achieve these goals...

After they had individually reflected about their goals and had written them down, the principals were then given time to discuss them with their partners. They were asked to reflect on how they could work collaboratively during the forthcoming year to achieve their goals. The principals then shared with the group some of their previous experiences and their future plans. The intention here was to provide motivation through the sharing of experiences. The principals talked again with their partner to discuss further ways of

working with each other. They set dates for their next visits to each other's schools. In the full group session evaluations one principal said that the value of that day was "knowing how to have a purpose for the shadow." Another said "Goal setting at last." These comments were indicative that the principals were now ready for more in-depth professional development experiences with their partners.

During the remainder of August all of the principals were visited in their schools, some individually, and others while they were working with their partner. Personal letters were then sent to all of the principals with reflections relating to the visit and the discussions that had taken place. Field notes written at this time highlight the concerns the principals were facing in their schools. They constantly seemed to be conflicted over educational issues and the resolution of dilemmas they were experiencing.

This is what was written about one principal after talking with him in his office one afternoon:

> He repeated his concern about being an educational leader on a Board of Trustees when the members have the ability to just outvote him on educational issues. A real clash of values is apparent—a staff wanting the best thing for all children generally—a community, or more particularly a Board of Trustees, wondering what is in it for the school, or making statements like "Great concept, but let another school have it, not ours." [Principal] can see many more incidents like this ahead for him and other principals—issues such as units for the intellectually handicapped, bulkfunding, enrolment schemes—all potentially divisive and often the principal is the lone educational voice.
>
> (F/N:26/8/93)

It was this principal's second year of principalship. He told me his ideals and enthusiasm were quickly diminishing. At this stage of the research there were now two principals off on sick leave for stress and pending retirement. These were two of the principals in their late fifties who were absent from the last group session. Another principal had just returned after being absent from her school on sick leave and was experiencing negative dealings with the chairperson of the Board of Trustees. The newly appointed principal was frustrated about the amount of time he was spending on administrative matters. I began to think more critically about this issue and re-read literature on self-managing schools, values-based leadership and educational platforms and talked with colleagues. It was evident that the agenda at the October full group session would need to include stress management through the articulation of educational values in the resolution of dilemmas. There was still a need to build partnership and to develop community within the group.

In the middle of September the principals were contacted to remind them of the next full session day on 14 October. We talked at these times about the research and the

preliminary findings. The research design gave many such opportunities for the principals to be involved in the negotiation of the meaning of the findings. Other opportunities were in interview when the principals were asked to provide clarification on certain issues or to affirm that certain propositions were fully saturated, such as in this example when I explored the proposition of the need for trust in the partnership. One principal responded:

> I think you have summed it up but you also need to have the knowledge that you can speak about something confidentially, particularly when it relates to staff and parents.
>
> (F/N:25/8/93)

Emerging thoughts and propositions were shared and clarification was sought for some and substantiation was sought for others. To this end, one principal was asked to reflect again about the value of his cassette reflections and the transcripts of them that were returned.

This example illustrates theory building through a dialectical approach as I worked to saturate some themes and continued to analyse the findings:

> Do you read these transcripts over when you receive them back? Are they another form of reflection for you? You say they are your "ramblings" but I wondered whether speaking into the microphone about some of the issues in particular is also a form of reflection? Are my responses in my letter to you a trigger for further reflection?
>
> (F/N:9/10/93)

This principal responded that the transcripts were his best prompt to reflection and that he did read them when he received them back. The "ramblings" read again at a later date, sometimes highlighted areas of concern or unresolved issues. He said he valued my responses because they acted as another prompt to take the time to reflect on his practice.

I shared ideas from the literature:

> I was just reading a journal and found this article which you might find interesting. I've highlighted a couple of places which I felt related to our shared thoughts on this topic.
>
> (F/N:9/10/93)

Their leadership actions were affirmed, particularly their involvement in this research, and suggestions were made of things to consider:

> You are putting yourself up for examination and not everyone is willing to do that. Did you ask [partner] to look at any particular focus during the visit? Did he give you any feedback on anything that you may consider setting as a personal goal to work together on?
>
> (F/N:9/10/93)

In return, the principals sent or gave me cuttings from the newspaper of things that applied to their school. They let me read copies of their Effectiveness Review reports and school development plans. They sent me their reflections. This continued dialogue was integral to the action research process of developing a community of researchers. The day before the full group session all of the principals were phoned in an effort to prompt full attendance.

Ten out of the eleven principals arrived for the full day session on 14 October 1993, and the one absence was expected and unavoidable. The day began with visualisations for relaxation and goal setting. The principals were then asked to do a prompted reflection with question starters relating to what they felt they could disclose to their partner to explore the properties of trust and impression management. The questions were:

- Sharing with your partner—are they the person you talk to when you are under stress at school?
- What is difficult to talk about?
- What is easy to talk about?
- What don't you talk about?
- How honest can you be?

It was concerning that the two principals who were ill with stress had not shared their feelings with their partners—in fact, had pulled back from the developing relationship and had not been available to meet with their partners to talk.

A consultant was brought in to the second half of the morning session to work specifically on building partnership and community. The activities were designed exclusively for this purpose. The principals talked to their partner about an issue that had been difficult for them to deal with in the previous week. The importance of creating time for active listening was stressed in the field notes:

> They only had five minutes each to relate the incident. They were all difficult to stop. Just a simple exercise like that builds the partnership and the sharing within the group.
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

We then all worked on a fantastical problem-solving exercise where initially an individual solution had to be devised for the situation, and then a shared solution had to be developed by the group. This activity illustrated to the principals how the values everybody holds influence the decisions that are made, and that educational leaders all have different beliefs and values and this is why conflict situations arise. This led in to the afternoon's session where another consultant worked with the principals on the articulation of values in the resolution of conflict situations. The first part of this process

was getting the principals to identify the values and beliefs that they held (see Appendix N). These formed the basis of their "educational platforms" (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1979, p. 212). They all carried out this activity individually and then shared, in two groups, the statements of their values and beliefs written on each of the points. There was no discussion at this stage but they had the opportunity to expand on any of the points they had made while listening to their colleagues' responses.

Each principal in the group was then asked to describe briefly to the group another area of conflict that they had experienced over the past week. The group then chose one of these conflicts to role play. Two principals role played a conflict situation while everyone else observed to see if the values that were important to each of the actors could be identified. The principals still did not adequately articulate their values. After discussion the consultant asked for more volunteers to re-run the role play, but nobody would volunteer. The consultant began by challenging these principals by saying that he believed they did not articulate their values when they were involved in conflict situations.

Role playing situations were then set up for the principals to practise the articulation of their values at times of potential conflict. The consultant then asked some very direct questions of the group in his role as group dynamics adviser for this session:

> Why is it difficult? Why were you reluctant to volunteer? Is it just going on show, or is it something else? Why can't we say "I believe such and such?" You are all ideally suited to being problem solvers and finding out strengths and background—but sometimes this is not enough—we need more—we need to let our values show. You are good at your job, but you need to speak the language of leadership, reaching people at a level which is different to problem solving; to hit the heart as well as the head.
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

He then re-enacted the role play with the same principal, whose conflict situation it was, taking the part of the other person involved. The consultant demonstrated how powerful the articulation of educational values can be in these conflict situations. There were many comments from the principals about the value of this exercise in their written evaluations. Some examples of answers are:

> [Consultant's] reminder on educational platform [was the most beneficial]. A timely reminder on values and their application to the tasks—whether appraising, self-evaluating, teacher/principal development. Can be a model for teacher or school or self review/ reflection.
>
> [Consultant's] role play made me really look into/analysing/ evaluate what was said in terms of its outcome and implication to the values it revealed.

These evaluations, along with a continual analysis of the findings, were an important part of the action research process. Next steps were based upon the data gathered during the research process. It was obvious that vicarious learning was a powerful way of getting the principals to reflect on their own practice and that these were important types of activities to include in the full group sessions. The principals had to have such opportunities to observe and practise different ways of interacting as educational leaders. This is why the shadow visits in each other's schools were also essential. There had to be situations where the principals watched their partner interact with others in their school, to observe theories-in-action and values and beliefs, rather than just sitting in one another's offices discussing issues and problem solving.

The last session of the afternoon was spent studying the action research model and adult learning theory model to show again the overall effects of the principals' leadership actions in their schools. This time specific examples of action research that were happening in their schools were used to demonstrate the model. Therefore, their concrete experiences were used to link the theory to their practice. Two of the principals were asked to share what they had been doing in their partnerships in relation to this model. The principals were then asked to make future plans and meeting dates with their partners.

Reciprocity was intentional again at the end of the session. The principals were asked to make suggestions and comments that could help to improve the emerging model of professional development. This was the set of questions on this day:

(A) How do you feel your partnership is going?

(B) Are you enjoying it?

(C) What problems have you experienced?

(D) What plans do you have?

(E) Any other comments?

One typical response was

(A) Excellently!—if only we had some more time!

(B) Totally!

(C) None—except that we would like to have more time.

(D) To contact [partner] for at least one more shadowing session.

(E) When you visit me, perhaps some of the visit could be a "shadowing" time—depending on what was going on.

> I'll be suggesting to [partner] that we continue the partnership on our own initiative.
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

Comments such as this latter one and others that the principals had made in conversation, necessitated a further contact before the year was over to inform them that the research was continuing.

In the second week of November all of the principals were phoned and appointments made to visit them while they were working with their partner. In the last two weeks of November the four pairs of principals remaining in the research were visited while they were working together, and the other two principals, whose partners had taken stress-related leave, were interviewed separately.

Each principal was sent a form letter in the last week of November. Here is an excerpt from this letter to demonstrate the style in which these types of letters were written:

> Dear "Community of Researchers" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986)
>
> (My writing of the theory is getting confused with this letter!)
>
> This is just a short letter with two main purposes. The first is to remind you of our barbecue on 2 December. Come along and meet socially.
>
> Secondly you will find enclosed a little Christmas gift for you! We have just finished this Partnerships' Kit and I would like you to have a complimentary copy for all the assistance and commitment you have given so far (it is not finished!) to the research of this model of professional development for educational leaders. I would value any feedback on the book and the cassette as this is a Limited Edition only and we can make any changes before we produce it in larger numbers.
>
> I'm enjoying the visiting to your schools. I will write to each of you again personally.
>
> (F/N:25/11/93)

Six of the principals came to the barbecue and it was enjoyable to visit with them on completely social terms. It was still concerning how much of the principals' talk went straight to the dilemmas they were facing and the disillusionment they were feeling in their schools. I wrote a eulogy to The Demise of Educational Leadership in Aotearoa/New Zealand at this time in December, prompted mostly by the feelings of despair that the principals shared with me during the phone calls or the visits (F/N:12/12/93). It ended by stating that:

> We have principals with no time for leadership development—they are surviving and coping with systems and management. It will be "principals = administrators" not far down the line. There will be no time to lead the

> staff on educational matters—they will slip away from staff to a "them and us" situation as experienced in many parts of the world.

The research process assisted me to constantly look at my own beliefs and values. This was the reflexive nature of this research. Gouldner's (1970, p. 490) statement of the importance of being able to "...acquire the ingrained habit of viewing your own beliefs as you view those held by others" and that "...to know others you cannot simply study them but must listen to and confront yourself" (p. 493) was highlighted.

The year ended with the writing of the methodology chapter of this report, along with some preliminary findings, in preparation to present at a conference in January. This was an important part of the action research process as it was an early synthesising of the findings and methodology, with the research literature, and the plan was to utilise it later in the research process to negotiate meaning of the research with the principals.

Institutionalisation Phase Maintaining the Partnerships

The 1994 year heralded the start of the institutionalisation phase of the partnerships. The principals had now been working together for nearly one year. On the 8 February, after school had been back in session for one week, all the principals were phoned to make an appointment for an interview. At this stage none of the principals had contacted their partners but said they were "planning to."

The principals were all keen to continue on into the second year and said they were looking forward to the interview. During the ten days between 15-26 February all of the principals were interviewed again. Questions were concentrated around how the principals viewed my role in the research and specific questions were utilised to ascertain the degree of institutionalisation of the partnership that had occurred. They were asked what goals they had set for the coming year and how their partner would be involved in the achievement of those goals. The principals were required to articulate their action plans and their partner's involvement. The principals were asked if they had already met with their partner and/or whether they had made a specific date to meet with their partner. Were the new professional interactions with their partners now their preferred ways of working in their schools? The principals were asked whether they felt they had changed their leadership practices in any way during their involvement in partnerships. I was exploring the theme of emancipatory behaviours. Interactive discussions and interviewing occurred about their understanding of action research.

The principals were also asked whether they had made any contacts with any other members of the group. This was to further test the saturation of a theme on the community of researchers. Each interview transcript was returned with a personal letter to

the principal. Three of the principals received an article which related to their specific leadership concerns. Three of the five partnerships were continuing to develop. One other partnership had two principals in it who did not seem open to learning themselves and seemed mostly only able to reflect upon their partner's leadership. They made comments which consistently indicated that they saw this programme as being excellent for "new principals or those with difficulties" (F/N:16/2/94). In the other remaining partnership one principal had been on stress leave and was seeing his stay in the principalship as a one-day-at-a-time effort. I suggested that the other partnerless principal was linked to this partnership and that the principals work in threes until this principal retired. The three principals were all agreeable to this. This reconstitution formed a fifth partnership.

The next full day session was on March 14, 1994. One principal was absent due to a sore shoulder which meant he could not drive. His partner was also away. The principal who had been on stress-related leave was absent also, so four of the remaining five partnerships were present on this day. The agenda had again been planned in accordance with the group's perceived needs. The first half of the morning was spent on reflective interviewing using the structure they had initially been taught, and then followed a second session in which they used the three questions from John Smyth's (1991) work: What did you do? Why did you do it? What effects did your actions have on children's learning? The principals worked through the two processes and the benefits of each were compared. The principals then discussed as a full group the difficulties in exercising educational leadership in their schools. They moved into their partnerships to share a conflict situation that they had experienced where they had difficulty exercising their educational leadership. The principals were then asked if they would role play first one of the situations and then the other, each as a role reversal. There was therefore no audience. The principals got involved in this very quickly. Comments were heard like: "She did exactly what I had done" or "I could put up some really good examples." One pair of principals role played a situation to the whole group. This role play arose naturally when one principal said "I would have done this and this and this" and I said, "Show us what you would have done." The principals again enjoyed a special lunch together and talked, sometimes in pairs, sometimes as a full group, about the issues concerning them at this time in their schools.

After lunch there was another more formal session on action research. Noeline Alcorn came in and presented her paper (1987) and talked with the principals about the importance and power of collaboration in action research. She affirmed their actions and linked their actions to the research literature. The model of action research was explored, and then the principals were given written examples of how two different principals'

practices fit a theoretical model (see Appendix O). The principals were then asked to use some sheets with starter headings from the same action research model to write about their own actions. They found this very difficult. One principal raised the comment that he did not believe that his action research actually started with a problem but more of a vision that he was hoping to achieve in his school but was not sure of every step that he would actually take to achieve it. We agreed this could be so. This is discussed more fully in Chapter Five in the theme which describes how the Partnerships' programme provided a collaborative structure for action research processes to develop. The principals took the sheets away to record further actions they had made.

The principals planned new steps and dates for their next visits with their partners before they left for the day.

The following day letters were sent to the three absentees with copies of the article on action research and the professional goal sheets that the rest of the group had worked on during the session. Another principal was sent an article that showed a way of assessing and evaluating a principal's instructional leadership (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987) as this related to her professional goal.

I had decided at this time to draw back as much as possible from the principals and leave them to work without my involvement for a while. The principals were phoned in the last week of March and asked to keep notes of the processes that they followed with their partner. They were prompted to carry out shadow visits before the 1 August session. The following are reflections recorded after these phone calls:

> I think the two main things that were highlighted from today's phone calls were that:
>
> • The principals job conditions are often inimical to their professional development occurring.
>
> They talk about the times they have tried to get their partner on the phone but were unable; or how the year is just racing by—they are going to "get together very soon"—and the date is one month away still! That doesn't seem "very soon" to me! They are all so busy that anything additional is very hard to fit in.
>
> • The principals do not always realise that their relationship with their partner is not something that they would have had before the Partnership's research. It *is* becoming 'institutionalised'.
>
> For example, [Principals A & B] were going on a course together tomorrow—and [Principals C & D] had already phoned twice and were going to get together when Education Review Office came to [D's] school "but we will do something more soon." I said "What you are doing *is* Partnerships!...This is how it is working for you!" When I said to [Principal

> A] that tomorrow the other principals wouldn't have their partners on the course like she would' she said "Oh yes, I hadn't thought about it like that."
>
> (F/N:28/3/94)

I researched the historical development of principalship in New Zealand, trying to understand more fully the basis for their continuing conflict of values. On the one hand they were now required to lead the professional development of the staff. Schools were given all professional development funds and a lead role in curriculum development through Ministry of Education contracts. Yet, on the other hand, there were more and more administrative duties and roles to carry out, such as meeting with subcommittees of the Board of Trustees, supervising building projects, organising relief staffing, which took time away from this other important function which alone, could have filled a principal's time in the school.

An examination of the discourse in New Zealand about the principal's role and functions of schools and the literature on effective educational leadership proved to be an interesting comparison. The principals had contradictory discourses operating on them (see Appendix B) between what they knew was effective educative leadership and what they were currently being asked to carry out in their schools. I felt that this was at the root of the dilemmas the principals were experiencing, which seemed to lead ultimately to institutional compliance and/or a conflict of values.

This research programme was also assisting these principals to see what was happening which in effect was possibly increasing their levels of dissonance. The research group was involved in:

> ...'discussions of false consciousness'—a dialectic between their self-understandings and my efforts to create a context which enables a questioning of both taken-for-granted beliefs and the authority that culture has over us.
>
> (Lather, 1986, p. 266)

From April to July few contacts were made with the principals. Four cassette reflections were received which were typed up and returned with a letter. These were intimate and specific to the relationship that had been formed with each principal. Here is an excerpt of this type of personalised letter:

> Don't forget to keep in touch with me about what you are doing. I would welcome a reflection at any time, but especially after you have visited with your partner. I am looking forward to hearing how the visit with [partner] went at his Education Office Review day. Please contact me sometime about the leadership development—a focus on yourself for this year. Did you have a chance to re-read the article I sent you [on principals' appraisal]? Did it trigger any areas that you would like to explore?
>
> (F/N:12/4/94)

Visits were made to one pair of principals while they were planning their future actions in their school and another whose partnership was still not developing successfully. However, he was fulfilling the role of building supervisor over the new capital works programme that was taking place on the school property and ran into the office apologising for lateness. We talked about the Partnerships' programme. He and his new partner had met for a context interview and had talked on the phone several times. The likelihood of this partnership developing seemed positive at this stage, but it was not to be. Another principal came into the Leadership Centre in July and wrote a case study (Case Study 3) of her action research processes. Two more articles were completed which described the research—one entitled, "Are we in the right jungle?" Robertson (in press) relating to the dilemmas these principals were facing in trying to exercise educational leadership in their schools and another on job-embedded leadership development. These would be used in the final group session.

One of the main things highlighted while studying the findings, during the three months time-out from the principals, was that they needed assistance in how to become critical thinkers. Time could be spent at the final session on current issues. The principals could be questioned in such a way that they would be able to be more critical of the social and political situation in which they were working. Effectiveness Reviews and Principals' Individual Contracts were selected as the two main areas of foci as these were raised as key concerns during interviews and phone calls.

The final full group session day was 1 August 1994. Seven out of ten principals were there but all of the partnerships were represented. The principals were all fully involved in the effectiveness review discussion and the role of the Education Review Office and brought to it a variety of perspectives and experiences. Two principals had reviews scheduled in the very near future; four principals had just been through their own review; one principal had been seconded to the review team for 10 weeks and had just returned to her school—so the debate and discussion was lively and critical. One principal, however, pointed out the irony of the situation:

> The absolute irony of the situation is that the very principal who isn't here, would have benefited the most from being here. My partner is back in his school buckling under the pressure of the proposed Education Review Office visit. He would have felt so much stronger and more proactive after discussing reviews and how they should handle them like we have today. But reacting to that particular pressure was more important than perhaps standing back and looking more critically at the situation, and is what we all seem to fall into the trap of doing.

The discussion on the individual contracts was led by a union officer who had a lot of information about the proposed contracts. This was obviously only one perspective about

the value of the contracts but it achieved the purpose of giving the principals a basis from which to discuss the issues and to ask questions. What was most interesting was how little information the principals actually had about this issue. They said they were worried that they often made important decisions based on very little information about the effects on the educational outcomes in their schools and this full group session had proved that this was so.

The principals read the two articles that I had written about the research. They had all previously stated that they do not get as much time as they would like for professional reading which is why the opportunity was built into this full group session. Their comments on the articles, although few, were valid and became an important part of the research process.

As a final written evaluation and reflection the principals were given two key questions as part of their prompted reflections:

> Tell me how you would explain the research that you have been involved in to somebody who asked about it?
>
> If you looked back now, what are the most important things that have happened to you over the past 18 months?

All of the principals were asked if they would continue with Partnerships now that the research was ended. All members of the research group were sent a personal letter after the final group session which thanked them for their involvement in the research. I wished them well for their future partnerships. The three absentees were sent the evaluation sheets (see Appendix P). They did not send them back. Every Board of Trustees was thanked them for the support they had given their principals. This officially ended the eighteen month commitment to the action research programme.

A reading of this action research process will reveal how a grounded theory can develop from a systematic and careful research process. Sergiovanni (1991) would argue that this would lead to the development of exactly the sort of new scruffy theory that is needed about educational leadership development. No two partnerships developed in the same way. The principals were all working on different professional goals and were dealing with different issues or problems in their schools. Nothing could ever be taken for granted. The principals reacted in different ways to the consultants; they had different levels of attendance at the full group sessions; they did not always carry out a shadow visit before the sequential skills teaching took place; they all had personal circumstances which impinged on their professional duties from time to time...these factors all had an influence on the research process. The initial goal of developing institutionalised partnerships

remained constant, but how to reach it was not clear and the action research cycle helped to move the group closer to this envisioned state.

In order to further understand the research process, a detailed case study of the research process is presented in the following section. It narrates how two principals worked together with the researcher and with the principals at the full group sessions to develop their partnership. This particular case was selected because the two principals were new to the concept of partnerships at the beginning of the research. Neither was convinced, at that stage, that this programme would be beneficial to them. The case study demonstrates that the process of developing a partnership is complex and takes time, but that the rewards for persistence are extensive.

CASE STUDY 1: THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING A PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIP

The following case study narrates the development of a professional partnership between two principals, Rawiri (pseudonym), a newly appointed male, Maori principal; and Sue (pseudonym), a pakeha woman who had been in the principalship for four years. They were both teaching principals, at neighbouring schools, in small rural communities. Fullan's (1991) model of change has been used to describe the stages of the development of the partnership.

Initiation Phase

The initiation of this partnership, as with all of the partnerships, required the formal intervention of an outside facilitator to encourage and support the two principals to think about working together in a different way from their normal professional interactions.

I phoned Rawiri on 9 February 1993 and talked to him about the Partnerships' research and invited him to be part of the programme. Initially he was quite hesitant and did not want to take on too much in first year of principalship. Then, he became more positive and suggested a principal of a nearby school for a partner. He said:

> I visited his school once...it had a really good feel about it. I think I could learn a lot from him. I have had many offers from principals who have said 'Don't hesitate to give me a call' but I have felt hesitant to do that as it wasn't specific. The legitimate chance to go into a colleague's school really interests me.
>
> (F/N:9/2/93)

Over the next month I contacted Prospective Partner 1 who was quite interested in the idea of the programme but wanted to think about it more and talk about it to Rawiri. Meanwhile, I sent Rawiri a copy of an article on the Partnerships' programme (Robertson, 1992). He also rang the other newly appointed principal who had an experience of the Partnerships' programme in the preliminary study. She told him that Partnerships had helped her to survive her first year of principalship.

On the 6 March I rang Rawiri again. His response was really positive. He said that he had spoken to Prospective Partner 1 and felt that he was "tending towards it." When I visited Rawiri four days later I was surprised to find that he now wanted to work with the neighbouring female principal (Prospective Partner 2). He felt they were beginning to develop a good relationship. He had enjoyed their few previous contacts. I left his school and drove on to Prospective Partner 2's school and discussed the partnerships' concept with her. She said "I like the sound of 'formalising' my informal relationship with Rawiri" (F/N:10/3/93). I then drove out to Prospective Partner 1's school. He had applied for a change of principalship, so his future plans were uncertain. He asked to be kept in mind for an involvement at a later time.

The following week I sent letters to both Rawiri and Sue outlining the philosophies and the requirements of the research model and asked for a written acknowledgment of their commitment to be involved. On the 20 March I received a letter from Rawiri. His earlier fear that the workload would be too great was still apparent. He stated "I understand the requirements for the group are to be kept to a minimum because of the workload we are currently under." The initial field data highlighted that he would like the opportunity to address the following leadership issue: "Guiding and learning with staff, in a professional way. Delegation, organising, resources, administrative ideas."

On the 7 April the research group met for the first full group session. Rawiri was present but Sue was on her outdoor education field trip. Two weeks later I visited Sue's school to work with both principals together to develop the new skills and to tutor Sue on the aspects of the full group session that she had missed.

Sue had made some written reflections after this context interview:

> Both principals described their school and community. Although we are in the same district and teach within three kilometres of each other our schools are quite different. Although we have differing visions and priorities the end result is the same: To provide the best possible educational outcomes for our children.

Rawiri also told me about the context interview when I was interviewing him at a later date. He said:

> We talked for another two hours after you had left and we found it extremely valuable. We have set a future shadowing date in each other's schools and look positively towards working together in the research.

The third of May was the second full group session and Sue and Rawiri were both present. They took part in the unstructured reflection at the start of the session, which was an attempt to monitor the principals' feelings on arrival. The two principals in the case study had quite different types of reflections at the beginning of the day. Rawiri focused on the leadership issues that he was facing at that time:

> I arrived with things on my mind—the community worker at school; the employment service worker starting next term; transport for tomorrow's trip; forgot my tape for Jan.

Sue, on the other hand, focused on her perceptions of the Partnerships' programme at this stage of the proceedings:

> I am not yet full clear about this partnership. My expectations are developing as we go along.

They had many opportunities to work together during the course of the day. They practised reflective interviewing and then reflected on the process of carrying out that interview. Sue found it was useful:

> Getting to know each other's communities and problems and realising that perhaps problems weren't as great as originally thought. Good to hear different approaches to same or similar jobs, and important to have a partner with same or similar needs.

Rawiri found the reflective interviewing process very interesting and beneficial. He said that he really had to think about his actions and would do things differently if he was faced with that kind of situation in the future. They practised effective interviewing skills.

The day was highly interactive and participatory and the underlying aim was to strengthen the partnership by providing many opportunities to work collaboratively. Before the two principals left at the end of the day they set new meeting times and were asked to conduct at least one shadow and one reflective interview before the next full group session in two months time. I asked them also for some final written reflections. Both principals now focused their reflections on their developing partnership:

> Rawiri: I feel I have a little more idea of what I am supposed to be doing. I am lucky to have Sue as my partner. I feel very comfortable with her and I am sure it won't be long before we will share almost anything.

> Sue: We have set some objectives and times and are happy to continue with the partnership. Personally I am much clearer about where we go from here.

Sue had now agreed to take part in the research programme and I sent her the Initial Field Data forms to complete. The Partnership was now initiated. The implementation stage was to extend over the next nine months.

Implementation Phase

Developing and maintaining the partnership

One month after the full group session it seemed that conditions were not conducive to these two principals getting the quality time to spend together. On 31 May I rang Sue to see if she had completed the initial data sheets. She had been ill and off work for the entire previous week. She said she had completed the sheets. She did not like the idea of the cassette and would prefer to write her reflections. She and Rawiri had not been together for a shadowing session. I sent Sue and Rawiri a letter with next full group meeting time and the guiding principles for partnerships which had been established at the last session. I then visited Sue in her school and talked informally with staff to build rapport and an understanding of the context Sue was working in.

The following week on the 17 June I visited Rawiri's school, again with the express aim to build rapport. Rawiri was in his office as it was his release time from teaching to undertake the administrative duties, and discussions centred around his main concerns. Rawiri had made a cassette diary entry. He shared a dilemma and concern that he was facing:

> I find that while it is good to get more release [from teaching for administration], I seem to get further and further away from my class...I was just thinking about Board of Trustee meetings and writing the report and how stressful it can be prior to a Board of Trustees meeting—basically because you never know what is going to hit you when you get there.

20 June

A thank you letter was sent to Rawiri with notes and reflections about the visit. It commented on his dilemma about not connecting with his class and offered

suggestions of how he might go about this. The short transcript was typed and returned.

A month later Sue and Rawiri were sent a form letter reminding them of the full group session on 4 August and outlining the agenda; they were asked to try to complete one more shadow before that session and prompted to do some reflections and to bring the cassette or written reflections on the day.

On the 2 August Sue visited Rawiri's school to observe him taking a full staff meeting. The principals first gained the consent to have their partners present at such shadow visits which involved staff/principal or principal/Board of Trustees interactions. Sue sent me a reflection that described the experience of this shadow visit. The reality of finding enough time to do justice to their partnership interactions was going to be as difficult as they had first thought.

Sue told me:

> Rawiri and I have been slow to get our shadowing done this term because of other commitments. I know we are meant to prioritise these tasks but the following is a typical example of what happens to teaching principals. Just as I was leaving school at 3pm a distressed? concerned? parent arrived determined to see one of my teachers. My teacher requested that I stay for the interview...
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

Sue did attend the staff meeting, albeit late, and described her first experience of shadowing in this way:

> It was interesting to hear another principal promoting visions, policies, positive attitudes and involvement to a staff who like all staffs, have individual and varying attitudes. I came away deciding that, as principals, we have to be constantly motivating children, staff and communities.
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

Two days later, on the 4 August, was the next full group session. Rawiri and Sue were both there. The purpose of this session was to get the principals to set professional goals and to think about ways in which their partner could be involved in assisting them to reach these goals. The aim was to give the principals a clearer understanding of the overall process of partnerships for their professional leadership development. To achieve this I asked them to write down their professional goals:

> Rawiri:
>
> Goal: To lead my staff into the area of data gathering in a non threatening way. To delegate jobs to the Board of Trustees and not do them all myself.

> He felt that Sue would be able to assist him to achieve the goals in the following way: "To monitor my progress. Share her first steps in this area."
>
> Sue:
>
> Goal: to set a better system of appraisal in place.
>
> She thought Rawiri could help in this way: "To be able to first observe and then assist me in getting ALL staff on board."

After another practice at reflective interviewing Sue commented that she had again found the process very useful. "It made me consider carefully preferred outcomes." In the reflections at the end of the day the group had been asked to reflect on the value of the day's session. Sue's reflection was "Better understanding of development of partnership."

A cassette reflection from Rawiri arrived on this day. He had made the comments onto the cassette late in July which told me how stressed he had been over the period between full group sessions:

> Kia ora Jan. I've just come out of a really stressful period from about the last five or six weeks—school and union and principals—it has been a really hard time and it has placed pressure on my family. I notice that a lot of smaller things upset me that normally I wouldn't worry about. It really does affect your home life. So I have just got my head above water—just this week—and now I feel really tired—I am looking forward to just keeping the school running—just doing the day to day things.

In the next recording made at the beginning of August Rawiri was reflecting on how best he could lead his team. This cassette recording demonstrated the benefits of the principals taking time out to reflect in a more formal way than they would normally do. In this reflection he came up with the answer to his leadership issue himself:

> So I expect I have just answered my own question then, that I have to lead the way by lifting my own standards. By doing that I can actually begin to raise theirs.

On the 11 August letters were sent to Rawiri and Sue including photocopies of their goal planning from the 4/8 seminar and Rawiri's transcript was returned to him with a personal letter which contained some reflections of my own. On 23 August I visited Sue and Rawiri when they were meeting together. They had not met as regularly they had planned at the 3 May full group day but they had decided to meet together and refocus. My arrival coincided with discussion centred around the issue of when a principal votes against an otherwise unanimous Board decision. Sue

had been in this situation in voting whether or not to take part in the Ministry of Education trial of bulk-funded schools. Sue was telling Rawiri how this had impacted on her as a leader and how one had to be strong in the decisions they made and be prepared for some mistakes. She said:

> I think you have to come to terms with the fact that you are going to make mistakes, but the important thing is not repeating those mistakes.

And Rawiri responded:

> I find that I am not always sure when I have made mistakes cause I haven't had the kickback yet. So I tell people when they ask, that things seem to be going alright, but I am waiting for the letter to say "Why haven't you done this?"...It will probably come quite a long while after.

They went on to talk further about their Board of Trustees. Sue had worked to get hers to take far more responsibility and was pleased with the amount of work they carried out. Sue shared with Rawiri how her Board of Trustees take responsibility for their portfolios and do get the work done. Rawiri said he has to do most of the work—that the board look to him for all the answers which he finds a huge responsibility. They compared their Board operations and how they work.

They moved on to discussing the amount of money budgeted for curriculum and the deferred maintenance in their schools.

> *Rawiri*: One thing that really scares me is that you can go and get $16000 to reseal the tennis court and if you tried to get $16000 to put into science, you wouldn't get it! ...I want to have a staff meeting on this next week—just to get the wheels rolling before next term. I am quite excited about it actually.
>
> *Sue:* I remember being so taken aback when one of the staff members questioned me on measurement and evaluation. I was so fired up I just imagined that everyone else would be too.
>
> *Rawiri*: I have thought about that too, and thought about a couple of questions I could ask them (they may be the wrong questions) but I know I could say "You know Johnny Smith, what year is he reading at?" and I know that would pull the rugs from right under their feet and the defences would come up straight away, and it wouldn't work, so I have really been trying to think about this.
>
> *Sue*: You will find that the enthusiastic ones will help to bring on the other ones because they will start bringing things of theirs and say "look at this" and things get left lying around and others pick them up.

This dialogue shows these principals constantly comparing and contrasting ways of working, sharing ideas and reflecting on and in action, for future actions. I sent Sue and Rawiri a letter with the transcript of this discussion a few days later. On 22

September they were also sent a form letter which asked them to do another shadow and reminded them of our next group meeting on the 14 October. These regular contacts were the prompts necessary to help this partnership develop. They did carry out a shadow. Rawiri attended one of Sue's Board of Trustee meetings and this caused him to do a lot of reflection on the way he worked with his own board. He said that he had changed many of his practices.

The 14 October was the last full group session for that year. Only Rawiri was there as Sue's Calf Club Day had been postponed to this day. The whole purpose of the day was centred on building partnership and building community within the group. Again, it was highly participatory and interactive. As Sue was not present. I worked with Rawiri in the first partnerships session.

At the end of the day he reflected again on his newly formed partnership:

> I have found a principal who I can confide in. I trust her and enjoy listening to her views. And yes, I do enjoy working with her. Problems: Sometimes we talk too much. We need to set an action research plan.

Rawiri seemed so motivated to be more formalised with his interactions with Sue, to achieve an action plan. However, when I spoke to Sue on 8 November I was surprised that she had no contact from Rawiri at all. I recorded this in the field notes:

> Has this partnership almost come to an end? She has not heard from Rawiri at all. She carried on with her appraisal goal on her own as Rawiri wasn't able to attend. They are fully involved with science, maths and art contracts but have not linked their partnership work to it. Do partnerships only work when the impetus comes from the principals themselves? For what reasons do people want to form these partnerships?

I then also rang Rawiri as soon as I had hung up from Sue, to see if the problem could be isolated. There did not seem to be a problem.

They arranged a date for 17 November and they felt comfortable about me attending and observing them in action. Here is the excerpt from my field notes:

> I walked into an excellent reflective interview that Sue and Rawiri were having today at Rawiri's school. Sue had been there for an hour and the main focus was 'the budget'—this of course raised a lot of other issues—staff asking for money when it wasn't budgeted for; Board of Trustees not allocating enough for curriculum budget; not having a strategic plan and so on. In fact, many of the same issues as they had discussed three months earlier. As the interview was at Rawiri's school the focus was on his goals and plans...I am trying to get them to observe each other in action, but I am having to push. I have suggested that Rawiri watches Sue present her Board of Trustees with her budget. Rawiri realises it would be very

> beneficial. Sue told him about how she told her Board of Trustees they were responsible for the Health and Safety Act and how she wrote it down.
>
> *Rawiri:* I really admired you Sue, when you told them that about the health issue. In my meetings from then on, I just kept writing down that they were responsible, until one day there was a close accident and I was able to say 'You guys are responsible for this'. That really helped me.
>
> The enormity of the task has just come home. The quality of the school and where it is all at, is right here in the classrooms where the work is done. It is hard work.

Rawiri had realised that he wanted his primary role to be that of an educative leader. On 25 November a form letter was sent to whole group reminding them of the barbecue on 2 December at my house and I sent them all a copy of the Partnerships' Kit as a Christmas present and as a way of thanking them for the work they had done. My field notes indicate my motive here:

> I hope it gives them a spur along as they listen to the tape and reflect on what they are doing.

9 December

Rawiri and Sue received a personal Christmas greeting letter with the transcript of the interview. That was the end of the first year of the research. Rawiri attended the barbecue. Sue was unable to attend. There was no further contact with the principals that year.

After eight weeks of time-out, I felt rather nervous about the response but knew that I needed to phone Sue and Rawiri again at the beginning of the new year. My diary notes...

8 February 1994

Rang Sue. We made a date to meet 21 February 9am. She seemed positive about working again with Rawiri.

Institutionalisation Phase

I will let my research diary reflections take the narration here:

21 February

> Met with Sue this morning. Sue said "I think these things take time to make them work. I needed the year before I could see how valuable working like this with a colleague could be." She seemed really positive about working through 1994 and had already given some thought about what she would do—principals' appraisal. I then went and visited Rawiri. He has

> swapped to a junior class and is loving his teaching. We had a good talk and he is really positive about his relationship with Sue "which I wouldn't have had otherwise." He has an Education Review Office visit coming up and we talked about ways Sue would be with him on that. He talked about Sue's appraisal:
>
> She asked 'Would you appraise me?' so she obviously feels a need to be appraised and she has been around a lot longer than me, and knows more, so I thought I should get in on this too...I always feel I am taking off her you know...but I have been good on buildings and grants and those sorts of things that I have helped her with; but she is really good on professional standards within your school which is more important than how it looks on the outside...and that is what I really need, that sort of help.

Rawiri reflected more about where it was possible to get this type of educative leadership development and feedback on his practice. He was beginning to realise that he had a unique situation developing.

28 February

Wrote personal letters to Sue and Rawiri and returned their transcripts from our interviews. Many reflections were made in response to their comments at the interview which were now typed in transcript and returned for further reflection by the principals. I saw myself as a 'planter of ideas' that they may pick up on and try in their next interactions.

4 March

Sent a chapter on principals' appraisal (Stewart & Prebble, 1993) which I thought may prompt Sue and Rawiri to think more about plans for their appraisal for 1994.

14 March

Full group session. Sue and Rawiri both present but a little late in arriving due to issues at school. We spent a substantial amount of time planning for the year ahead. Sue outlined her professional goal during a reflection time for this purpose:

> Principal appraisal done with partner principal. Actual goals and objectives for this year yet to be set. Am I running an efficient and effective school? Are children achieving consistently at appropriate levels? Do I motivate staff sufficiently? Do we share the same vision for the school? Do I delegate responsibility? Do I know exactly what is going on in each classroom?

Sue's reflections at the end of the day, reiterated that she recognised the benefits of the Partnerships' programme. She appeared determined to be more rigorous in carrying out the programme in the forthcoming year:

> I see the partnership of being of greater benefit than I did at this time last year...I shall be happy if Rawiri and I can follow through with our objectives and reach some outcomes this year.

28 March

Phoned Sue and she told me that she and Rawiri were meeting with rural adviser that night on curriculum development. She also mentioned that she is attending Rawiri's Education Review Office effectiveness review, the preliminary and ending interviews. Sue could now see the powerful advantage of vicarious learning.

12 April

Sent Rawiri and Sue a copy of an article on this research. I said "Perhaps you could include a few comments about it in your next reflection to me." I did not receive a response on this article from either Sue or Rawiri.

25 May

Rang Rawiri:

> I asked "How did Education Review Office visit go?"
>
> "Well we had it." he responded. "It was pretty stressful. I haven't fully read the written report but it seems fair. Sue came—she really picked me up. It was really demanding and rigorous. I thought at the time [when Sue said she would come to my Education Review Office day] "that's not a bad idea." To begin with I don't think I realised what a great move it was—until it happened. She helped my self-esteem at the end."
>
> I asked him whether this could have been any other principal. He replied "I trust her. That is it in a nutshell...on the professional side of it. Sue can tell me more about my school than my Board can."

Rang Sue—she has Education Review Office visit before the midterm break and Rawiri will attend that. They are planning to do a social studies unit together and are planning together on 30 May. I asked if I could visit for half an hour on that day.

30 May

Went and visited with Sue and Rawiri today. We talked again about the Education Review Office visit that Sue had been present at. They both said they gained from sharing this experience.

> *Diary:* It was exciting hearing them talk about their partnership—these were two principals who went into this very tentatively and now show all the signs of continuing this way far into the future. In fact, they seem very '"institutionalised" now in working together—I feel redundant! I listened to them talk a while before I interviewed them and they were challenging and

> questioning each other—and operating at a very professional level of interaction.
>
> I said "Your relationship with each other has changed—tell me what happened?"
>
> Sue replied "We got to know each other and what we wanted to achieve. I think then that after an interview you could come in and keep going back to our objectives, rather than just chatting which we did quite well...we have had time to develop respect and trust. I didn't know Rawiri very well until this. I had just met him."
>
> I asked: Can you see this relationship continuing in the future? *Sue*: "Oh yes!'
>
> *Rawiri:* "I sort of take this for granted now really. Like I said, it would be a shame if we didn't have our partnership. "

31 May

Sent letter, transcript and Education Review Office article (Smythe, 1994) to Sue and Rawiri today.

1 August

Final full group session. Sue and Rawiri both present. Both said in final reflections that they would be continuing with this partnership and looking for other partners to develop and fill other needs. Rawiri had some advice to other principals. He said

> Find a partner that suits your style. It helps if you are not in competition with one another. If the first partnership doesn't work at least try one other. Have some open talking sessions about whatever comes up. This is more difficult...make formal sessions to observe and reflect on them. If you are a teaching principal and depending on the success of the partnership you may or may not meet regularly out of school. Two heads can be better than one.

Sue's final reflection: [the most important thing that happened over the past 18 months]

> Developing a partnership has proved to be a very supportive way of working professionally with another leader...my present partnership will continue as I believe we have both found it to our advantage.

12 September

Sent all principals a personalised letter of thanks for their commitment and involvement in the programme. A letter was also written to each of the Board of Trustees thanking them for supporting their principal—their greatest resource—and

trusting that they would continue to support professional development programmes for their school leader in the future. Each principal was sent a copy of this tribute too.

26 October

Sue rang me on another matter. We talked about the joint social studies unit that they had been planning on my last visit with them. Rawiri had not been able get his whole staff on board but Sue felt that it had been a very successful unit with all of her school joining with Rawiri's class. Sue told me that she and Rawiri have decided to make their partnership continue to work and that they will schedule a time into their diaries once a month to make it more official.

Sue also told me about her Education Review Office visit that Rawiri had reciprocated and attended to support her:

> The Education Review Office visit was excellent. Rawiri attended both of the interviews. At the first interview they had picked up an area in written language where we hadn't put the school's expectation...I was really quite wild! Rawiri took me outside. He said "You have got it this far—you only have another hour to do on it. Do it!" I was furious about it—but my staff said we'll all do it. I wouldn't have done it if Rawiri hadn't challenged me to do it. Because of that there were another two areas that I could prove progress had been made.

This final conversation with Sue demonstrated that indeed a mutually beneficial partnership had developed. The two principals supported each other fully. They both gave professional advice.

They both knew it was a reciprocal arrangement with much give-and-take, making it the unique professional relationship that it was. These principals did not have this type of relationship with any of their other colleagues. However, they both planned to extend their range of 'partners' in the forthcoming years. They could see the benefits of these enhanced professional relationships. The idea of professional partnership for leadership development and support was firmly institutionalised into their leadership practice.

This case study has shown that the process of developing a fully functional professional partnership takes place over time. The change process is developmental and this way of interacting with a professional colleague was a changed practice for these school leaders. They had to see a need for this changed way of working with a colleague before they adopted it as the norm. They institutionalised this collaborative practice when

it became their preferred way in which to work. They recognised the value of this interdependent relationship.

To summarise, this chapter has described the action research process. In action research, the analysis of findings cannot be fully separated from the description of the research process, because the analysis is part of the research process. It can be seen through the reading of this case study that considerable input was needed from an outside facilitator to establish these partnerships. There were many factors, such as the role of the researcher, that influenced the successful development of the partnerships and these are discussed in Chapter Six. The main categories of findings from this research are now presented in a narrative in the development of a substantive theory of professional development for school leaders. The voices of the principals predominate. The principals were involved in the negotiation of meaning and although I was the writer and therefore present my interpretation of the findings, the principals' feelings and experiences have been captured in their direct quotes, as the theory of professional development unfolds.

Chapter Five: The Findings

This study has demonstrated that the partnerships have assisted in the professional development of the primary and intermediate school principals who participated. They all stated that the partnerships had been beneficial to them and that they saw the programme as an integral part of their professional development. One urban intermediate school principal, who had been in the research from the time of the preliminary study, and who retired from education at the end of the third and final year of the Partnership's research programme, said this about the Partnerships' programme in his final reflection:

> This has been one of the most—no, the most!—professionally supportive experience of my 39 years in the job!
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

A newly appointed rural teaching principal, who had worked with an urban teaching principal, saw substantial benefits throughout the research process:

> I hope we keep up this partnership. It is my best development undertaken! Even my staff comment on this.
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

Her partner summed up their experiences with their partnership in this way at the end of the research:

> We feel we have gained substantially from the arrangement.
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

The ways in which these principals gained from their involvement in their partnerships in the research fell into four major categories: a) enhanced critical reflection on practice; b) increased professional interactions; c) educational leadership development and finally, d) establishing structures for processes of action research and school development. There were many propositions relating to each of these themes. The proposition that outlines each theme will be highlighted in small caps and the others will be interwoven throughout the text. These four major categories of findings will be discussed in this chapter. Other findings which related to the factors that influenced the successful development of professional partnerships and which led to the development of a grounded theory of professional development for school leaders are discussed in Chapter Six and Chapter Seven. This first chapter of findings develops the thesis that partnerships assisted in the professional development of these school leaders and reports on the ways in which it did.

A) ENHANCED CRITICAL REFLECTION ON PRACTICE

REFLECTION TIME NEEDS TO BE STRUCTURED INTO THE PRINCIPALS' PRACTICE.

This research found that to enhance the likelihood of critical reflection on practice occurring, the time for reflection needed to be formalised into the principals' practice. The demands of the principals' jobs worked against them being as reflective as they would have liked. While one principal was still wondering whether her involvement in Partnerships would be worthwhile for her she said "Reflection is something I have not been in the habit of allowing time for " (F/N:3/5/93). The principals recognised that it was important to be reflective but found that, in the reality of their leadership practice, it was difficult to find the time within the school day for reflection to occur. One principal pondered about this at the end of the preliminary study. He said "I know I should be reflective, but committing time to it is a problem" (F/N:1/12/92).

Their workload had not diminished since the first year of the implementation of Tomorrow's Schools and the principals felt that they were most often in 'reactive' mode, responding to a myriad of tasks, characterised by their brevity and fragmentation. This is how one principal described her situation at the beginning of the research period as she too, pondered whether there would be any value for her in establishing a professional partnership for the purposes of greater reflection on practice:

> I felt interested to find out the process. I hope it will be useful. There is so little time for all principals have to do that reflection is probably confined to the trip to and from school. But I am always prioritising and that entails reflection—but reflection on the tasks to be done rather than how I do them. I should benefit from reflecting on my performance.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

The principals had all stated by the end of the research that the Partnerships' model assisted them to learn to take the time to reflect not only on their proposed actions but also on their performance. The Partnership's research model provided the principals with many structured opportunities to ensure that time for reflection was made available. These were: when their partners were observing them and when they were observing their partners; during reflective interviews; through written or cassette reflections to the researcher; from the return of those transcripts along with researcher's reflections and during the full session days. One principal had earlier stated that his behaviour did not change at all when his partner was observing him but then went on to state that he would not have been involved in reflecting on that particular leadership action at all if his partner had not been there. As he reflected on his processes one day, after the observation and reflective interview had just taken place, this is what he said:

> Aye, I'm consciously thinking about what I did. I'm analysing...Normally I wouldn't have done this. I would have moved onto another job.
>
> (F/N:24/8/93)

When their partner was observing them in their school it forced the principals to stop and take the time to analyse their leadership actions. These principals were taking time for reflection on their practice which normally did not occur with such stringency. As the principal cited above stated, they would have normally "moved on" to the next situation demanding their attention without further thought on the actions just taken. This statement was supported by the other principals who all confirmed that they would have moved straight onto the next thing in the normal hustle and bustle of their school day rather than taking time for reflection.

One principal and his partner talked to me about the benefits they were realising. They said "Partnerships gives us more chances for analytical thinking—more in-depth thinking is what we get" (F/N:24/8/93).

They became much more reflective about what they were doing or were planning to do. Another principal stated quite categorically that before his involvement in the Partnerships' programme, reflection on his leadership practices simply had not occurred. He said "Apart from these sessions [with partner in reflective interview] I cannot recall spending any time on thinking about my leadership style" (F/N:4/8/93).

It was interesting to find, however, that although all of the principals agreed that the reflective interviews were beneficial, they still did not always conduct the reflective interviews when they met with their partner in their school. The principals most often interacted in conversation, rather than interview, as they reflected on the key issues in their schools. Therefore, even when the structure of the professional development model suggested a reflective interview as a requirement, this did not always ensure that this type of critical reflection would necessarily take place.

Another strategy in the model to assist principals to take the time for reflection was the suggestion of making a cassette reflection or written notes. These reflections could either be about their leadership actions or the process of partnerships. Eight of the twelve principals did send a cassette reflection at least twice during the eighteen months of action research. These reflections were extremely valuable and led to rich research findings. Only three of the principals were able to allocate the time to reflect regularly in that way throughout the programme. One of these three principals preferred to write her thoughts late in the evening when she was at home; the other two male principals would turn their cassette machines on while at school and talk for periods of time. These three principals reflected in this way at least twice a school term throughout the research. The other principals commented that they felt nervous about what to say or that they just found it

difficult to make the time. The aforementioned senior principal who wrote letters of reflections at night was prompted to do this by the reading of the transcripts and reflections that she had been sent. In this way, a regular dialogue was maintained:

> When you are reading them (because you don't read things like this at school!) you are reading them in an atmosphere where you have got time to sit and think anyway.
>
> (F/N:17/2/94)

She also described how she valued the write up and return of these transcripts:

> Sometimes when you reflect back on your own words, something becomes an issue, that perhaps you hadn't taken much notice of...It was only when I could see it arising a couple of times that I realised it was probably an issue for me and I had chosen not to confront it.
>
> (F/N:17/2/94)

I asked the intermediate school principal who made 10 regular reflections onto cassette throughout the research which of the opportunities for reflection he considered were the most valuable. He almost echoed the previous principal's words. He said:

> Probably getting feedback from your typed notes. I have time to stop and think. They are all valuable, but that one sticks out more than others. Those are the ones where you do actually have time to pull them out, go back and have another look.
>
> (F/N:24/11/93)

This statement suggests that these interactions with the researcher were very important. This idea will be further studied in the section on prerequisites for the development of successful partnerships, and in particular, the roles of the researcher.

The principals were also able to work with their partner in the workshop setting to practise and carry out reflective interviews on issues of concern in their schools. Group discussions and role plays were also ways of formalising opportunities for reflection to occur and these were also built into the activities of the full group sessions. Interestingly, the principals reflected on their own practice not only at these times, when the focus was specifically on their own actions, but equally while observing and reflecting on the way their partner carried out the leadership actions within their schools. When the principals took time out of their own school to visit their partner this also became enforced time for reflection on practice. They were able to stand back out of the demands of the day in their own school and think about their own practice and school as they spent time observing their partner. In this way, their learning was vicarious.

PRINCIPALS' REFLECTION ON PRACTICE WAS OFTEN ACHIEVED VICARIOUSLY.

The principals said that they found themselves reflecting on their own practice when they shadowed their partners in their schools. This is how one principal described it:

> Going into someone else's school you tend now to really look. You really are looking at some of the things that are occurring and, when you are doing that, you are thinking to yourself all the time "Would I do this?"
>
> (F/N:25/6/93)

Observing their partner in action, and therefore learning vicariously, was a valued aspect of the research. The principals all said that they seldom, if ever, had the opportunity to observe another principal in action before their involvement with the Partnerships' programme. This proposition will be expanded within the next category which discusses more fully the increased professional interaction that the Partnerships' programme afforded these principals.

One principal explained the feeling:

> It was nice to be the observer for the first time, to sit and watch how someone else deals with the parents/staff. I found this makes me think about my own methods/style [more] than having someone watch me and talk about what I did. You don't often get to see someone else 'in action' and this to me is the greatest strength in Partnerships.
>
> (F/N:30/7/93)

The principals felt that there were equal benefits for both partners in both situations, of observing or being observed. Engaging their partners in reflective interviews was also noted as a way in which these principals were able to reflect on their own actions. As they actively listened to their partners' responses to each of their questions, the principals were formulating their own responses and mentally comparing and contrasting the two sets of leadership actions. One intermediate school principal said that it was mutually beneficial—and indeed the very process *had* to be beneficial—because...

> ...the mere fact that we get into each other's schools, everything that we see, everything that we hear is registered, and some of it we take back and put into practice.
>
> (F/N:15/8/93)

This is how a teaching principal described it:

> It is so valuable seeing someone else in action. Yes, I get problems solved when we are here, but I gain the most when I am in [partner's] school.
>
> (F/N:25/8/93)

This principal had begun to see that there were more gains to be had when the reflection moved beyond straight problem solving into critical perspectives which she

achieved by observing her partner's leadership actions. Her partner then responded in agreement to this statement:

> I think you pick up a freshness [going into someone else's school] and you go back thinking "Oh gee neat, I could do something. I've seen this, or maybe I shouldn't have handled that that way."
>
> (F/N:25/8/93)

Sometimes doubts and challenges, therefore, were cast on the ways the principals themselves had handled similar situations to those they saw their partner handling. This principal described it positively as a "freshness." The principals all agreed with the principal who stated that they always "took away a few ideas" (F/N:3/6/93) when they visited each other's schools. It was these outside perspectives which was most important factor in enhancing the process of critical reflection on practice.

OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVES CHALLENGED PREVIOUS WAYS-OF-KNOWING.

The "freshness" and the "new ideas" were, of course, new ways-of-knowing, new perspectives. These outside perspectives then challenged or affirmed the principals' previous ways-of-knowing. The principals were often not aware of their actual practice or the effects of their practice because previously they had not had these opportunities to reflect critically on their leadership actions. It was often not until they had witnessed these other ways of acting, therefore, that they became aware of their own actions. In this way, the principals' practices were sometimes challenged and changed. A rural teaching principal at the end of the preliminary study described this challenge as follows:

> Shadowing my partner makes me think about what I am doing, ways I could do things differently.
>
> (F/N:1/12/92)

She later reiterated her previous assertion to her partner:

> It is just so neat for me to have the chance to watch you and to think how would I act or what would I have done...I learn so much.
>
> (F/N:25/8/93)

This principal was newly appointed to the position of principal and I initially wondered whether this partnership was going to be more of a mentor-mentee situation. However, her partner, and also the partner of the other newly appointed principal, both maintained that they felt the gains for each partner were equal. They said that the perspectives and enthusiasm that the newly appointed principals brought to their jobs, lead them to greater reflection on their own actions.

The reflections did not always lead the principals to change their own practice. Often the reflection on another principal's practice affirmed them in the way they were operating in their school. At the beginning of the research process, before two principals were sharing any real concerns they had, one of the principals had made some critical reflections about her partner's practice which led her to ponder about her own practice. She recognised that her leadership style was different.

She said:

> It is easy to see these things in other people. It would be interesting to know what my partner thinks of the way in which I attempt to manage my school...I suppose I am just a different sort of person.
>
> (F/N:2/6/93)

As their partnership progressed these two principals became more frank and open with each other. To recognise that there was not one particular leadership style that was effective, but many different ways of dealing with issues that arose in a school, was a valuable learning opportunity seldom achieved elsewhere in principals' professional development programmes. These outside perspectives were vital to ensuring that the principals viewed their own actions more critically.

OUTSIDE PERSPECTIVES ENABLED CRITICAL REFLECTION ON PRACTICE TO OCCUR.

One of the propositions to become fully saturated very early in the research was that outside perspectives were vital in enabling critical reflection on practice to occur. There were many ways in which these principals attained outside perspectives: through their partner shadowing them; through shadowing their partner; through reflective interviewing and receiving evaluative feedback on their identified area of focus; through discussions and role plays at full group sessions; through discussions with the researcher.

One principal described the outside perspectives gained when his partner shadowed him as "a pair of eyes coming in from out" (F/N:25/6/93). He felt that the fresh perspective that his partner, in particular, brought to him could help to shorten the time factor to achieve the goals that had been set for the school. This factor is discussed more fully in the category of the findings that the Partnership's model provided a framework for action research and school development goals to be achieved. The outside perspectives enabled the principals to see the differences between their espoused theories and their theories in action. Often what they thought they were doing and what they were actually doing, were quite different things. Before their partners observations they had not necessarily been aware of the effects of their actions. One principal described this in the following way:

> It is funny but I don't even remember doing it, but when [partner] drew my attention to the occasion—I remembered.
>
> (F/N:14/6/93)

Throughout the research there were constant referrals to the increased reflection on practice that working closely with a partner ensured because of the outside perspective that they brought to the situation. One principal described how she saw the benefits of her partner's visits to her school:

> They can't do it for you, but they can listen and give support, and they can give another perspective.
>
> (F/N:26/8/93)

After shadowing their partners, the principals sometimes reflected on the philosophies underlying their partner's practice. One urban principal talked about the guiding principle of his partner's school:

> That obviously is the whole underpinning within the school—to ensure that every child has an opportunity, if there is one available to them.
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

This type of reflection led them in turn to reflect upon the philosophical underpinnings in their own school. At the end of the preliminary study, one principal who later carried on in the research group, reflected about the processes he had been involved in:

> The shadowing and reflective processes have provided insight into my professional performance and philosophies.
>
> (F/N:1/12/92)

This statement was supported fully by all of the principals in the research. They said this vicarious reflection on their practice helped them to become more critical of their own practices and more knowledgeable about the values and philosophies that underpin their practice. The principals were able to reflect on the way that they personally would have responded to the same leadership situation in which they had observed their partner.

During the reflective interviewing the principals asked in-depth questions to assist one another to make the connections between their actions, values and visions for the school. When they had set an area of focus for the shadow, interview and subsequent evaluative feedback session, the principals were able to receive an outside perspective in the specific area for development that they had selected as part of their professional goal. A principal described the importance of these sharing sessions, in all of these forms, in the following way:

> I believe at least 60-70% of the value of this programme is the mere fact that two principals with a lot in common, both successes and problems, can sit down and share these honestly and openly, and be helpful to each other.
>
> (F/N:23/9/93)

Other perspectives on educational issues were also made available at the full group sessions because of the diverse nature of this group. These principals were usually kept quite sheltered from the viewpoints of principals not holding the same positions as themselves. These principals would normally meet with either only intermediate principals, or only rural teaching principals, or only normal school principals, and they did not often receive the diverse perspectives as were apparent within this group. They realised how very insular and isolated they had all become in their schools. A senior normal school non-teaching principal described how much she had learnt from and about other principals because of the diverse nature of the research group in this way.

> We learn a lot from talking...this course has brought me "face-to-face" with the reality of principalship in rural areas. The stress must be intolerable at times and yet they have such professional concerns for their staff and children.
>
> (F/N:25/10/93)

The realities of how other principals dealt with the leadership issues in their schools were also highlighted at the full group sessions through the role plays. The principals were able to watch each other enact how they would have handled the same issue. This gave them an excellent opportunity to examine their own values and beliefs. One principal, whose leadership conflict situation was selected for enactment at a full group session, later described it as the most beneficial aspect of the day, as the time had been made available for him to rethink his actions and to see how he could have more adequately expressed the educational values that were important to him. He said:

> The role play showed me how I could have handled that situation more positively and effectively.
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

The interviews that I conducted with each principal each term in their own school provided them with another outside perspective. The principals all utilised my visits to ask for direction on various matters within their schools. One principal, whose partnership never developed to a satisfactory working relationship, viewed my visits as particularly important. When asked in interview one day how he viewed my role he made the following statement:

> If there has been one *single* thing that I could say I have enjoyed most of all, it is this one-to-one sitting down with you...you coming back with

> comments and interpretations or "Have you thought of...?" or "Is there another way?" or just encouraging.
>
> (F/N:15/2/94)

In this way then, the outside perspectives enabled the principals to reflect about actions they might take before they took them. They pondered on various possibilities and reflected on past actions. They asked these outsiders (their partner, other principals and the researcher) how they would deal with particular issues and then compared and contrasted the answers given with their own solutions.

REFLECTION LED PRINCIPALS FROM PRACTICE TO PRAXIS.

The outside perspectives, then, led the principals to further reflection *on* action and to enhanced reflection *in* action for decisions about prospective actions. The principals' overall awareness of how things were being conducted in their own schools had been enhanced. This critical reflection then lead the principals from practice to praxis in their schools—informed, committed actions. This proposition was a major finding under the category of educational leadership development and will be further expanded in that section. All of the principals, stated that they had become more conscious of their theories-in-action when they were being observed in their leadership roles within the school. For example, one principal described how the senior staff meeting she was planning to take while her partner shadowed her, was more thoroughly prepared:

> Just knowing that [my partner] was going to come and look at this and this was something I had to do, made me give this priority in my own time, which I may not have given it otherwise.
>
> (F/N:26/8/93)

The same principal said in her final evaluation of the Partnerships' research that she reflected more on the outcomes of her actions, of how her actions affect the learning-teaching processes in the school, since being involved in the research:

> I reflect more, on the outcomes of how I implement new regulations to gain staff support.
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

Many times, too, the principals became aware that their espoused theories were not the same as their theories-in-action. It was when they became more critically aware and informed of their actions, through the receiving of evaluative feedback from their partner, that they began to be more committed about the actions they took and to think more carefully about the effects their actions had on the quality of learning programmes in the school. This was one of the theoretical principles underlying the methodologies of the Partnerships' model—to provide chances for principals to ask questions such as: What

am I doing? Why am I doing it? What are the effects of my actions on learning in this school? (Smyth, 1985).

One principal described it like this:

> The experiences have helped me to look critically at my own performance and to use the outcome of such reflective thoughts to improve it.
>
> (F/N:4/8/94)

The principals took the responsibility for the improvement of their practice very seriously. The partners were obviously not able to be present all of the times that the principals were carrying out actions in their schools, but because the principals became more conscious of their actions, they began to reflect more about the outcomes of their actions and their proposed actions, during the interludes *between* the partner's visits.

PRAXIS WAS EVIDENT DURING THE INTERVALS BETWEEN PARTNERS' VISITS.

One of the propositions leading to the saturation of the property that praxis was achieved, was that the effects of the partners observations and questions were still able to influence reflection and action during the intervals when the partners were not present in the schools. One principal described it like this:

> I am quite sure that in all my interactions with staff I am all the time subconsciously, and occasionally quite consciously, thinking back to some of the techniques and topics that were discussed in the big group. I remember one of the things you said...that in the long run, the one criteria that you need to apply to everything is "What is the educational value—the impact on children's learning—of what is going on?" That is a criterion that I consciously apply all the time [now].
>
> (F/N:15/2/94)

The principals all stated that they found themselves reflecting more carefully on their actions in the days following and between the shadow visits:

> I now question what I am doing and think "What would my partner think of that?"
>
> (F/N:1/12/92)

This is not to imply that the Partnerships' model established within the principals a dependency on their partners' views, but after they had discussed various aspects of their programmes with each other and then together established goals and plans of actions, they would reflect on what their partner would have thought "if they could have seen that" or they would actually phone their partners to give them an update on the happenings in the school after key events had occurred. The partners were always genuinely interested and, therefore, became knowledgeable about the happenings in each other's schools. The

principals commented that this type of person had been missing in Tomorrow's Schools since the abolition of school inspectors, who used to make regular visits to each of the schools in their region and discuss goals and school plans. They welcomed the interest taken by a professional colleague.

In summary, there is no doubt that the partnerships led to far greater reflection, on practice and in practice, taking place in these schools by these principals. The fact that many more structured opportunities for reflection were made available during the school day, in the evenings and at the full group sessions, meant that these principals began to experience and hence recognise the value of this more in-depth reflection on their professional practice. Further examples of how praxis was achieved are illustrated through the case studies on emancipation and action research which are detailed later in the chapter. In enhancing reflective practice the Partnerships' programme assisted in the professional development of these school leaders. The collegiality and collaborative nature of these reflective practices leads on to the next main category of findings of how partnerships assisted in the professional development of these school principals—through increased professional interactions.

b) INCREASED PROFESSIONAL INTERACTIONS

This section highlights the many ways in which there were increased professional interactions for the principals through their involvement in the Partnerships' programme. These increased professional interactions were experienced: between partners; between schools and other members of staff in the schools; between the members of the research group; and between the university researcher and the principals. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

BETWEEN PARTNERS

All of the principals in the research talked about the differences between their interactions within their partnership, and within the research group, and their usual interactions with colleagues at other times. They said that when principals usually talked together they were more social than professional; that discussions were more systems-oriented and organisation-oriented rather than centred on the resolution of specific leadership dilemmas. They said there appeared to be an unspoken rule among them that principals would not reveal any personal concerns or inadequacies that they felt and that they would unite to uphold the belief that all principals were managing well. This was what Goffman (1959) described as *impression management.* When groups of like-minded people get together there are rules and rituals that they abide by, and when someone

breaks these traditions it is termed a 'faux pas' or other. One of the principals described this when he talked to me about how critical principals are towards each other.

> We are terribly critical people. When anyone says anything (wrong or untoward) we don't overtly do anything but we think a lot...we are all very critical of each other and jealous of our own patch and our own domain.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

It was a matter of them keeping the facades in place among themselves, and also for the impression created to the outside world. The principals described this type of talk, or act, as a bluff that principals usually put on when they met together and they said they had all experienced it. The principals in the research group said that nobody really ever revealed anything of any depth when principals talked together in their usual social and professional situations. It was very apparent from a search of the data gathered that 'impression management' in the presentation of self in social situations did occur when school leaders met together in other situations, and that how they met together in the Partnerships' programme was *not* the norm. One principal described the situation like this:

> This group is much more open with each other than other groups... principals put on a bluff exterior at Association meetings.
>
> (F/N:16/11/93)

In other words, everyone supports and portrays a view of themselves that they know others will find, at least temporarily, acceptable; a 'bluff exterior', or 'a veneer of consensus' (Goffman, 1959, p. 21), which they maintain by concealing their own needs. This consensus is that "We are all finding the job of principal easy. Our schools are running well. We are keeping up with everything." Another of the principals who had just read some of the writing of the findings for this research commented that this 'bluff' was one of his pet hobby horses. He used to go to principals' meetings, even before he was a principal, and wonder how he could ever make the grade. He made this cassette reflection after he had read the article which described the impression management as related by the principals in this research:

> I used to listen to all these experienced principals. They were waxing loud on this "and in my school...this," and "my staff...that" and "we do this" and "we've got that" and "I got this" and "I've got that" and I used to think "Holy cat fish, how will I ever become as good as they are." And then I discovered...what I called the 'whited sepulchre syndrome'...a biblical allegory. The sepulchre is a raised tomb which you whitewash every year in memory of the death. So on the outside everything is beautiful but on the inside it is all corruption.
>
> (F/N:12/5/94)

This impression management then, involved the principals in controlling the extent to which their colleagues saw beyond this front. The principals usually only saw each other in action, therefore, at Association meetings, conferences and at other groups, but not as educational leaders operating in their respective schools. Thus, the impression was kept protected and fostered. This research has shown that until principals were able to get beyond the veneer of consensus and were able to reveal their own needs, quality professional development was unlikely to occur. What was needed were interruptions to discredit the impression and this research opportunity was one such interruption that allowed principals to go beyond the bluff and attain access to a deeper understanding of each other and themselves. The principals said that this research gave them their only legitimate access to see other principals in action in their schools. It was an aspect of the model which was highly valued as they realised it enhanced their professional relationships.

Piercing the surface of the impression, and thereby getting beyond the bluff and developing a unique professional relationship with their partner, did take some time however. A case study (Case Study 1) which demonstrated the process of the establishment of a partnership was presented at the end of Chapter Four. Initially most of the principals felt quite humble about being asked to be a 'professional partner' to a colleague and responded in the same manner as this principal who said he "did not know what he had to offer [partner]" (F/N:4/3/93). They demonstrated a feeling of doubt that they could be of professional benefit to another principal. The principals also all described how tentative they were in the initial stages of gaining access to their colleagues' practices. Looking back over the year of the preliminary study, one principal summed up how they all felt about the shadow visits in this way:

> I think we were both pretty apprehensive to start with—you know, you always want to put the best foot forward. But I think we got over that period very quickly and I think we both realised that it was important that the cards were played face up on the table and that we didn't try to perhaps hide some of the things.
>
> (F/N:3/12/92)

Another principal stated honestly that she felt "defensive really although I pretended not to be" (Dec/92); and most of the principals said that they were initially very conscious of their colleague watching them in action. They were usually very closed about what things they offered for observation in the early stages of the development of a partnership. It was interesting throughout the research to watch as the relationship between each pair of principals developed. Openness slowly developed between partners. The principals, although aware that the relationship they were developing with their partner was different to that which they normally shared with their colleagues, still

showed surprise that they *were* so open and trusting with their professional partner. One principal said that she was "more honest" than she thought she would have been (F/N:14/10/93).

They realised also that it was a new way of working that had developed over a period of time. One principal described it like this:

> I tend to find things will build up and worry me and when we arrange a meeting I have no difficulty in talking. This is new for me and has come through the partnership.
>
> (F/N:4/10/93)

In one particular partnership the two principals concerned initially seemed more willing to reflect on their partner's practice than their own. I worked to try and get both of them to begin to look at themselves and their own practice. All of their written and cassette reflections were about their partner's leadership practices. It appeared that neither were able to be totally honest with each other or, more importantly, with themselves. Quite late in the second year, though, a change in the relationship began to occur when one of the pair finally dropped the bluff and let his partner get beyond the front he had been maintaining. These principals had begun to be more open with each other. This was when a higher level of professional respect was attained. His partner described how beneficial she had found it once her partner began to be more open and honest with her:

> I needed to find something I could respect in my partner before I was prepared to make any change because of our collegial work. And that something was the courage of my partner in admitting a slight fault—something not normally done. That made me realise I was not the only one...we could in fact exchange ideas.
>
> (F/N:17/4/94)

It is not until people are true to themselves and their needs that they are truly open to development. The principals all commented on the unique relationship they had developed with their partner-principal. It was a new way of experiencing collegial support as one principal described:

> Collegial support, knowing that I have someone to ask questions, to ask for help and guidance is needed, or knowing that I am able to offer the same.
>
> (F/N:4/8/94)

The principals all talked about the importance of being open if they wanted to gain and grow professionally, and how they had shared things with their partners that they had thought they would never share with other colleagues. Sometimes the degree to which they laid themselves open to their partner's critique, did give them cause for concern. When one principal invited his partner in to observe his visit with the Education Review

Officers, he was just as concerned about seeming inadequate in front of his professional colleague as with the review officers. This is what he shared with me:

> [Partner] said he was impressed with the fact that I clearly knew my school, knew my staff and knew the programmes that were going on within it. So that was good, because between ourselves, that was the thing that worried me. I didn't want to look silly not only in front of them but in front of a colleague.
>
> (F/N:23/9/93)

But in successfully developed partnerships such as this one, there was never any cause for real concern. The professional trust and respect was upheld at all times. Another principal described the relationship with her partner in this way.

> This is far more than your normal collegial relationships—there are no secrets or hidden agendas. We have exposed our innermost thoughts and feelings with complete honesty without fear of reproach or condemnation.
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

The principals were all very humble about the level of trust that their partner had afforded them.

Another principal was concerned with the overall picture of what was happening to principals' collegiality in New Zealand since Tomorrow's Schools. He felt the Partnerships' philosophy was well founded and said that "The whole philosophy of partnership is that collegiality is important. Schools seem to be becoming so individualistic" (F/N:16//2/94).

One rural principal described how it normally would have been by saying "I may have gone for a few beers with (partner) but never something professional like this" (F/N:21/2/94).

His partner, who initially was unsure about her involvement in the research, felt that it took them a year to be fully open to the benefits that a trusting partnership could bring. (The development of this partnership has been fully described in Case Study 1 within Chapter Four). The commitment to the research was for two years, and although this principal said later that she thought at the time "Two years! Gee, that sounds a long time" she then realised that they had needed that length of time to develop a successful professional partnership. They were then at a stage where they automatically talked about what they were going to work on as professional goals for the year ahead. Early in the second year she described it like this:

> I don't feel I have to prove myself...we can be very honest about our problems. I am not saying that I couldn't go to other principals in the cluster and say "I need help here" but none of us are all that good at doing that, cause you feel you are admitting some sort of failure and on the

> whole principals appear to be fairly confident—that is the image they want to portray anyway.
>
> (F/N:30/5/94)

When the principals no longer felt they had to portray this confident, all-knowing image, many advantages followed. There was always a sharing of resources and the most common occurrences when the partners met together were the exchange of new resources and ideas being noted down on arrival. "Have you seen this?" and "Have you done that?" were very common questions at the onset of their shadow visits. The sharing and collegiality was always apparent. This intimacy through reciprocity that Lather (1986) spoke about was obviously achieved in every case within each of the partnerships between the principals. Without this reciprocity between principals, professional goals would not have been advanced as fully.

The principals soon became very familiar with each other's schools and communities and in all partnerships the amount of professional interaction between the partner-schools began to increase, usually after one year of the principals working together.

BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND WITHIN SCHOOLS.

The principals soon became very familiar figures in each other's schools. One principal described it to me:

> My staff see my partner as "a friend" of the school—a person they could approach for advice in my absence.
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

Another principal also said her pupils would announce "Your friend is here" and a rural teaching principal said that her Board of Trustees would often mention that perhaps they could ask the principal's partner to see what the situation was in that school on the same issue. As the principals became more familiar with each other's schools they began to identify the strengths in each other's practice and looked for ways in which they could share this valuable resource between the schools.

Two of the principals jointly planned and implemented a social studies unit on myths and legends in their second year of working which involved the whole staff and students of one school and the partner and his class. Initially it was to be the full staff of both schools but only one school staff were willing to be fully involved. Children and staff from both schools worked together to fully maximise the use of strengths and opportunities available. They shared the same storytellers who went to both schools. One principal organised with the kaumatua at the local Marae to come and tell the stories of the district. The adviser for art education conducted an art unit for the combined group.

The children from both schools worked together for the activities. The art work was displayed in an exhibition at the university.

In yet another partnership, the two principals worked alongside each other through the same school development plan and their staff met for joint staff meetings and development related to their school development process. This process has been described in Case Study 3.

In another partnership, one principal discussed bringing his deputy principal into his partner school so that the deputy could also benefit from a partnership with another deputy principal. The principals in the fourth partnership worked with each other's senior staff on different occasions such as in the appointment of staff and the development of performance agreements.

In the fifth partnership, the principals worked together on senior staff development. In his final reflections about the most important things that happened during the process of the research, one of these principals said that it was the increase in the amount of interactions between the two schools which was a highlight:

> The partnership has led to an increased degree of professional interaction between our two schools at all levels—support staff; teachers; seniors, tech-art staff and deputy principals.
>
> (F/N:4/8/94)

The philosophy of collegiality that these principals were fostering in working so closely with their partner was therefore pervasive through their school cultures. The role models that they were portraying to their staff, their belief in the importance of openness to development and lifelong learning for improvement of education in their schools, paved the way for these increased interactions between individual members of their staff. One principal could see the importance of the role model he was setting as early as at the end of the preliminary study:

> I think it is important that the staff see that the principal is also committed to the concept of professional development and that the principal doesn't think "Well, I'm at the top—now you others catch up. "
>
> (F/N:5/12/92)

This commitment to their own professional growth led to a greater understanding of the other principals in the group and increased professional interactions with them at full group sessions. The knowledge that the group was made up of principals of widely varying experiences, did lead to some interactions between members of the research group outside of full session times, but not as many as would have been hoped for through the development of a community of researchers.

BETWEEN THE RESEARCH GROUP.

As the trust and amount and quality of professional interactions between the partners continued to develop, so too did the trust and then professional interactions between all of the members of the research group begin to develop. From the beginning of the research I had talked to the group about the establishment of a community of researchers (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) which ensured that I was, as they were, part of a *group* of researchers who were exploring and studying a model of utilising professional partnerships for school leaders' professional development. The principals were reticent to share anything of real concern to the whole group in the first sessions. After the first meeting one of the principals wrote to me in a reflection that she wanted a signed declaration from the group that the confidentiality of things shared in group sessions would be assured:

> I think it will be necessary to set up some system to ensure confidentiality when we talk in the larger group. I don't think there's any problem between partners, especially not in our case, but I don't know the other principals and I'm sure that we all need to feel secure in what we have to say.
>
> (F/N:29/4/93)

She believed that this would have an influence on how open the principals then felt they could be within the whole group situation. There were many examples of the principals taking their role in this community of researchers seriously throughout the research. They made comments back to me noting that they were pleased when I had followed up on their examples. The principal previously quoted commented on the end of the next full group session evaluation "Pleased about the confidentiality clause" (F/N:3/5/93). At this same full group session one principal's suggestion was "that it was equally important for the researcher to be familiar with the school before a shadow visit as it was for the partner" (F/N:3/5/93). In a letter back to the whole group shortly after this day I stated how valuable these comments were to the research. It was important that the principals not only saw me espousing the importance of their input, but also that I was seen to put their theories into action. This suggestion from this principal, therefore, led to me carrying out 'context visits' to each of the schools before I watched the partners working together.

Slowly but surely then, trust within the group developed. This trust we had developed, however, did not automatically extend to other people who came in to work with the research group. One principal was quite indignant about this in her later reflections:

> Why does (consultant) believe he can have our confidence without doing anything to win it?
>
> (F/N:25/10/93)

It was therefore, an important part of the research model to develop, but then also protect the ethos of trust in the group. The trust was extended to all members of the group equally. A principal described the lack of hierarchy in this way:

> There are the ones starting off, the others retiring. There is a good atmosphere of sharing and it certainly never comes to me at any time that the experienced ones have the answers. If anything it is some of the young ones in the less experienced positions who tend to feel they have the answers and are certainly innovative in the way they attack problems...For me there are two distinct groups involved and neither feels dominated by the other and each is prepared to learn from the other.
>
> (F/N:17/2/94)

During some of the team building activities the principals were interested to note how different principals took the lead in so many ways. The impression management was no longer apparent and the principals listened to each other and their ideas. One of the more experienced principals commented that this group had a much greater openness to listening to each other and that therefore the sharing of ideas came from all principals, not just from the more experienced ones as was usually the case at their other professional meetings:

> At the professional meetings they [more experienced principals] often postulate about things and not all are happening in their schools...Look how [a teaching principal] turned the thing around last week! From a small school and the guy with the best ideas!
>
> (F/N:16/11/93)

The newly appointed principal had effectively changed the whole direction of the discussion in one session with his lateral thinking and creative leadership. One principal while reflecting at a full group session on the question of how honest she could be with her partner, felt also that the fact that this was a group of people sharing similar concerns made it easier for her to be open about her needs both with her partner and with the full group:

> I now feel confident to express my weaknesses as I know my partner has the same kind of stresses and problems—I am not alone. Also, other members of the group obviously have similar problems.
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

Despite these similarities however, the principals were obviously a diverse group, selected with that in mind. When asked whether this group was different to others they met in, all the principals not only mentioned that it was much more 'open' than other groups, but they also all noted it had a wider mix of principals than their usual groups. The wide and representative mix of principals in this group helped to alter the culture of 'usual' principals' groups. There were women and men; Maori and pakeha; intermediate,

full primary and contributing primary schools; rural and urban principals; teaching and non-teaching principals. These factors all helped to create a different ethos for this group than that which was experienced in other groups. One principal added the following comment in her final evaluation of the research:

> Meeting together as a large group once a term is very beneficial. It is a sharing of more ideas/thoughts. A mixture of school sizes and school areas is giving a broader picture of things happening out there. It is also a chance to discuss educational issues. We don't get many chances like that.
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

Another principal also wrote about the importance of being able to discuss the educational issues currently affecting them and the chance to hear a variety of viewpoints. In answer to my question "Are there any other developments you would like to see this programme take?" he gave this response:

> It would be good to do what we did today—again. Let the ISSUES that are concerning us be raised and hear what people are doing to resolve these issues.
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

Another principal referred to the variety of viewpoints and ascribed it to the different mix of people than she usually experienced in her principals' groups:

> A wider mix of people. More women involved, a more even gender balance there than other principals groups. That is one of the things I noticed and that is unusual for me to notice that because it is not something that is a problem for me as I come from a background of being the only woman in the groups.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

Only four out of the twelve principals were women, but the ratio of women was greater than that usually experienced, by these women when they met in their own principals' groups. This woman later described the gender issue of a professional group in a different way:

> The other groups I am in may provide opportunities for professional development but it does not occur within the time we meet. It is more the organisation of things within those times. The collegial aspect is regarded as prime importance. To me, that is of no importance personally, but that might be because they are all male and I am female and if I require collegial support or personal support or whatever, I don't seek it from those groups.
>
> (F/N:17/2/94)

The rural teaching principals found the urban school principals' situations quite different to their own, but said that it was valuable to have those different perspectives to challenge what they were doing in their smaller schools. One described it like this:

> I listen to the likes of [principals in large urban schools] and to me their schools are so big and it is quite different but at the same time when I listen I am taking it in and I am thinking "I am going to try that." And I'm taking in ideas more.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

One of the urban principal's reflections to me after a full group session showed that she, too, felt the diversity in the group meant the principals gained a greater understanding of the situations other principals were working in. She empathised "the power of Boards of Trustees in country areas is a little frightening. I really feel for our young principals in small country schools" (F/N:25/10/93).

However, although they liked to hear different perspectives on issues to challenge their own ways of doing things, the principals were probably more likely to call a principal of a similar sized school when they had an issue or concern to solve. During the research there was actually very little interaction between the principals in the group other than at the full group sessions.

There were only three interchanges between members of the group during the research and this principal—Principal A for ease of discussion here—was involved in each of the three interactions. He was experiencing a similar leadership concern to another principal which was in relation to their deputy principals. Following my suggestion Principal A contacted the other principal and went over and visited her school for the purpose of further discussion. When I was talking to this other principal later in interview she said she was "pleased to help him" (F/N:2/12/93). Principal A was again involved in the second meeting between principals of the research group. Two other principals in partnership had contacted him quite early in the research programme and had arranged a visit to his school to discuss his reporting and assessment procedures. They had found this very useful.

One of these principals, in her final evaluation of the research, said that building relationships with other principals in the research was one of the most important things that happened for her during her involvement in the research. She then went on to clarify why it was so important:

> Particularly with [Principal A] as we are in the same area and it has been good for my community to work with his school—in a more "us" way than a "them and us."
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

In the third interaction, Principal A contacted another urban principal on two other occasions and when the other principal's partner did retire, these two remaining principals did work at developing a new partnership. Principal A phoned me, soon after the new partnership had begun, to thank me for initiating it and to tell me how promising it looked. He had always felt particularly isolated in his smaller urban town, and was looking to the Partnerships' programme to fill a distinct professional development void. He felt that there were possibilities within this new partnership and the research group to be able to do this. Principal A confirmed that he felt a part of a research group and that his trust extended further than to his own partner. He stated that he had been much more open with the three principals on an individual basis than he would have been otherwise. He felt more at ease discussing issues with particular principals "because they were a part of this research" (F/N:16/11/93).

They were more willing to be honest about their concerns and dilemmas and moved beyond problem solving to look more critically at their practice and their educational values. The gaining of different perspectives from the group members at the full group sessions was an important aid to the development of critical reflective processes within this research and therefore the diversity of experiences within the group was paramount. So although there were few interactions between the wider group during the intervals between the full group sessions those that there were, were meaningful and beneficial.

The collegiality and friendliness of the group was evident. Photographs and anecdotes were shared at morning tea or lunch. The principals combined the professional and the social very easily. One of the most helpful hints for one principal was gathered at a research dinner party when she heard another principal stating that it was not necessary to go to every standing committee meeting of the Board of Trustees. The principals talked about the willingness of the principals in this group—particularly their own partner—to share and be collegial. One newly appointed principal initially had not realised this group *was* any different from the other groups she belonged to, but then realised that most of her new ideas and learning had come through her participation in this group rather than from the others. She explained:

> So I think I was going to say I was getting it (leadership development and ideas) from *all* the principals' groups but I'm not...I'm very much into sharing things...and [in other groups] I say 'why don't we do this together?' and I end up doing all the giving...which is fine but at the same time I thought, "Well, there has to be a sharing" and *our* partnership *is* sharing.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

The principals were genuinely concerned about each other and displayed a warmth that was not always there at other meetings of principals. After an absence due to sickness one of the principals felt welcomed back into the fold and described how he felt:

> It was good for me after a period away from the group, to see those lovely/familiar/warm faces to welcome me in their own subtle way. It was good to share korero with my partner, as well as other members of the group.
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

However, they mostly talked about the fact that there were, within this group, increased professional opportunities to really focus on their leadership. This finding is fully discussed in the next section on leadership development.

They all felt that this was a programme which, because it was based on the concerns and issues that they were specifically facing within their schools, maintained an emphasis on reflection on their professional practice. The Partnerships' programme and the regular use of full group sessions, led to increased professional interactions between members of the research group.

The constant facilitation of interactions by the researcher, as part of this community of researchers, kept the group focussed on leadership issues and the current research literature, both during the full group sessions and on an individual basis with each principal in the group. Principals in schools often do not get the opportunity to have professional interactions with university personnel unless they are attending lectures for the purposes of attaining a qualification. This action research process created the opportunity for increased professional interaction to occur between university researcher and the principals.

BETWEEN UNIVERSITY RESEARCHER AND PRINCIPALS.

In this research process as praxis, the findings demonstrated that the presence of the researcher was not only acknowledged and, the influence of, celebrated but also that methodologies were established through which the reflexive nature of this research was strengthened. There was an unexpected increase in professional interactions between university researcher and principals.

The open relationship and trust and reciprocity that the partnerships each shared soon extended to include me. The principals also sometimes told me things in confidence that they did not wish revealed to their partners. Specific examples cannot be given in this writing as it would be a breach of the confidence the principals held in me. Sometimes they were to do with their partner's practice; sometimes to do with staff members in their school. Conflicts with Boards of Trustee personnel were discussed and career plans and prospects. Sometimes they were to do with the research process—concerns that their partner did not seem as committed as they were; concerns that reflective interviews were not carried out. These confidential reflections that the principals told me individually gave

me a deeper understanding of the research process. I learnt of their disappointment when their partner did not turn up on the planned shadowing day. I heard about how threatened they could feel if their partner was judgmental about their practice. I was able to get different perspectives about the same shadow visit. However, I recognised that I also needed to see these principals working together to get a third perspective.

Early in the research I forewarned the principals that I would later want to come and see how they were working together in order to get a fuller picture of the research. I had not realised this would be an issue until I read the written reflection later that night from one woman who had been part of the research for 15 months through her involvement in the preliminary study, and whom I thought I knew really well. This is what she wrote to me:

> When you mentioned shadowing the shadower my mood ring changed showing tension. Not a major change but interesting as I have been on the course all year.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

Even though I had waited until all of the partnerships were well established, the principals were all reticent about allowing me access to the front regions of this research model in action. The same impression management was there for university researchers as it had been for their own colleagues. I had to follow the same processes within each partnership, as each of the principals had followed, to develop trust and eventual access to the observation of the partnership practices. When I was invited in to each school, to shadow the shadower and therefore observe the principals working together, I found that the principals were still extremely conscious of my presence. They made many comments which showed me that they were concerned to be "doing the right thing." Even though I reiterated that I was just gathering information about how they operated within their partnership as *that* was the right thing, the principals still had some feelings of being judged and they shared these with me. It was highlighted to me that what I had imagined they were doing in each other's schools when they met together was not in fact what they actually did. This knowledge helped to plan future full group sessions and, their partnership processes were able to be further developed.

I worked hard to create a particular culture within the group. One principal described what had developed like this:

> You have had to work to get to the level the group is at now. People trust you and reveal in the small group small personal items related to their principalship. We trust each other.
>
> (F/N:25/10/93)

These "small personal items" revealed in this research gave the findings a richness not always experienced in research projects. How is it possible for a researcher to relate case studies and develop grounded theory if they are not privy to the feelings of the researched? The fact that the principals talked openly about what they were actually doing in the research was extremely important to me. They often made comments like the following one which demonstrated that they were, in fact, being open about their processes:

> I don't think that we have done our context visits correctly but I think they have been of some use.
>
> (F/N:29/4/93)

I kept reiterating that there was not a "correct" way but that I wanted to research what they were actually doing, so that it could become the basis for new theory. The principals then recognised that they were involved in establishing the research process and that what they said was important and taken into account in the development of theory. Reciprocity at the junction of data and the subsequent theory developed is indicated in the following example where this negotiation of meaning during the research process takes place. The following excerpt demonstrates reciprocity.

Demonstrating Reciprocity

> In April of the second year of research I was asked to submit an article on the research process and findings to a journal in Australia. At this time I thought it would be an excellent opportunity to give a copy of this article to each of the principals and ask for their comment on it, and in doing so, openly aver my seriousness about reciprocity. As the journal audience was school leaders I asked the research group the following:
>
> I am enclosing for your comment an article which I am going to submit to an Australian journal...I would appreciate it if you could read it and comment on the article's readability from a practitioner-viewpoint (the clientele for the journal) and whether you feel it accurately portrays what we have been doing in the research.
>
> (F/N:12/4/94)
>
> Six of the ten principals remaining in the research gave some valuable feedback on this paper. Sometimes their comments were on specific propositions that were emerging:
>
> Totally agree "these principals found they learned vicariously"- correct! "Legitimate opportunity to observe leaders in action, a rare occurrence otherwise" True. Also true to say they challenge how we know things.
>
> (F/N:12/5/94)
>
> Sometimes their comments were on the actual model of professional development in place:

> I have begun to wonder about the value of groups of three since skill in causing another to reflect needs careful honing and should be the highlight. A third person could give feedback on the interview.
>
> (F/N:17/4/94)

Another principal questioned the use of a particular quote stating that she did not think it correctly portrayed the true essence of the research. This response demonstrates how the principals felt committed to the strived-for reciprocity in this research:

> I think it gives a fair account of what has happened as far as I am aware. I wondered about the quote from Nola's [pseudonym] field notes 5/3/93. I feel this gives the impression of developing dependent principals or at least encouraging dependency when really you are developing very independent principals by causing them to reflect and do their own learning, and since learning is change, change themselves.
>
> (F/N:17/4/94).

It was important that the principals recognised a willingness on my part to be committed to reciprocity—that I did not just pay lip service to what they were saying. I replied:

> I think your comment about the choice of quote is very pertinent...And if that is what that quote said to you, then I certainly won't be using it (in the final write up) as that is what it would say to other people as well.
>
> (F/N:22/4/94).

This principal also stated that she did not like the pseudonym that had been selected for her in that particular article! Another principal phoned soon after receiving the article and said that although the writing was "a bit jargonistic" he was enjoying getting his dictionary out and getting back "into some learning." He also commented that the preliminary findings "look very readable" (F/N:14/4/94). Other comments made were quite general statements about the research writing. One principal phoned to say that the article was "well-written and really easy to read and understand" and that it was "interesting to see the research as a whole" (F/N:13/4/94). Yet another stated:

> I think you have made a good job of summarising the situation. That certainly is the way I see it and I wouldn't be surprised if everyone else sees it that way too. It is almost like a sort of progress report on how things are going. It will be interesting to hear how others come back on it.
>
> (F/N:12/5/94)

The other four principals did not comment on the article. When two teaching principals were asked in interview what they had thought of the article, they said that it was still in their "pile of reading" (F/N:30/5/94). They were both preparing for an effectiveness review by the Education Review Office at that time.

These increased professional interactions between researcher and researched are an essential quality in this type of research and the model in this research enabled them to

occur. Another example nearer the end of the research demonstrates how one principal recognised that their input into the research process was indeed warranted:

> ...for the 1 August meeting it might be interesting to look at the pros and cons of individual employment contracts from purely the role of a professional leader...
>
> (F/N:12/5/94)

Sometimes the principals commented that they had concerns with the actual research process that had been suggested for when they were working in partnership. They had ideas and suggestions which they thought would improve the professional development process. One of the questions for a written reflection after a reflective interview prompted the following suggestion:

> I feel it would be beneficial to list mutual concerns or topics we wish to seek or share advice on before the interview starts. If these were committed to paper before the interview, to be dealt with afterwards, it would help sharpen our interview interaction.
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

However, the way they worked together at the beginning of the partnership and when I was observing was not a relaxed and normal way of working for them. The principals often stated in reflection that they *did* work differently in my presence, which made it increasingly difficult to find out what was really happening when the two principals met together unobserved. What they *said* they did, what they *actually* did, and what I *saw* them doing, were not always the same things. It *was* apparent that there was a separation between researcher and researched in the principals' minds at times during, in particular, the early stages of the research. In reflection after a shadowing visit for which I had been present, one principal quite openly stated "If this interview had been *for real...*" (my emphasis) (F/N 1/6/93). In other words, this principal was saying "If you hadn't been there..." She stated quite openly what she would have done if she had not been given a *set process* to follow. The principal then chose to reflect whether there was any merit in the set process she had been asked to try. "However, I shall reflect on whether interviews to cause others to reflect are of some merit." The next day she made this comment onto a cassette tape:

> The first thing that occurred to me as I made my last recording was that the process which I attempted to carry out for the sake of the evaluation is in fact an excellent model for me to use for my staff.
>
> (F/N:2/6/93)

This "evaluation" was when I, the researcher, shadowed to observe what the shadower was doing! Even after many practices at reflective interviewing in the workshop situation, reflective interviewing was not always carried out in the school context. I never lost hope

that the processes of reflective practice would continue to develop successfully within each partnership over time. I worked with each partnership in their schools to help them to further develop their reflective interviewing and active listening skills and to assist each other to set specific professional goals. While explaining to me that they did in fact behave differently while I was present, one principal stated quite explicitly that my presence was needed from time to time to maintain a degree of stringency in the partnership:

> We need you here though—to keep us focussed on leadership as that is what is the hardest thing to do—systems and management are the easiest things to focus on.
>
> (F/N:30/11/93)

She later described how she saw my role in this way:

> I really appreciate it when you come out here into the schools and offer practical kind of suggestions. You are not sitting up in your ivory tower saying "Hey, you know this, this and this" and then you find when you actually put it into practical application it doesn't work. You don't have that role. You are more practically involved and you know what we are doing and you are part of it.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

There were increased professional interactions between researchers and principals due to involvement in this research. It was always important that the principals benefited from the *process* of being involved in the research rather than just benefiting from the research findings at some later stage as can be the case in traditional research methods. Reciprocity, a mutual give-and-take, was therefore easily achieved between the principals and between the researcher and the principals and, through this reciprocity, a degree of reflexivity was also achieved. The principals had changed in the manner in which they conducted their professional interactions. The very fact that they met with their partner and also the researcher in an open and honest way was the earliest evidence that change had occurred. Change is development—professional development means changed practices. The thesis that is being developed here is that partnerships do lead to the professional development of school principals. The next section of findings highlights the areas of educational leadership development that occurred.

C) EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

One of the questions often asked when people discussed the research with me was whether the principals' leadership had significantly improved and what were the qualities of sound leadership practice that I was endeavouring to help each of the principals to achieve. The response was that this piece of research did not put a recipe, as such, for

excellent leadership into the hands of principals, but that it gave the principals the skills, the attitudes and the behaviours to become more reflective about their practice and in so doing, helped them to focus on the quality of education in their own schools. It was in this way that I believed that involvement in Partnerships did lead to the development of their leadership practice. There was the strength gained from the support and affirmation of working closely with a professional colleague and the subsequent loss of feelings of isolation. There was a greater focus on the quality of education in their schools and on their own leadership styles and development. The principals became increasingly open to new ideas and growth which lead to further reflection on practice and then informed committed actions taking place. There was greater responsibility taken for self-development and therefore increased intellectual independence on the part of the principals. Partnerships enhanced the likelihood of emancipatory behaviours occurring. The very concept of leadership denotes proactive action and these principals moved from being reactive and isolated, to proactive and politically empowered through belonging to the group of principals involved in the research.

Reduced Feelings of Isolation and Provided Support and Affirmation

Many of the changes related to leadership development that principals were affective in that the change was apparent in their feelings, attitudes and confidence rather than in new skills they had learned.

This links to what Hargreaves and Fullan (1992, p. 7) were referring when they said:

> Teacher development...involves more than changing teachers' behaviour. It also involves changing the person the teacher is...Acknowledging that teacher development is also a process of personal development marks an important step forward in our improvement efforts.

A proposition that was saturated early, during the preliminary study, was that partnerships reduced the isolation felt by principals. The administrative structure had meant that principals felt quite vulnerable to all of the changes occurring around them. Their present position saw them as a member of the Board of Trustees and yet the same Board of Trustees was their employer.

One principal told me the feeling that "You are only as safe as your last Board meeting" was a fairly common one among principals' circles (F/N:11/11/94). Another described the situation in his school after the Board of Trustees had made a decision abut whether or not to have a special education unit on site as "You are damned if you do, and you are damned if you don't" (F/N:23/8/93). This dichotomous position often left the

principals feeling isolated. One senior principal described his experiences with his previous Board of Trustees:

> They would never say "That's your job and that's my job." They would frequently say "Why haven't you done that?" when I had assumed that was their job. Or they would say "Why are you poking your nose into the board?" I was never regarded as a board member—just a pain for the whole thing.
>
> (F/N:5/12/92)

A loss of confidence in their ability to carry out their role successfully had been experienced by many of these principals. The principals were required to take on new roles and often they had been given little training and no support to cope with the changes. The amount of change and the increase of paper to read and digest had left many in education feeling 'behind' and inadequate. The principals knew that how well they dealt with each of these changes could reflect on their future employment in their schools and this affected their confidence levels. The principals had lost a lot of confidence prior to this research project.

The aforementioned principal described his lack of confidence in this way:

> I'm always afraid, every time I stand up just to give a few notices at morning tea or staff meetings or something like that. "Am I going to say the right thing? Am I going to say something that someone is going to pick up on that I can't give them a good answer on?"
>
> (F/N:3/6/93)

At the end of the research this principal was talking to me about he confidence he had gained through his involvement in the programme. He said that he felt so empowered:

> This is where I have gone from one extreme to the other. If I had known then what I now know, I wouldn't have let them push me about. I would have felt so empowered, supported and emancipated, that I would never have taken all that rubbish from the first Board of Trustees! I would have dealt with it quite differently.
>
> (F/N:11/11/94)

What he now knew, was confirmation that the way he was operating in his school met with the same issues and concerns of many other principals around and that it was not just him, feeling the way he did. One of the factors which led to the principals regaining their confidence was the positive affirmation that they received from their partner after their partner had seen them in action in their schools. This particular principal found that the affirmation received during the partnership visits was one of the most important parts of the programme. He felt that nobody ever thanked the principal and that without his

professional partnership the affirmation for work well done would be very limited. He said:

> It is probably the only way in which we can get any sort of positive acknowledgment as to how we do our job. Question: Like everyone, we need this positive feedback. You can't ask people for it—so how do you get it?
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

Answer: Through increased and enhanced professional interactions with a colleague. Nearly all of the principals commented on the fact that the affirmation received during the Partnerships' programme gave them a greater feeling of confidence within their school. This developing confidence was the foundation for emancipation to take place at a later stage in the principals' development. Normally the principals' jobs worked against them working with others or getting to know others and therefore the learning curve for leadership development had not been supportive.

One principal commented to me one day about how he felt about being so isolated previously in his work. He said to me "I feel guilty about this—principals are supposed to be accessible" (F/N:24/8/93).

This research process placed principals in a position where they were accessible again—first to their colleagues and then to other members of the profession. They were able to realise that they were not alone in feeling inadequate or frustrated in coping with the many changes in education and the national curriculum, the long hours and new roles. One experienced principal described it like this:

> You need someone else to talk to—especially about specific problems. Having someone who understands these problems, can listen, can suggest ways of coping, has been a lifesaver.
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

Another equally experienced principal described it in this way:

> One gathers strength from on-site dialogue, and to a lesser degree, but still one of support, from the telephone.
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

Yet another principal described how his partnership helped develop more confidence:

> It's a developing relationship and I have found that the similar problems that we share gives me more confidence in what I need to do e.g. [partner] and I work out a common approach.
>
> (F/N:14/10/94)

One of the newly appointed principals in the research realised how valuable the opportunity was to learn from the experiences of principals who had been in the position longer. She realised that she had changed considerably, and although recognised that the principals of the larger schools had quite different contexts, she realised that she was listening to their ideas and trying them out in her own school. She said:

> I have made a lot of changes. I've seen other people doing things. I've stopped panicking. I can't believe how much more confident and relaxed I am this year.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

Her partner too, extolled the virtues of having a professional partner with whom she could share the issues in her school. Before she had this professional partner she had felt very isolated. At the end of the preliminary study she stated that "a problem shared is a problem solved" (F/N:1/12/92). During the research she had relaxed and changed the way she worked with others within her school. She described it as more of a "personality change than anything else" (F/N:16/2/94). She had found that her stress levels had really decreased and she attributed this mainly to her ability to share with her partner. She had described to me about how she felt during an earlier interview:

> To be honest, I think I am a lot more relaxed because I know there is a least one other principal out there who has got the same problems as me, the same hassles, the same worries, and I know that I am not unique, not the only person who has got everybody doing the wrong thing at the wrong time and some days are like that, and it's something you can ring up and laugh about.
>
> (F/N:1/12/93)

She went on to say that just knowing that she could call her partner about something often eliminated the necessity to do so. The relationship between partners led to a lessening of their feelings of isolation and provided a context for support and affirmation to occur. A more senior urban principal described how he felt about sharing with his partner:

> It is like a light relief to share with her. I enjoy her sense of humour. We can have fun about the important issues that challenge us and work through them with confidence, knowing that we are, at least in our two schools, "on the right track."
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

The fact that they were meeting with these colleagues and openly discussing their schools and their leadership, was one of the most obvious indicators that change had occurred. This was leadership development—a willingness to focus upon their leadership. This was often a point made by people who listened to papers about this research written

during the data gathering period. One woman in the Education Review Office attending my paper session at a conference only had one question. She asked: "How did you find 12 principals who were willing to lay themselves open to development in this way?"

MORE FOCUS ON THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The principals all stated that they were focussing more on their own leadership because of the Partnerships' programme. They found it was always very easy for them to focus on systems and sports organisation and forms that needed filling and budgets that needed finalising when they met with their colleagues, but that it was much more difficult to find opportunities to focus on their own leadership actions. This was how one principal described it to me:

> The partnerships focus principals into leadership issues and seek evaluation. Although we may wear many hats in our schools we are the professional leaders and sometimes...other issues can take priority.
>
> (F/N:14/3/94)

The structure of this Partnerships' programme gave them the opportunities to do so. One principal stated in cassette reflection to me that he had no doubts that his involvement in a professional partnership had helped him focus and, subsequently, improve his leadership and that this was the greatest benefit of the programme and he wished all principals could be involved in it. He said "However it is done, there is no doubt about it. It does assist in the development of professional leadership" (F/N:15/8/93).

His partner had found that his involvement in partnerships was a form of revitalisation as it helped him to refocus on his leadership practice:

> It has made me refocus and made me rethink about where I am. I mean, seven years have gone past [since I came to this school] twice as long as I have been anywhere else. I usually have had the challenge of going to another school.
>
> (F/N:25/6/93)

The reflective interviews at the full group sessions were built in to provide these challenges and further opportunities to focus on leadership. There were also opportunities to refocus and rethink during the shadowing sessions with their partner on their own school site. One principal made this comment after reflecting about the role that the reflective interviews played in helping him to focus on his leadership style:

> I feel now that things are moving forward particularly in terms of my leadership. It is amazing how one can change styles of leadership. As a younger man I made decisions with no consultations—take it, lump it or get out. The result of that kind of decision making was too brutal, blunt and abrasive.

(F/N:14/6/93)

My involvement in the shadowing sessions in the schools often provided the degree of stringency required to bring them back to focussing on these types of leadership issues and the resolution of them. The principals did indeed very easily slip into talking generally about systems management and other issues when meeting together in partnership rather than focusing on how their specific leadership actions had an effect on the quality of education within the school. In fact, one principal in her final evaluation seemed to despair as to how they could keep the degree of formality in their partnership that she realised was necessary for critical reflection on practice to occur. This is what she said:

> I do believe it will take real effort on our part to keep the 'formal' aspects of visits alive. We have to watch we don't just look at the 'here and now' situations.
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

The reflective interviews were these formal aspects. They were the key mechanism for assisting the principals to think through their actions and their proposed outcomes and what effect their actions were having on learning in the school. The principals all agreed with the principal who stated that the questions that his partner asked him made him "consider more carefully" his actions (F/N:3/5/93).

After further practice at reflective interviewing one principal admitted that he and his partner had not been carrying the reflective interviews out effectively in the previous year during the preliminary study. He now recognised the value of reflective interviewing for their leadership development. He said:

> I feel positive about the future role of reflective interviews as my partner and I have been shadowing for a year without any in-depth sequel or outcomes to these viewing episodes. I anticipate the reflective interviews will focus attention on the hows and whys of our management structures/styles.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

The principals found the reflective interviews quite challenging to their beliefs and values and often seemed to avoid them if they could. Mostly they attributed the avoidance of reflective interviewing to not having sufficient time available when working with their partner. Sometimes one principal had other commitments back in their own school, or other situations arose which inhibited the interview taking place.

One of the principals described to me another reason why sometimes, even within the Partnerships' programme, the reflective interviews were not carried out:

> In a way there is almost a natural reticence about doing it because you have to share so much of yourself when you have to ask about these innermost thoughts...If I don't have to delve in very deeply I don't... because sometimes you find out interesting things about yourself.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

The principals all stated that it was not only interesting what they found out about themselves but that they did reap maximum benefits when they used the reflective interviewing technique. I went on to ask this principal whether there would ever be times, outside of Partnerships that they would get opportunities to do this, and she said that there were not. She said that Partnerships provided her with something quite different and challenging:

> There is definitely a challenge and there is work involved, but it is rewarding and it's very worthwhile.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

I had been pondering on this issue of whether there was enough challenge being generated within these collegial partnerships. Comments like the following made at a full group session had made me wonder whether these principals were just giving each other too much affirmation and not enough challenge for leadership development to occur:

> I enjoy sharing with [partner]. She is soundly based on her philosophy and I find I agree with her ideas. This is helpful from a "confirmation point of view." We are open and honest.
>
> (F/N:14/10/93)

When one of the more experienced principals was asked if he believed there was sufficient challenge or whether a partnerships' programme such as this actually just reinforced the status quo he replied:

> The first challenge is that you have got someone observing you, and that in itself makes you think about what you say and do. You can't help but compare schools.
>
> (F/N:24/11/93)

Field notes written after shadowing the shadower in this principal's school on the same day confirmed that there were a lot of challenges between the two principals on many issues that arose.

Another principal, in her final reflection, described her confidence in her leadership in the school. She now felt she *was* an educational leader because she always prioritised her commitment to better learning and teaching within the school. She told me:

> The biggest gain/change has been a move from a 'managerial' role to a 'leadership' role. Now I am comfortable with the day-to-day running of the

> school I can take a look at the bigger picture—Where are we going as a school? What do we want for the children here?
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

As this principal became more confident in her handling of the managerial aspects of running her school, she began to reflect on the leadership issues and how to achieve her school objectives. Some principals are not challenged to see management as a tool to this end. If professional *development* means *change* the professional partnerships as carried out in this research were a valuable form of professional development for these school leaders. There were changes in their priorities and practices. There were challenges occurring due to the exchange of thoughts and ideas. There was a necessary amount of challenge to their previous ways-of-knowing and the principals became more open to new ideas and professional growth.

OPEN TO NEW IDEAS AND GROWTH.

This openness to new ideas developed over time as the trust within the partnership strengthened however. It was not always there in the initial stages of forming the partnership as one principal outlined as she described her changed way of operating within the partnership:

> I now look for outside discussion with shadow. When I started I was wary of being considered inadequate.
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

Some of the personal learnings were in changes of approach, through observation of alternative ways of acting and an openness to development. Sometimes the principals talked about new skills and ideas they had picked up in each other's schools from which they immediately made changes in their own school. One told me that she now has a phone in her room, so that the children can answer the phone and she can keep teaching. She said this was her "partner's way." Another mentioned getting an idea of a "trusted class" system for allowing children to be inside the classrooms at lunchtime and ideas for an internal courtyard development. Another talked of acquiring a policy and action sheet for a board of trustee meeting which outlined who was going to do what. A newly appointed principal took ideas for the development of a school strategic plan. These all led to changes in leadership practices. The principals all stated that this availability of new ideas was one of the most beneficial parts of the Partnerships' programme. A very experienced principal described it like this:

> So from that point of view I think it is just merely being in each other's schools, talking to each other, reflecting ideas then and there. They are all

> valuable too. But what we really need is to sit down and analyse each other's interactions with the people with whom we interact.
>
> (F/N:3/6/93)

Therefore this openness to, and the availability of, new ideas is one of the prerequisites for leadership development to occur as it leads to a desire for further reflections and then analysis of the principal's own practice as stated by this principal. I visited two of the principals when they met together one morning for a shadow visit. They had chosen to work together in the principal's office on budgets and long term plans and monitoring and evaluation systems in the school rather than utilising the time for observation of specific leadership practices. I asked the principal concerned what he saw as the most beneficial part of the morning and this was how he replied:

> I'm full of ideas. I'm more settled than I was. I hadn't realised that I was trying to do too much. I'd thought I'd really wasted a year. I've looked more at the admin[istration] side rather than at the quality of education within the school and haven't pushed that side enough.
>
> (F/N:17/11/93)

This principal was also not only full of new ideas but also open and ready for growth and willing to focus more on his leadership and education within the school. When teachers are at the stage in the process of change that these two examples illustrate, further reflection on their practice will lead to more informed committed actions in the future. In this case, this principal had reflected on his practice and realised that it was too 'systems-focused' and not enough focus had been placed on educational leadership within the school. In the forthcoming year, he was ready to make this his priority. In the previous case, the principal recognised that further leadership development would occur when they began to analyse their interactions with those with whom they worked. It is this further reflection on practice which leads to leadership development and praxis.

OPENNESS LED TO FURTHER REFLECTION AND INFORMED COMMITTED ACTIONS

When the principals were fully open to new ideas there were boundless opportunities for professional growth to occur within the programme. At the end of the research one principal described her experiences and professional growth in the following way:

> When I look back at our experiences I see growth of confidence and leadership skills that can actually be tracked back to reflective interviews after shadowing because one takes such an in-depth look at the situation.
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

The principals enjoyed watching their partners in action in their schools. One of the principals talked about this further reflection on his own practice when he described his observations of his partner after a shadow session:

> I think I learned the low key way that [partner] handled it. In terms of his voice, his restrained body language and that how, as conversation went on, I began to see as [partner] went on that he had his agenda there.
>
> (F/N:24/8/93)

Another principal described his feelings of professional respect for his partner after observing her take a Board of Trustees meeting and how it had changed his future actions:

> I really admired you when you told them [Board of Trustee members] that about the health issue [that it was their responsibility]...[after that] I just kept writing it down [at my own Board of Trustee meetings] that *they* were responsible...that really helped me.
>
> (F/N:17/11/93)

His actions became informed and committed. He was aware of how he had been taking on more and more of the Board's responsibilities and consciously worked at changing that at his future meetings. The same principal talked about the effect that the reflective interviews had on his future actions in his school:

> I had to think about my actions. [Partner's] questions and especially her last question "Would you do the same again?" made me think. I would handle things differently.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

This principal's ways-of-knowing were being challenged. Another principal also found this collaborative effort made him think critically about his actions. When his partner was questioning him in a reflective interview after observing a staff meeting that he had taken, the principal concerned said to him "It makes you think though...it [this reflective interview] is a really interesting thing to do" (F/N: 18/10/93).

I could see these changes in leadership practice and greater reflection on practice occurring but I wondered how many or how much of the change the principals could themselves detect or credit to their newly formed partnership? After one year of the research process I decided to ask the principals directly in interview "Have you changed?" to see what their response would be. The first response, in just about every case, was to think not. However, when they reflected, and/or after I prompted them with some of the data from earlier transcripts or discussions, they realised that they had indeed changed in some way. One principal said that he had not changed, but then went on to make this statement:

> Subconsciously one could not help but do some things of course as an outcome of talking with [partner] or with the total group or yourself. You become very conscious of how and what you say to people.
>
> (F/N:22/2/94)

His increased consciousness was a changed leadership practice. The principals all became very conscious of their actions. They commented on the fact that the structured opportunities for reflection had cause them to change because they were now thinking more about their processes and likely outcomes of their actions. One principal explained her changes like this:

> I don't know if I personally changed but I thought about some of my methods and changed some of those...I made a conscious effort to be as positive as I possibly could with my staff...I probably made a more conscious effort to be patient...rather than say "We are doing it."
>
> (F/N:21/2/94)

Again, these are informed committed actions. The critical reflection not only led to more committed actions—praxis—but it also led to the principals beginning to take greater responsibility for their own development.

GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR SELF-DEVELOPMENT

With the confidence and an openness to new ideas and growth comes a natural ownership for the responsibility for the principals' self-development. The focus on the quality of leadership within their school and the emphasis on looking specifically at their leadership actions, meant that the principals did make changes to their leadership practice in their schools. This came about because the principals felt an ownership for the necessity to change. They saw a need, and often changed without thinking further about it. This is how one principal described it in her reflection to me:

> ...you are developing very independent principals by causing them to reflect and do their own learning and since learning is change, change themselves...I think the strength of the system is the expectation that each principal is responsible for her own development. We don't want clones.
>
> (F/N:17/4/94)

The principals did not want to be the same as their partner but they began to recognise the importance in utilising their partner's strengths to develop and meet their own professional goals. As they highlighted areas for development, they then naturally sought ways for development to take place. They began to look for professional development opportunities with their partner. Two partners attended a January refresher course for rural school principals together; two partners always travelled together to the Intermediate Schools' Association Conference. The principals began to seek opportunities for further

professional interactions. The principals set personal/professional goals and asked their partners for evaluative feedback on these areas of focus. One principal described her evaluative feedback session with her partner in this way:

> I needed some honest feedback. I didn't feel the least bit threatened. I asked his opinion of how I gained co-operation from the staff and how he felt relationships were.
>
> (F/N:25/10/93)

For the purposes of their evaluative feedback sessions and reflective interviews some principals chose to have their partners observe them taking senior staff meetings; or watch as they conducted appraisal interviews with their staff. Three principals observed their partners taking full staff meetings; five principals attended the effectiveness reviews that their partners were involved in; two principals attended meetings of the Board of Trustee at their partners' schools. The principals began to take a greater responsibility for their own development.

This is how one principal described the research on the last full group session day and demonstrated the amount of intellectual independence apparent through involvement in the research:

> This research has made me focus on my own educational leadership. It has led me through a series of processes which has enabled me to reflect on and analyse my own actions. The research has made me take an in-depth look at my own leadership style and has given me the opportunity to observe others.
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

It was extremely hard for the principals to pinpoint all the change to its original source such as whether it was the Partnerships' programme which had initiated the change in leadership practices. One principal told me that a course that he went on prompted the changes and then his partner just worked alongside to see him trying to put it into action:

> We have changed the way we do staff meetings, but I don't think it was entirely related to the [Partnership] thing that we went through. It was more from my involvement in a couple of courses that changed the structure. What [partner] and I went through...tended to reinforce the changes that were generated from the courses that I had been on.
>
> (F/N:15/2/94)

It could be asked whether the ideas from the course would have ever been implemented back in the school without the Partnerships' framework for support? This premise is further developed in the next section. Two other principals related the same type of thing. They had attended the January refresher course together and then worked alongside each other to see if they could apply what they had learnt on the course in their

respective schools. This to me had always been the ultimate benefit of the Partnerships' model—that it would provide the link from the professional development course, situated on an island divorced from the school and its culture, to the school setting where something actually takes place. Partnerships would provide a framework for the achievement of professional and school development goals. After the research, the principals will, of necessity, get all of their leadership and school development ideas from other courses, curriculum and leadership development contracts and conferences. They may then continue to work together to implement these new ideas in their schools.

The self-development and increased responsibility for continued professional development and lifelong learning also led to a realisation of the wider picture of principals' practice. When I gave early findings back to the principals they were able to see their situation from another perspective and to "see the research as a whole" (F/N:14/4/94). I wrote an article on their experiences which addressed the importance of leaders taking the time to climb the tallest tree to see if they were working in the right jungle (an analogy from Covey, 1989). A rural teaching principal stated that he would continue with his partnership in the future because it helped him to do just this and see the big picture:

> It is too easy to go overboard in a school such as mine especially living on site. So I will need to be reminded to keep my head up or "climb the tree."
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

Seeing the "whole" and "taking time to climb the tree" occasionally, heralded the beginnings of emancipatory actions being taken by the principals.

ENHANCED EMANCIPATORY BEHAVIOUR.

When the principals were able to reflect on the actions of their partner and subsequently reflect on their own actions after seeing their partner in action, they began to realise that they did not have to continue practising in the way they had previously been doing. They experienced feelings of agency. These realisations were the beginnings of emancipation. An example which highlighted this emancipation was when the newly appointed principal quoted above said that without this close involvement with his partner he would have continued taking on more and more duties and responsibilities in his school and gone "overboard." His enlightenment came through observing his partner at her Board of Trustees' meeting and seeing the systems that she had in place to ensure that delegated responsibilities were actually carried out. In this way a neophyte was able to benefit from the previously learned experiences of another principal rather than having to go through the same learning processes. He said:

> I was new and...fairly gullible. I would have taken it all on but when I heard [partner] say that I thought "Cripes I don't have to do that!"...I list things more now...that they have to do.
>
> (F/N:21/2/94)

The other newly appointed principal found, too, that she became more assertive in her dealings with the Board of Trustees than she had been previously. She told her Board of Trustees that she would no longer be attending all of the standing committee meetings between the monthly Board of Trustee meeting unless there was something they specifically wanted her to report on, and then she would be happy to attend only if she saw the agenda. I said to her "You weren't doing that last year. Tell me how your interactions with your Board are different." She replied, "I am bossier! I can stand up for myself! I know what each person is required to do" (F/N:15/6/94).

Another principal found that he also had become more assertive and more open about doing the things he believed were important. This strength of conviction developed through the Partnerships' programme through the increased professional interactions with other principals and their schools. He felt affirmed in knowing that others were also striving to achieve the things he was:

> No [I haven't changed], except that I am probably less reclusive about what we are doing... I have become a bit more steely about those things [I believe in]. Having seen other schools has fortified me in the way I'm doing things.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

This fortification and strength can lead easily to emancipatory behaviours through informed committed actions. I asked another principal in the group if she was different in her dealings with her Board of Trustees because of her experiences through the Partnerships' programme. She described her emancipatory actions as assertiveness, but stated also that she was definitely fortified by her partner's support:

> Yes, definitely more assertive. I suppose it is more a feeling that my time is valuable. I have got more confidence. Therefore, when people waste my time I do something about it. I know that if I can discuss my decisions and can ask my partner "Do you think I am right or wrong?" and that she would do things in exactly the same thing, I can then say "I cannot agree with what you have done..."
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

The partnership supported and encouraged agency and emancipatory behaviour in school leaders. Another senior principal reflected that this united front could be one of the real benefits of developing a professional partnership with a colleague. Her partner attended her senior staff meeting that was centred on the issue of senior staff performance

agreements and she reflected on the value of having him there to lend support to the policy which she had to implement:

> I could see that such a situation could be useful for a principal wanting to gain support for unpalatable policies if the principals prepared themselves beforehand.
>
> (F/N:25/10/93)

The principals were beginning to see that changing the structures and the ways they had previously worked could empower them in ways they had not realised before. They began to take more informed committed actions which lead to the beginnings of their emancipation as they approached their leadership in partnership.

PRAXIS LED TO EMANCIPATORY BEHAVIOURS

It was often not until they had seen other principals either doing things differently or doing things in the same manner, that they began to see the 'bigger picture' of what was occurring in principals' practice in New Zealand. Whereas previously they may have felt it was just themselves experiencing the difficulty or issue, they now began to see that there were others experiencing the very same feelings and issues. They began to see the problems were not only at the micro level of their school, but were also at the macro level of education in New Zealand generally.

Therefore, the professional partnerships helped these school leaders to refocus on their leadership for a long enough period of time to be critically reflective not only about what is happening within their schools but also about what is happening to school leadership in New Zealand. After reading the article I had written which highlighted how buried in their work these school leaders were, and how before their involvement in partnerships they were not able to take the time to reflect about education generally, one principal confirmed that he did indeed now see the bigger picture. He wrote the following in the margin of the article:

> Also I now think more about the whole situation and not just my own corner—I think because the group is diverse and we all know a lot about each other's problems therefore we started relating to other types of schools—this has turned to be a general view of all schools and problems experienced by them generally.
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

I had been concerned at how often the principals voiced the dilemma that they felt they were implementing things that they did not necessarily think were a good thing for their schools. They seemed to be acting as middle managers for the Ministry of Education and the Education Review Office. They were vulnerable in this new environment. They

did not have a united voice. If the principals are moved to individual contracts did this further isolate their voice? This is why one principal wanted this topic included on the agenda for our final group session. This was an emancipatory action—the suggestion that we should discuss this current issue as a full group. All of the principals commented at that session that they had really known very little about the ultimate effects of individual contracts on learning in their schools and that they now felt more informed to take part in future debates on the issue.

The Partnerships' programme focused the principals on to the leadership issues that they were all experiencing. It helped move these principals beyond day-to-day problem solving into more critical reflection on their practice and, subsequently, emancipatory actions. The programme gave these principals a feeling of united strength to deal with the problems, sometimes at the school level; sometimes at the regional or national level. They described a sense of freedom from the constraints of some of the official systems that they felt were inhibiting their educational leadership actions in the school. The processes of working closely with a colleague for reflection on practice then, become those of emancipatory action research.

The following case study demonstrates how one principal gained this feeling of agency and took political action at the local and national level on the issue of the Education Review Office Effectiveness Reviewing procedures.

CASE STUDY 2—EMANCIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH

Effectiveness Reviews

Just before the full group session in August, 1993, one principal had been notified of an forthcoming Education Review Office visit to conduct an effectiveness review in his school. At the full group session of the Partnerships' programme he *set an objective* of what he hoped to do—"to lead the staff positively through the review procedure." He felt that his partner would be able to assist him to do this by "evaluating my performance in a non-routine type of school day—in terms of interacting with staff; the review team; the events of the day" (F/N:4/8/93).

Then began a phase of *data gathering*. His partner had previously been through an effectiveness review and he had discussed proceedings with him and read the report from the Review Office that his partner had received. He read through his own school's previous review report. He talked with his staff.

He developed a *plan of action*:

•Ascertain as soon as possible the actual dates of the review.

•Decide on major focus points for the review with the senior staff and the review team and pass these on to [partner].

•Arrange the shadowing date.

•Decide, as far as possible, on the shadowing focus.

The shadowing of the principal on the Review Day became *the first step* in this action research. This was planned as a professional development exercise for evaluative feedback on this principal's leadership performance. It was the analysis of the data that revealed this principal had moved easily into action research processes to solve the dilemmas he was facing.

Step One: The partner shadowed this principal on his effectiveness review day. This is how the principal described the day with his partner:

> In actual fact it was quite good because his school has recently had a similar review and they were able to involve him quite informally in the interview situation...[Partner] basically sat there and just took his shadowing notes normally apart from the fact that he was involved in it.
>
> (F/N:23/9/93)

Then began a period of *reconnaissance and critical reflection*. The partner carried out a verbal evaluative feedback session after the reviewers had departed for the day. He later gave the principal concise notes of evaluative feedback on his observations of the afternoon with the reviewers. The principal then made a cassette reflection in which he reflected on the actions of the review day and about education generally in New Zealand. He thought back to words he remembered from a conference he had been to four years earlier:

> The focus has changed again, just a little bit more, and it is getting back to what Ivan Snook warned us about at our 1989 Intermediate School Conference. He said that you are going to be required to provide education like sausage manufacturers fill sausages and it will be inputs and outputs and no allowance made for individuals. It is not quite like that but it is very strongly "How do you define achievement for the whole school and in particular in these areas?"
>
> (F/N:23/9/94)

He reflected again on his philosophy and the school's achievement statements and *gathered new insights*. He felt good about the review day because he had "clearly known my school, my staff and the programmes that go on within it" (F/N:23/9/94). He began *reflecting* more deeply about the realities of educational leadership in the school. On the one hand, educative leadership in trying to work with senior staff who were not as effective as some of the assistant teachers in the school and on the other hand, needing to take two hours out of the review week to

deal with non performing painters to try and get something done about the ineffective job they had done in the school. He said cynically about the latter that he guessed that it in "some obscure way contributes to the advancement of the educational cause" (F/N:23/9/94).

I became involved in giving outside perspectives for further *reflection* and wrote a letter which then accompanied the return of the transcript of his cassette reflection.

The report of the effectiveness review arrived back from the Education Review Office. The principal described to me how he felt when he received it:

> I took objection to the phraseology "The Board of Trustees is unable to demonstrate..."
>
> (F/N:24/11/93)

He then discussed it further with his partner and told him that he was personally not going to accept it and that he hoped he was going to get the support of his Board of Trustees in not accepting it. His *reconnaissance* included discussions with his Board of Trustees about the actions that he proposed to take. They supported his proposed action of non acceptance of the report written as it was thus presented. When the principal was asked whether he had been giving further thought to the actions he took as to whether they were the best for children's learning, he replied that this was how he measured the worth of his actions. He said that he had enjoyed an interesting discussion with a group of intermediate school principals on the way to an association meeting the previous week. He related the gist of their conversation:

> We were saying "We have all been worrying about this Education Review Office outfit and they are almost irrelevant. We are going to run our schools and they can say what they like about it. As long as we are on the right track, as long as our values are correct, if they want to come in and criticise us, well, it doesn't matter."
>
> (F/N:24/11/93)

These critical reflections led to the next *action.* The principal then contacted the manager of the local regional Education Review Office and stated that he was not willing to accept his report and demanded to meet again with him and the reviewers. This meeting was positive and the reviewers agreed to alter the wording in the way the principal wanted.

Reconnaissance then included talking to other principals who had also received reports around that time. There was a principals' conference on at the time and the principal took every opportunity to gather support. The principal raised the issue

with two reviewers who were attending the conference. He spoke also with two ex-reviewers. He spoke with other principals and one asked him for a copy of his report as she also had a concern about the one he had received from a recent effectiveness review.

The next *action* he took arose almost simultaneously. The Chief Executive Officer of the Education Review Office overheard some of the conversations and this principal then, in the height of this support and confidence in his convictions, spoke to her directly about the concerns that he had about the reviewing and reporting process. This is how he described the day to me in a later interview. "It was discussed quite widely and I got tremendous professional support and as a result of that I think we have made a breakthrough on certain phraseology around the country" (F/N:25/2/94).

This principal had taken his *emancipatory actions* to a national level. When asked why he thought this was such an important educational issue to pursue he replied that he felt it was not an accurate statement of fact and that it was not the fault of the Board of Trustees that certain things could not be shown. Some of the areas were being newly implemented as was a new system of assessment, and the fact that Board of Trustees' members were mostly lay people who had nothing to do with the process except the legal responsibility to see that it is done made it equally ironical. He also felt that it would not be in the best interests of the school if the press got hold of an isolated statement such as that. He could see the headlines already: "SCHOOL UNABLE TO PROVE PROGRESS" and felt that "it would be bad for the school, bad for staff morale and bad for parent-school relationships" (F/N:25/2/94).

The principal was later pleased with the final report when it arrived. He *reflected* that the Education Review Office did have a role to play in ensuring accountability in schools in New Zealand and found the report relevant to the school development plan. He said:

> Our system of recording data needs not only to show the added value but that we can use that recorded data to improve the quality of instruction and to add more value...the action plan for this next year is to continue to fine-tune our assessment and evaluation.
>
> (F/N:15/2/94)

This principal now felt more positive about the role of the Education Review Office and was able to see their report in the whole scheme of the self-managing school. He was setting further professional goals. His emancipatory behaviours did not end there with the arrival of an acceptable report however. The next *action* he

took was at a meeting of the local principals' group. The Regional Manager of the Review Office was scheduled to speak to the group and he had asked this principal to raise the issue and put it on the agenda. Various other principals then put in their views which further supported this principal's actions. This principal's actions helped the other principals in the group. He said "Now the other principals all know what is expected of them in terms of the effectiveness reviews and the data that they need to have to show this progress (F/N:15/2/94). He empowered the other principals in his local group. The effects of his actions went wider than his own school, to regional level and then "...on to a national basis in terms of getting the phrases right—because it had to be cleared through head office. Probably my lobbying..."(F/N:15/2/94).

Yes, most definitely his "lobbying" and the recent politicisation within his role as an educational leader meant his actions had an effect at the national level. When asked whether he felt that his confidence to be proactive had arisen from having his partner present on the review day and from being able to discuss the report with him in the light of his first hand knowledge of what went on, his reply left no doubt that the partnership had been his initial source of strength:

> Absolutely. I suppose that the mere presence of a colleague that knew what it was all about, who had been through it himself, did several things. It spurred you on to give a good performance. I knew also that the impressions and information that he would be storing up would be informed ones if I needed further support for any follow-up.
>
> (F/N:15/2/94)

He went on to add "I am not a political activist. I have never been one of those" but said that he had felt so strongly about the issue and knew also that he had the support of his colleagues. Later in the year, he sent me a reflection and an article by Kelvin Smythe (1994) entitled "The Education Review Office Must GO." He had read it with interest and felt that I should circulate it to the research group. He was again planning national-scale action. "I sent a copy of it off to the organiser of our national conference in Dunedin with the suggestion that he give it out with the conference papers in that it might stimulate a bit of discussion around the bar if nothing else" (F/N:12/5/94).

He said the reaction to the article was "very, very strong." The principal described it to me at a much later date:

> On the morning of the last day there was a panel discussion and one principal who was very concerned about the whole issue of the Education Review Office and had been fired up by the article, was speaking about it as the Chief Executive Officer of the Education Review Office walked in.

> The principal was getting rousing applause from his colleagues. The spare copies of the article were at the door and the CEO took one as she left. She later wrote to the President of Intermediate Schools' Principals' Association to ask for a meeting to discuss what could be done to improve Education Review Office's image in the eyes of Intermediate Principals.
>
> (F/N:11/11/94)

At the next full session of the group, the principal shared his review experiences with the research group. They were all involved in critical reflection about the issues of effectiveness reviews. One of the research team had also just finished a short-term secondment on to Education Review Office team so the insider information was particularly valid. The largest indicator of emancipation having occurred was that every other principal in the research team, who had an effectiveness review scheduled in the near future, then asked the Review Officers if their partner could be present. Five other principals shared the review days with their partners before the end of the research programme and each and every one indicated how professionally supportive and fulfilling that experience of having their partner present, had been. These principals were experiencing agency.

This case study demonstrates an example of how the process within the Partnerships' programme assisted one of the principals to confront [his] own circumstances and to gain a sense of agency. He took emancipatory actions which released him from the practices which he believed were constraints to his educative leadership. Through this critical reflection he became aware that he could act in a different way.

In summary, through the support and affirmation and lessening of feelings of isolation by working closely together in their partnerships, the principals became open to new ideas and growth. They became willing to accept responsibility for their own leadership development, and in doing so, developed an awareness of the leadership actions and development of others around them. This awareness and fortification from unity thus received led to the principals taking informed committed actions which in turn led to their feelings of emancipation. They had agency. In this way then, the partnerships' model of professional development became institutionalised in their practice.

THE SKILLS, ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS FOR REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONERS.

A major theme of findings already discussed was that the Partnerships' programme led to the principals being involved in increased reflection on practice. The aspect of

leadership development which relates to this, however, was that through their involvement in this research the principals have had the practical experience of utilising reflection in and on practice and have recognised reflection as a powerful tool for enhancing the quality of leadership actions in their schools. They have developed the skills necessary for in-depth reflection and the knowledge that it is a worthwhile and positive component to have in their practice. This in itself signals the development of leadership qualities. One principal described her continuing commitment to collegial professional partnerships with another principal as "it is fully accepted that that is a part of this school and a part of what we do" (F/N:16/2/94).

"Part of this school" meant that this school now included the partner school in activities and decisions made and in the consultation process for future planning. Another principal could not rate too highly the benefits of being involved in the Partnerships' programme:

> I think that the whole business of professional partnerships in whatever form we do it, it has got to be totally beneficial.
>
> (F/N:15/8/93)

All of the principals said that their experiences with the Partnerships' programme were beneficial. In their final written reflection at the last full group session I asked the principals directly if they had plans to continue with their present partnership or to re-establish a different partnership in the future. Here are some of their responses:

> My present partnership will continue as I believe we have both found it to our advantage. I have begun establishing another partnership with another principal in a much larger school than mine and have found already that many issues are the same, just involve differing numbers.
>
> Yes, I will continue if my partner is willing...I will also seek other partners for different areas of expertise.
>
> Probably not with the same one. Personalities are very different. I hold different values...I'd like to work with someone on implementing the 1993 National Education Guidelines. There is enough in that to keep us involved for a couple of years and much of it would entail real leadership skill.
>
> Yes, until the end of the year [as I retire then]. Next year, if it is at all possible, I would very much like to be able to do something similar—if only in a one-way manner, perhaps with a newly appointed intermediate principal somewhere!
>
> I hope to keep working with [partner]. My Education Review Office visit is next term and I have invited [partner] to join me.
>
> Yes, we will! We have not only gained professionally but also get on well together and like the same wines!
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

These responses indicated that the practice of partnerships, even the idea of multiple partnerships, was well and truly institutionalised as an important part of these principals' practice. Even if they do not continue with the formal partnership that was established in this research, this programme has given them the skills and practice to be more reflective in the future. The findings indicated, too, that these principals will not be satisfied with the less in-depth relationships with colleagues in other situations and will be therefore more likely to try and establish such professional partnership relationships with other principals in the future.

This depth of reflection and collaboration that was occurring within partnerships as they worked consistently in their schools to achieve their professional and personal goals was one of the most evident leadership developments identified in the data gathered. These principals had possibly always set school goals but this type of ongoing relationship with a colleague helped them to formalise the structure and ultimately helped them to *achieve* the goals because they had their partner acting as an outside facilitator to assist them to keep the focus and impetus. Their partner's involvement helped the principals to monitor their progress towards their goals. When these principals focused on their leadership actions to achieve their professional goals it appeared that change occurred more rapidly. Most of the principals commented that they believed their partnership had assisted them to do this.

The next category in the grounded theory which relates to leadership and professional development describes the framework that the Partnerships' programme established, not only for the achievement of school and professional goals but also, for collaborative action research processes to develop.

D) STRUCTURES FOR ACTION RESEARCH AND SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

As the partnerships developed, many of the principals began to use steps of action, reflection, observation, data gathering, and evaluation of their practice. They then replanned their next steps of action. This process was easily recognisable to the researcher as the process of action research although the principals did not initially recognise or describe their processes as such.

It was after one year of the gathering and analysing of the data that the grounded theory indicated that action research practices were taking place in some partnerships. There was evidence that there were longitudinal goals and visions of desired outcomes that the principals were working systematically towards meeting in collaboration with their partner. This meant that the processes had surpassed problem solving and had moved through at least three or four cyclical stages before the goals or outcomes were

being achieved. One partnership's two year long process began with ideas gathered when they jointly attended a holiday course. This is presented as a case study (Case Study 3) at the end of this section. These principals had the same desired outcome and were working collaboratively to achieve this in their individual schools. No other partnership worked together towards the achievement of the same goal in their individual schools to the same extent that these two principals did. Each of the other principals had specific goals for their own school. In the previous section an example of emancipatory action research has been outlined in a case study (Case Study 2) which demonstrated how one principal had worked through the Education Review Office's Effectiveness Review process with his partner. Two other principals were working on the development of their deputy principals' leadership and performance agreements. A rural teaching principal was developing appraisal processes; another was developing resource-based learning philosophies throughout the school; another principal wanted to develop and implement a five year strategic plan of school development. The principals' partners were working with them to a lesser or greater degree on the achievement of these goals, depending on the level of involvement and regularity of contacts.

The principals had not set out to undertake pieces of action research. They had not been taught the process or theory of action research at the beginning of the research process. In the early stages of partnership development the principals were observing and reflecting and discussing various issues in their schools. One principal gave her partner this advice after they had completed shadow visit early in the research:

> I feel in this situation it would be more helpful if you were to nominate or tell me in advance "Would you watch how I use the telephone or how I manage time or how I deal with people."
>
> (F/N:1/6/93)

After the proposed changes were put in place in their partnership practices the principal cited above began to see that her partnership was "becoming an integral part of school development" (F/N:14/10/93). Early in the research then, the principals all moved quickly to defining a focus for their partner's visits to their school so that they could receive some evaluative feedback on an area of professional or school development that they had identified. They began setting up their partner's visits around such things as: a senior staffmeeting; a full staff meeting; a Board of Trustees' meeting; a conflict situation with a staff member. The systematic process of action research did take time to develop. The theory and a model of action research—the model developed from an analysis of the data of their collaborative processes—was introduced at a much later stage when it became apparent that knowledge of a more formal structure could assist the principals to achieve their goals more effectively. Their processes and action plans had evolved

naturally out of working regularly with their partner towards their school goals. The theory affirmed what they were doing. They also began to realise they were involved in the making of theory. One principal described how he saw the development between him and his partner deepening after working together for one year. They had been given further practice in reflective interviewing and there was discussion on how this skill could be valuable in assisting the principals to achieve their professional goals:

> I feel that the session today has shown us the way ahead. Before we have merely been observing rather than interpreting, appraising and reflecting on what we actually do.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

The beginnings and continuing processes of action research had to be fostered by allowing the principals time to reflect upon the goals they were setting. This was extremely important and therefore built in to the full session days.

These were some of the goals that they set:

- To lead the staff positively through the upcoming effectiveness review early next term.
- Evaluation throughout the school to be standardised.
- To set up a five year plan for the school.
- To establish resource-based learning across all rooms for 1994.
- To improve skill in motivating Deputy Principal and Assistant Principal to accept new performance agreement contracts and show this by contributing relevant and challenging content.
- To lead my staff into the area of data gathering in a non threatening way.
- To set a better system of appraisal in place.

They all started then, with a perceived outcome or professional goal that they wanted to achieve. They then developed an initial plan, of which the first step was usually more data gathering of the current situation:

- [Partner] will be able to first observe, and then assist me in getting all staff on board.

(F/N:4/8/93)

- Looking at areas such as organisation of time (class, staff, administration, secretarial, cleaning, environment).

(F/N:14/3/94)

> • Interview each staff member separately to get agreement on Performance Agreement Contracts
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

> • Month 1: Set up discussion. Cover State Services Commission document.
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

The principals then carried out their first action(s), with or without the observation and feedback of their partner, and then reflected on the outcomes of the action and the necessary directions to take from this stage. This reflection was more like the reconnaissance that Lewin (1948) described which involved evaluating the action, gathering new insight, planning the next step and modifying the overall plan.

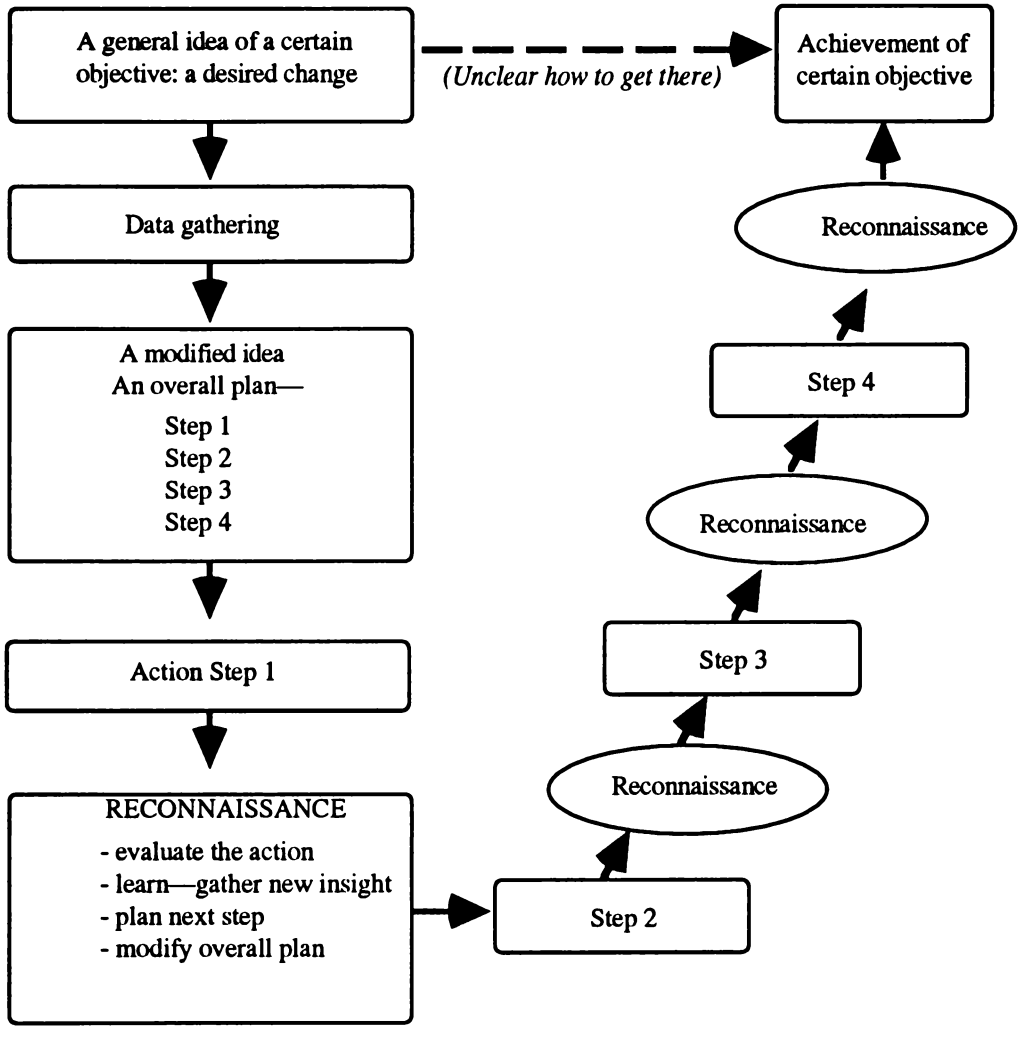
One principal described this ability to reconnoitre as one of her most important professional developments over the two and a half years of her involvement in the research:

> [The most important things that happened to me were] Being made to examine my actions reflectively and the action research programme and how it is going—having to look at outcomes objectively—Is this what I want? Where do I go now?
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

They evaluated, they learned from their actions, they planned the next step and then they modified their overall plans. The principals then carried out their second action, and went through a series of action steps and spirals of reconnaissance before arriving at the desired outcome. The following diagram is my conception of the action research processes as these principals carried it out in their schools. It most closely relates to the processes described originally by Lewin (1948) most importantly in that the principals start with a perceived outcome and that the way to get there is not always identifiable in easily defined steps. It is the reconnaissance after each action which helps the principal decide "Where to from here?" They sometimes required outside assistance to help them achieve their next actions. But they were always aware of the desired outcome and work systematically and collaboratively towards it. (See diagram on p. 212).

The Action Research Process

Developed from Lewin's (1948) concept of action research



The collaborative nature of the Partnerships' programme was a key feature in leading the principals into action research processes. The 'conscience' type effect of the partner kept them focused and moving systematically ahead to achieve their goals. This was how confident one principal felt after a full group session:

> At the end of this session I find myself thinking about the next step, the goals I want to achieve and the ways that I could help [partner] achieve her goals/objectives.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

At another full group session I asked the principals how they felt their partners could help them to achieve the goals they had set. Another principal was quite clear about what his partner's roles would be:

1. Monitor introductory process and see if goals are clear.

2. Evaluate the degree of change.

3. Assist with evaluation through reflective interview with staff.

(F/N:4/8/93)

One principal said that acting as this conscience-type role was how her partner could assist her best as her personal goal was to "see something through to the end." She said:

> Keeping me on track...checking up things are happening...dates are being met.
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

The reality of the principal's job has meant that principals get sidetracked by the short term issues and sometimes have difficulties keeping the momentum up to achieve the long term goals. One principal described his daily job as dealing with the "immediacy of the trivia." He said:

> It is the immediacy of the trivia. What you do is you try at that point of time to clear it up because our jobs are a whole series of time, put together by interruptions. The interruptions tend to catch your attention at that time.
>
> (F/N:1/6/93)

Getting sidetracked by the trivia and managing "time put together by interruptions" often meant that the principals were unable to stand back and look at the school development plan and the amount of progress that was being made towards school goals. School development plans were not usually followed with any sort of structure or time frame. The Partnerships' programme helped the principals to set action plans and the dates to action them by. Their partner became the interested party who monitored their progress towards their goals. The fact that their partner had planned a shadow visit to see some aspect of the plan meant that other actions had to be scheduled and carried out.

Another principal felt that the Partnerships' programme had helped him to refocus on the personnel management within his school rather than the monetary aspects that were always seeming to take his attention away from what he considered were educational matters of greater importance. He stated:

> It has made me think about management as opposed to the economics of doing the job. I'm buckling at refusing to fall in line with the accruals and all these things they are wanting us to do. I'm still trying to hang on to the

> school management thing rather than being the financial controller of the school.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

For the principals, equally important as acting in the role of 'conscience' in this framework for establishing action research processes was the ability to act in the role of 'coach'. The principals needed many skills to be able to work successfully with their partner. The more they worked together, the more skills they were taught and given the opportunities for practising, the more they were then able to work in different ways with their partners. These skills were taught and practised at every opportunity within the research design. These skills were: goal setting; developing action plans; setting time frames; observation skills; active listening; reflective interviewing; giving evaluative feedback; critical reflection on practice and knowledge of the action research process. How these skills were developed is covered in the Chapter Four. The importance of a knowledge of these skills as a factor in the establishment of successful partnerships is further discussed in the following section. It is sufficient to say here that they were an important part of the framework for the eventual process of action research to be implemented in the schools. After the principals had sufficient practice in using the skills they were ready to apply them back in their schools when working with their partners. One principal described it like this:

> All the teaching on interviewing has now become relevant; earlier the need was still in the future. Now I can see how we could have improved reflections and will use this information to upskill myself.
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

Their interactions became more in-depth as they developed the skills to work effectively with their partner on critical reflection on practice. The principals experienced frustration, however, when they felt that although they had the skills and knowledge to work more effectively with their partner they were still not being fully implemented or utilised. One principal was disappointed her partner had to hurry back to his school and did not have time to conduct an interview after the shadow visit.

She told me in a later reflection:

> I should have had [partner] do a reflective interview on some point but he had to get back to his school and I wouldn't have had any feedback if I hadn't asked for it. There is little point in having learnt the skills to put to some useful purpose if we don't use them.
>
> (F/N:25/10/93)

This situation occurred in all of the partnerships at various times. This was one of the problems experienced in the establishment of successful partnerships and is discussed in Chapter Six.

However, when there was regular contact, regular reflective interviewing and evaluative feedback given, it was obvious that the majority of the principals were not carrying out simple day-to-day problem solving when working with their partners in their schools. They were able to keep a desired outcome in sight as a focus for their leadership actions. Although some of the professional goals were achieved in a short time frame the principals still had a desired outcome that they had planned action steps for, reflected upon and evaluated their actions and modified their development plan. They continued acting and planning further actions in the light of those previously carried out until their goal had been achieved. The principals were moving into more critical reflection on their practice which often led to emancipatory actions being taken.

As the principals began to reflect more critically on their practice, through working closely with other principals and other professionals they modified their plans in the light of these reflections. They began to search for opportunities to gain the information and skills that they required. These principals enjoyed being able to share ideas with a partner to help establish the best course of action.

The next case study (Case Study 3) describes, from one principal's perspective, the collaborative, consistent approach that two principals took to achieve the same outcomes for their individual schools. Although they worked collaboratively towards achieving the same goal, Mary's (pseudonym) school moved more quickly through the action plan due to Laura's (pseudonym) husband's extreme illness and final death, and Laura's grieving and absences from school at the time. However, Laura still maintained close contact with Mary throughout the entire process, even when she was on leave of absence for one term from her own school. Laura, therefore, tended to be following one or two steps behind Mary's actions throughout the whole process, but was no more dependent on her support than Mary was on hers. They regarded their partnership as equal give-and-take at all times and felt that they both benefited from the processes of collaborative action research. These two principals started developing their partnership during the preliminary study in 1992, and continued developing it through and beyond the research period.

CASE STUDY 3: ACTION RESEARCH FOR SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

1992

Developing partnership for professional collaboration

Mary was moving into her first year of principalship when she saw a Ministry of Education Curriculum Leadership Contract advertised. It was a one year programme for the support and development of school leaders. She applied and was accepted

into the Contract. At the first session, the 43 school leaders selected each chose another principal in the group as their 'partner' for the professional development during the school year. Mary had not met her partner, Laura, before this meeting. As she said later of this day "Very surface level sharing took place. Very safe territory, factual sharing of information only."

Over the next three months their contacts included full school events such as art days and cross country running, plus numerous phone calls. Mary commented on the process of developing a professional, working relationship with her partner: "Slowly and unobtrusively, a partnership and trust is developing."

As the trust developed, so did the desire to work together on professional issues such as appraisal of themselves and their staff. The two principals began to recognise the value of the sharing of ideas and issues with a professional colleague. The level of trust continued to develop and as the partnership continued to develop, feelings became less threatened and more productive sharing began. At the end of the contract Mary and Laura decided to continue with their partnership programme unassisted. They made plans to attend a course for school principals in January in Wellington. This heralded the beginning of a principal using action research processes for staff (including herself) and school development. As data was gathered on Mary's school development process, it was apparent that it could be clearly structured around Lewin's (1948) concept of the action research process. This model has been used as a framework to present this case study.

The Action Research begins...A general idea of a certain objective

At the course Mary began to reflect again about her school. She described this to me. "I began spending time at the course thinking—'Is our school effective, how do we know this, how can we show this?" Mary developed a general idea of an objective that she wanted to achieve. "I wanted a shared vision for the school; to develop a plan owned by staff, children and community." At this stage she wasn't clear as to the specific steps she would take in the process to achieving this.

1993

At this time too, I approached Mary and Laura to ask them if they would like to be part of my doctoral research on exploring the use of partnerships for principals' leadership development. They readily agreed.

Data gathering

Mary continued a period of data gathering. Time was then spent in looking at other schools long term plans and discussing the developing ideas with Laura.

Previous course notes on development plans were re-read. Mary began talking informally with staff and her Board of Trustees. I visited Mary at this time and she shared her desired objective with me. She had four excellent staff members but sometimes felt that they were all working in different directions and felt that if they could only all work together towards a common goal and vision, the whole would then be so much greater than the sum of the four individual parts. That night I located an article on shared vision and total quality management principles which echoed her sentiments and sent that to Mary to read.

A modified idea

Mary simplified her original idea to the simple but specific questions "What type of children should leave Cloverleaf (pseudonym) School? What knowledge, skills, attitudes, ideas, values, should they have? Are we all working to the same end?"

An overall plan

A one year plan was completed. It identified curriculum areas to focus on as a school as well as other aspects affecting the school. The plan included staff members becoming involved in curriculum development contracts, staff meetings, and community surveys. The first action was taken at the next staff meeting.

Action One

During this staff meeting, discussion centred on methods of monitoring assessment in the school. Mary said that questions such as "What were we doing? How did we know our children were being successful?" were beginning to be asked. There was staff interest in this area but it became apparent, as Mary first surmised, that each of the staff members knew very little about what occurred in each of the other classrooms and levels within the school. Following this staff meeting Mary went through a period of reconnaissance.

Reconnaissance

The reconnaissance did involve the four steps that Lewin highlighted: evaluate the action; learn—gather new insight; plan next step; modify overall plan.

Evaluate the action

As she evaluated the first action of the staff meeting, it was quite clear to Mary that none of the teachers had the whole picture of a child's progress at Cloverleaf School. They only focussed on their one small part and were not clear of any particular desired outcome at the end of that process.

Learn gather new insight

From this Mary developed new insight and decided that they all needed to become far more aware of what was happening in each other's rooms and the beliefs and philosophies that each of them held. She talked to each teacher separately and tried to understand more fully herself what was happening in each classroom.

Mary talked to Laura about whether she felt her teachers were also working in relative isolation. Laura agreed that they were and became involved in developing the processes with Mary and alongside her in her own school. Unfortunately Laura had a very ill husband at this time and she finally had to take leave from her school to tend to him in his final stages of illness. However, Laura and Mary kept phone contact and Laura picked up the process again six months later when she moved back into her school. I am only describing Mary's processes here but it is important that the reader notes that her professional partner was a constant source of outside perspectives, support and acted as a facilitator of the school review and development process.

In April, Mary and Laura joined with the rest of the research group and practised the skills of observation of leadership actions, giving evaluative feedback, and conducting reflective interviews. Mary and Laura also spent one week of their May Holiday break together and attended rural school principals' conference. Mary found she was still reviewing previous notes on school vision and school achievement, and discussing these ideas with Laura and other colleagues.

Plan next step and modify overall plan

Mary then decided that the next step should be to allocate one entire day to the development on 18 June 1993. She then modified her original plan to include this day of consultation and sharing.

Action

The Teacher-Only Development Day was held. Mary set up an individual folder for each staff member which outlined and summarised the main points she had taken on each of the principals' courses she attended and ideas for developments in their school. She invited the mathematics advisers and myself, as researcher, to spend different part of the day with the staff and to provide outside perspectives to their discussions. The staff shared with each other their own assessment and evaluation systems for the different curriculum areas. Mary introduced the idea of a portfolio for each child that highlighted their development in each curriculum area and which could follow the child through each of their years at the school. There

followed much debate and discussion on the issues. This day led Mary into another period of reconnaissance.

Reconnaissance

The key question that had arisen from the teacher development day was another way of refining the overall objective. "What do we want children leaving Cloverleaf school to have achieved?" Mary decided to gather more data at this stage and asked each staff to fill in a questionnaire on this question under each of the curriculum areas. She typed up all of their responses. She talked to Laura and other principals and the school advisers to get ideas about what was happening in the development of curriculum objectives in other schools. The two curriculum contracts were also assisting Mary to think about performance objectives at this time and, as Laura was also involved in these professional meetings, there were many opportunities for collaboration and discussion.

Action

Mary took the collated results of the questionnaire along to the next staff meeting. The staff found this very interesting. Mary described what they did like this. "Discussions were held on some items identified, some we wanted removed, some we hadn't thought about and had overlooked." One of the key questions that arose at this staff meeting started the next phase of reconnaissance "What do parents want for their children? Are our goals and perceptions the same?"

Reconnaissance

During this period of reconnaissance, Mary came to another full group session as part of her professional partnerships' programme. Mary also spent time talking with Laura about future actions and past actions at this full group session. They then approached another school leader in the research group for advice and assistance. He invited Laura and Mary to visit his school to view the way evaluations were conducted and recorded in the junior school. Mary began to reflect that a one year plan, as she had initially developed was not long enough to achieve the objective she desired. Her original idea of a five year plan was much more realistic. On this day Mary was quite specific about the timeline she would use to develop this plan. On the 4 August she wrote a timeline.

During this phase the plan was remodified and it was decided to send the same questionnaire, with supporting explanations, home to the parents to gauge their views. Laura planned to do the same in her school. When all Mary's surveys were returned she and Laura collated the findings and typed a summary to present to the staff at the next meeting. On August 23, 1993, I observed Mary and Laura as they

shadowed each other in their schools and could see quite clearly that although the action research was occurring, very little in the way of action plans were actually being written down. A discussion about action research processes took place and they were both really interested to see how the theory described what they were currently involved in. Mary wrote down the next six month's actions and to put an asterisk besides those where she felt her partner could best assist by shadowing her and giving her evaluative feedback.

Mary and Laura then worked together to collate the community survey returns. Once again, through the evaluation of previous actions, the learning of new insights and the planning of future actions, Mary had remodified her original plan. Mary also engaged her professional partner's assistance. She explained why:

> I wanted my partner's help to achieve my goals by: keeping me on track, checking dates are being met, watching a staff meeting to see if I'm selling the overall idea to the staff, that they have ownership too; observe Board of Trustees' reaction to the ideas at a meeting.

Outside perspectives that were gained during the process were invaluable to Mary in being able to monitor her progress toward achieving the desired objective which had not changed from the start of this process: "To develop a shared vision of what children leaving this school should have achieved." The two principals also acted as catalysts to each other to ensure that the momentum was maintained in the progress towards achieving their objectives. Mary also observed Laura in Laura's school and they both visited their neighbouring research colleague's school as invited, and these visits gave Mary other opportunities to learn vicariously about her own values, beliefs and actions. Mary asked Laura if she would attend her next staff meeting when she reported the results back to the staff for further discussion. This staff meeting became the next major action in the process.

Action

At this staff meeting the staff developed a base document: "Goals for children leaving Cloverleaf School." and an overall list for all curriculum areas was agreed upon. However, the reconnaissance after this staff meeting led Mary and her staff to reflect upon "How measurable are the things listed?"

Reconnaissance

Laura was now carrying out the same data gathering processes at her own school and the two principals were sharing and reflecting upon the findings. Mary and Laura decided to hold a combined staff meeting for the two schools and to use a

consultant to help them to develop the next steps. Mary described these steps as she perceived them:

- How can we make our document measurable?
- How can we check our successes?
- Where do we go to from here?

In October they attended a full group session. As a research group, we shared the action research that Mary and Laura were involved in. This workshop assisted Mary and Laura to further reflect on their process of action research and the progress they had made towards achieving their goals. During November the two principals regularly met and conversed by telephone to arrange the details of the shared staff meeting. As Cloverleaf were further ahead in the process it was decided to use their collation of staff and community ideas—their base document—for the staff meeting. Mary faxed this document to the school adviser before the meeting. The New Zealand Curriculum Framework had also just arrived in schools and Mary was reflecting on this document and how their developments aligned with this. The next and last action for this school year was the joint staff meeting in the last week of term.

Action

The combined staff meeting was very successful. The staff of the two schools were very interested in the parallel developments in each of the schools and enjoyed comparing and contrasting the findings of consultations with staff and communities through the in-depth study of Cloverleaf School's document.

Mary knew what the next step would be as she moved into another period of reconnaissance but did not begin immediately as she so succinctly stated in her reflections. "The next step now was to take the notes from this staff meeting and use these to review our document but it's the end of the year, so it can wait awhile."

1994

Reconnaissance

In fact, the reconnaissance began again when I interviewed the two principals early in February. Mary was reflecting about how the action plan had developed:

> We have had kind of an action plan all the way through. Planning ahead "We are going to do this," "We will go to the principals' retreat," "We are going to do such and such." We have now taken it a step further. We have had our joint staff meeting and we are now looking at taking those things

> in our documents and working out how they can work. That is our next step. We were meeting together yesterday.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

At the professional Partnerships' programme's full group meeting six weeks into 1994 the two principals once more had opportunities to reflect and plan together. The programme again helped these school leaders to reflect upon the educational leadership concerns in their schools and to refine and set new plans. Mary's desired objective had still not changed, but she had not achieved it yet.

Mary was very clear on the outcome she wished to achieve and was confident that the action research processes she was working through would ultimately lead her to the achievement of this goal. One aspect that she was also reflecting upon during this period of reconnaissance was how did what they had been doing 'fit' in with the Education Review Office's Effectiveness Review requirements? It also became obvious that she would have an ideal opportunity to find out. Laura's school had just been notified that they would be having an Education Review Office visit in April and Laura invited Mary along to be part of the day spent on review of principal's leadership. This shadow visit then, became part of Mary's *reconnaissance* cycle. This is how she described it:

> Shadowing Laura for the Education Review Office visit was a very worthwhile activity. Recording questions and comments meant I could give an overview and qualify events if needed. I was able to get Laura to reflect on the answers given through good reflective interviewing techniques. A unique experience that couldn't happen without the trust and relationship developed over the Professional Partnerships' course.

Mary found herself constantly *reflecting* on her own school. She told me that she was writing down every question the reviewers asked Laura and mentally answering them based on her own school. She was pleased that she felt able and confident that she could have answered their questions competently and fully. However, these reflections also led Mary to *modify her original plan* yet again. Mary realised that she needed to bring her own Board of Trustees continually along in the process, and to refocus the staff again to looking at the importance of school wide systems and a school wide focus. She reflected on this latter concept with another teacher from her school on the way to an English Curriculum Development course. Other teachers were involved in the planning of the process. They were beginning to show an ownership of the process of which they were part. The whole staff decided to devote a full day of their May vacation to have another Teacher Only Day on the issue of gaining more uniformity within the school. Mary said "This day was to be a concrete, worthwhile day with actual end product."

Action

At the next Board of Trustee meeting, Mary shared her experiences of the observation of the effectiveness review, and set her trustees to work on developing a performance objective. She wanted them to be proactive and doing things for the school well ahead of any notification of an Education Review Office review.

Meanwhile they also held their development day in the holiday break. On this day several distinct areas were covered :

- What data were teachers gathering for individual folders at present?
- What data do we want to all record, on uniformed timelines?
- What testing do we do that gives an overall picture of children at Cloverleaf School, and can that be compared from one year to another?
- Look at curriculum policy/implementation plan/goals for children leaving Cloverleaf School—tie these in together.

Reconnaissance

Modify the plan

The outcomes of this day were that a year's plan for sample collecting was set up. The plan was modified again and future staff meeting dates were set to focus on the samples taken to give staff an opportunity to discuss key issues and developments.

Evaluate

Mary described to me the process at this point of time:

> The folders are now uniform, as a staff we have set up forms/methods of record keeping—these are been constantly discussed—reviewed. All staff have been involved in these folders/record dates and so have ownership of the activities—all are working hard to make these work.

Where to from here?

Mary shared the results of her teacher development day with Laura and discussed the outcomes. Mary also attended another course on principal's appraisal with her Board of Trustees which helped her to refocus on the five year development plan for the school and along with her Board, remodify the ideas for future actions. She outlined her modified plan for the next six months to me and the action research process continued.

Mary was continually developing the shared vision she described over two and a half years ago. The change process is a slow and long process and school leaders often have difficulty in working systematically through such a long process over an extended period of time. The professional partnership has helped Mary and Laura support each other in their personal, professional and school development processes. Mary and Laura have developed sound skills to assist each other to reflect upon their leadership practice in their schools. They have learnt how to conduct reflective interviews and in so doing, ask in-depth questions of each school leader enabling them to reflect on what they are doing, why they are doing it and what effect their actions have on the children in their schools. These principals have refined their ability to observe behaviours and describe these to each other as a valuable basis for reflection. Perhaps most importantly, these principals have acted in the capacity of an outside facilitator in the development process, nudging each other along, challenging each other, affirming and supporting each other, and above all, helping each other to redefine goals, develop steps in the process and reflect upon the outcomes.

Mary did keep notes of her school process and progress towards achieving her desired outcome. She also kept a detailed chronology including the times she phoned Laura to clarify or discuss or share an idea. No other principals kept records in this way. Mary also willingly spent half a day in at the Educational Leadership Centre at the University writing out the chronology of her action research as well as writing a narrative that was used as the basis for the case study that is presented here.

This case study illustrates how action research processes can assist school leaders to achieve their school development goals. Outside assistance, such as provided through this programme of partnerships can lead principals into these action research processes. Time, and assistance to write about their processes to share with other school leaders is also necessary. The school leaders in this research were interested in carrying out their next action, not writing about their last.

The collaborative nature of this action research has meant that the university academic provided the school leader with structured time for writing and also developed a case study from the leader's writings; and the professional partner supported the action and research in the school environment. The collaborative nature was vital to its success for job-embedded development. School leaders' job conditions appear inimical to in-depth

reflection on practice, and if school leaders are to move towards praxis, systems of professional support need to be set up to enable this to occur.

In summary, a substantive theory of a model for principals' professional development has been presented through the narrative of these findings. The four categories of the theory—the enhanced critical reflection on practice, the increased professional interactions, the resulting leadership development and the supporting structure for action research processes for school development—were all developed from the study of the principals' work in their partnerships. The principals all unanimously stated that their work in the Partnerships' programme was an important part of their professional development. For all of the principals, participation in this programme meant a focus on their leadership practice. They said there were few other opportunities for this to occur.

However, all of these advantages were dependent on the establishment of successful partnerships, and this development was contingent on certain factors. The next chapter outlines the factors this research has identified that are necessary to the successful establishment of professional partnerships between school leaders.

Chapter Six: Influential Factors and Problems Experienced in Establishing Partnerships

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

There were many factors that influenced the development of successful partnerships. The first and most significant of these factors was that the researcher played crucial roles in the establishment and maintenance of successful professional partnerships. Other factors which affected the development of partnerships were: the involvement in the selection of a partner; the school size and type; trust, confidentiality and respect between partners; regularity of contact; skills and training; commitment to and prioritising of time for professional development and the maintenance of a degree of stringency when working in the partnership and in the overall programme.

THE ROLES OF THE RESEARCHER

The researcher played crucial roles in the establishment and maintenance of successful professional partnerships.

The category that was fully saturated early in the research was that the researcher played many different roles in establishing and supporting this model of professional development for these school leaders. The research methodology of building a community of researchers, and the belief in the power of reflexivity and reciprocity in resulting in rich research findings, meant that I, as the researcher, became involved in not only the research process but also the principals' individual, partnered and group professional development processes.

The aim, however, was to establish independent principals' partnerships who would continue to work together once the research had finished. It was quite difficult to isolate all of the properties of this category of findings. Not only were different roles taken on different occasions, but sometimes the different roles were taken on the same occasion. I took the role of partner in one instance because one of the principals had taken early retirement. My roles then alternated between consultant, confidant, catalyst and partner (and always researcher) to this principal over a three month period. I interviewed the principal about his professional goal and discussed his action plan with him. I took his

place at a workshop that he could not attend, and by working with his three senior staff at the workshop, helped in the next action towards achieving his professional goals. I went out to his school and ran a workshop for him and his senior staff, always mindful of the perceived outcomes the principal was hoping to achieve. This principal still attended the full group sessions (partnerless) and was telephoned more regularly to keep an interest in his action plan and the progress he was making in his school. In this way I was fully a member of a community of action researchers, taking on many different roles as did the principals. One of the principals stated that I filled multiple roles in this research:

> One of facilitator, one of disseminator of information and one of enabler to bring about I guess a liaison between principals...provider of good lunches!
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

The principals called me a "flea," a "taskmaster," "glue," a "devil's advocate" and many other names. The facilitator roles identified by Everard and Morris (1985) have been used as a framework for this discussion of the roles, with the addition of one other role that the analysis of data revealed. Everard and Morris identified the following roles of a facilitator and these were supported by the findings of this research: process facilitator; dynamiser; exemplar/demonstrator; pace-maker; reminder; learning facilitator; coach/tutor; consultant; resource investigator; co-ordinator/convenor; catalyst/assumption challenger; norm establisher; group dynamics adviser; observer/note-taker; scribe; discussion leader and task facilitator. The additional role that the data of this research highlighted was perhaps the role which ensures the quality of all other roles in the research and the one that Everard and Morris (1985) made no mention of—that of confidant.

Process Facilitator

The role of researcher automatically became that of process facilitator.

All of the principals recognised the role played in facilitating the whole process of partnerships for them with the initial establishment of a professional partner. One principal said "you made the initiation to begin with—you made the *formal* initiation" (F/N:21/2/94).

They all stated that they would not have had a partnership at all if the initiative for establishing them had not been taken by an outsider. The principals were of the view that it would have been very difficult for them to organise these partnerships because their job conditions were inimical to that occurring. One principal summarised these feelings in interview one day. He said "In a way, setting up two principals (or how many) is a very difficult thing to control because of the demands of the job" (F/N:15/2/94). The initiation

of the partnerships was seen to be an extremely important part of the process facilitation role.

After the partnerships were established, continuing support for the process of partnership development was necessary. An important aspect of the process facilitation was to keep the principals moving forward towards attaining their professional goals. One of the partnerships had been established for over two years and the principals saw themselves as autonomous within their partnership. They displayed the ability to set directions and goals and work together towards these but they still felt that I had an important role to play in their partnership. They saw my role as one of "guidance, keeping us on track" (F/N:16/2/94).

When another principal was asked what she thought my roles in this research were, she put the same idea a lot more bluntly. She said " to make sure I don't forget to do what I am supposed to do. Task master!" (F/N:16/2/94). As she continued to explain how she saw my role, this principal felt the word "facilitator" was perhaps a more appropriate title than "taskmaster." She added "you facilitated the early sessions for us. You follow through what we are doing. Facilitator, that's the right word" (F/N:16/2/94).

This "follow through" was seen to be important by all of the principals. They recognised that although their partnerships may continue to exist after the research, to a greater or lesser extent depending on the strength of the partnership commitment, the influence of the researcher's role would be missed. Another talked about the direction given to their partnership:

> Probably giving us direction and making us more formalised; to actually get something done and achieved rather than just chatting...It's goal setting. I think you probably keep drawing us back to that.
>
> (F/N:21/2/94)

This "drawing back" that the principal described was a fundamental part of the role as process helper. The principals' view of the importance of this role was quite succinctly encapsulated in the following discussion with one principal:

> I've thought of you as the glue in the whole business of giving direction, encouragement, knowledge and structure, to the types of contacts that we have had between each other...The most effective thing is you, that glue, because without it I don't really think it could exist. I don't think it would be as effective if you removed yourself from the situation.
>
> (F/N:15/2/94)

This principal's partnership had not developed successfully and he had found that the time we spent together was the most valuable part of the programme. Although the principals all stated that they would carry on without my involvement, it was obvious too

that they all recognised the value of the outside perspectives provided while they were actually working together. The role of a dynamiser or motivator was important to keep the whole process of partnerships going.

Dynamiser/Motivator

The researcher helped to motivate and stimulate the principals in their professional development programmes and their careers.

The stimulation to continue to implement the professional development plans that each principal had, often stemmed from the fact that somebody outside of the school was taking a keen interest in the happenings within the school. This interest acted as a form of motivation for the principals. This interest was supplied in part by the partner and also by the researcher. It would have been beneficial to have had more time to spend in each school for this purpose but it was not possible. The partnerships had to be the enduring aspect. The person who ultimately would take the ongoing interest in their school would be their partner. The partner definitely also filled the role of dynamiser but the researcher became part of providing the necessary impetus for the principals to carry through with the plans discussed.

This impetus then created a feeling of revitalisation and refreshment especially for those principals who had been in the principalship for some years. These principals said that the fact that there were outside people taking an interest in what was happening in their school, who provided them with ideas and affirmation for things going well, who challenged them to think about their leadership helped them feel refreshed and motivated in their leadership role in their school.

At full group sessions I shared the excellent things happening out in their schools, constantly shared with the principals how interesting the findings of the research were and the interest in how each partnership was developing. My own enthusiasm for the research study was evident when talking to the principals and this acted as a source of dynamism. One principal told me how much she enjoyed the full group sessions because "Hearing you speak to us is good motivation" (F/N:4/8/93).

It was important to model what the principals had been asked to do. Part of taking the role of dynamiser was being a good exemplar of the model.

Exemplar/Demonstrator

The researcher acted as an exemplar or demonstrator of how processes of partnerships can assist in professional development.

The methodologies bound all participants in the community of researchers to the same processes. It was a matter of "Do as I Do," not just "Do as I Say." I modelled the role of a professional partner with my colleague and discussed the benefits enjoyed. These discussions about the way my professional partner and myself worked together were often the key to teaching the model with practical examples. In this way I became the "champion"—the exemplar—the educational leader who had established and was carrying out the process of this Partnerships' programme for my own professional development.

I was open and shared my beliefs about the value of a programme of partnerships for educational leaders' professional development. The research was conducted because of my own passion, enthusiasm and belief about the value of such a programme for all educational leaders, including myself.

My expectation was always that the principals would continue with the partnerships after the research. I did not lose faith that each and every partnership would develop successfully and that when they had experienced the worth of the programme that they would want to continue with it. There were high expectations of the principals in the research group as to what progress they would make between the full group sessions. In this way, the pace was set for the group and for each individual partnership.

Pace-Maker

The researcher played a role in keeping the principals to a time frame for prioritising actions set.

In the reflections which were sent back to principals after suggestions were made for a next step or something else they could try before the next full session, or something to be working on when I next came out to observe. One principal saw this as one of my roles as facilitator. She saw this pace-making as providing an element of support but also providing a conscience and a guide that they would continue with the process as planned. She said:

> You are obviously the facilitator. We definitely look to you for support. To some extent you are a compelling force because I know that you are going to be there and therefore I feel "I must do that cause I'll be seeing Jan" and I don't want to go and say that I haven't done it.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

Another of the principals said that I nudged them along by "making polite suggestions" as to what they ought to be doing with "the hope that we will take up the suggestions." She also said "You bend over backwards to get us to do something; to change" (F/N:16/2/94).

Between each of the full group sessions the principals were phoned and told the date of the next full group session. They were asked whether they had carried out their next steps or had tried the skills from the last session. In this way too, I then took on the role that Everard and Morris called "reminder."

Reminder

The principals needed reminding from time to time of things they had been taught.

It was important to remind the principals of skills they could use or ways they could work together that would enhance the likelihood of achieving their professional goals. At times, they slipped back into previous modes of operating, discussing, not challenging, not reflecting critically, not using any of the skills they had been taught, to assist their partner to develop effective action plans.

One principal described to me how their familiarity with each other worked against two principals moving into the more formalised modes of interaction such as this programme of professional development required of them:

> We are together the whole time. You think about the time that you stopped and talked to me and then you left me by myself and I could stop and think about it and plan my next action, as opposed to us just talking and me responding to the moment, not stopping and thinking about it. I think that is why it was not happening for me, and because we talk together like that all the time, you forget the obvious things.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

Reminding the principals about "the obvious things" was therefore an important part of my role. When I was conducting a shadowing visit in one of the schools one day, the principal used the following saying to describe my involvement with the partnerships when I was shadowing the shadower. He said "So bigger fleas have little fleas upon their backs to bite them. Little fleas have smaller fleas and so on ad infinitum" (F/N:24/11/93).

He meant that his partner was on his back to remind him what to do, and I was on the partnership's back to remind them both what to do, and that it was an important part of the role. The metaphor of "fleas" and "biting" were describing my prompts—my nudges—to get the principals to do things done that were important. In the role of reminder it was important to draw attention to details that the principals had said they would do. I would ask if the reflective interview that they had planned to do at a later stage had been carried out. Reminders were given about the guiding principles of giving evaluative feedback or to do a cassette or written reflection after a shadow visit. The role of reminder then overlapped with a very important role of being a learning facilitator.

Learning Facilitator

The researcher kept clarifying the process of working in partnership for leadership development.

The researcher had an extremely important influence on the developing partnership process and this must be acknowledged. These principals had not worked with a professional colleague on their *own* professional development with supervisory techniques before this research. It was always necessary to keep helping them with the process and the skills necessary to carry the supervision out effectively. Smyth (1985, p. 2) said "We may be researchers into the process of clinical supervision, but we are teachers of that process as well" and this was to be the case in this research. Some principals moved more easily into the supervisory mode of working with a partner to set professional goals and implementing, monitoring and evaluating their progress with the assistance of their partner. The Partnerships' programme then became the framework upon which their other professional development activities and sessions were linked.

Being a learning facilitator meant constantly providing opportunities for learning to take place. The principals all commented that this group operated very differently from all of their other professional groups because they did not confront their own leadership in any of those other groups. Being the learning facilitator in this research meant making sure there were many opportunities for the principals to confront and analyse their leadership. As this way of working with professional colleagues was new it was easy for the principals to slip back into other patterns of behaviour which did not necessarily facilitate learning.

The shadow visits were the times when I worked within the partnership to facilitate learning and more effective professional development processes. Often, opportunities for reflective interviewing or evaluative feedback were not taken up. Sometimes it was difficult to know where, and where not, to interfere in the processes the principals were involved in. For example, when shadowing three of the pairs of principals on different occasions it was obvious that a reflective interview was not going to take place at a most appropriate time. In these cases I intervened and prompted the principals to carry out a reflective interview on the topic in discussion. Afterwards, in discussion about my intervention with the principals and why they did not utilise the reflective interviewing technique, I also asked whether they felt I should have interceded at this point. One principal, when questioned about this, was very certain that the intervention should have taken place. She felt that the degree of stringency was important as it was too easy for them to lapse into conversations about other things and not deal with the real issues. She said "It is easy to just relax and forget what we should be doing next, and keeping just

little bit more formal. Not formal but just thinking things through a little bit more" (F/N:16/2/94).

There was then the dilemma between not wanting to interfere and recording what it was that these principals actually did do when I was not present, and the need to use this specific occasion for a learning situation. Both were usually possible. The process could be allowed to continue long enough to record what the two principals did, and then the situation could be used as a teaching point to facilitate further learning. The principals were often then asked to re-run the session in a different way. Therefore, this not only prompted the principals to stop and reflect on what they were doing but also to move into the new modes of interacting with their partner that the programme required.

Working with two principals one day it became obvious that these principals had not yet set specific outcomes which they would like to achieve in their schools that year. My field notes describe the session:

> I asked them to look specifically to outcomes for each of their schools in 1993. One principal's reaction was to laugh. The other said "I had one in the back of my mind." It made me realise the importance of principals sitting and doing this exercise and then asking them, "Do your staff know these outcomes?"
>
> (F/N:22/4/93)

We therefore spent time looking at the Leadership Framework (see Appendix D) of how all the principal's actions will ultimately affect the learning outcomes in the school. Each principal reflected individually and worked to develop three specific outcomes that they felt were important for their school in that year. We discussed also, how they would articulate these to their staff. Later full group sessions were able to be planned around their professional development needs. In this way, I also became "coach" in their professional development processes.

Coach/Tutor

The researcher needed to teach the skills of working collegially on professional development.

One of the important findings from the preliminary study was that these professional leaders would not necessarily have the skills to be able to work in partnership on the supervision of a colleague's leadership practice. As a learning facilitator one of my roles became that of tutor of the skills necessary to carry out the process successfully. I then took the role of coach as I observed and assisted the principals as they practised the taught skills with their partners in their schools. Specific skills were then able to be taught individually, in pairs or in the full group sessions. The principals felt they had learnt

many new skills to utilise in their schools. One principal described one of the benefits of the Partnerships' programme:

> In skilling us in terms of how to conduct a reflective interviews, those types of things, the imparting of those abilities and skills I think has been really really terrific.
>
> (F/N:8/2/94)

Another principal saw how she could better utilise the interviewing technique that she had been shown for use with her staff.

When principals had missed a full group session each one required individual tuition on the aspects they had missed. I became personal trainer to each principal. It became easier to meet their specific professional development needs.

The return of the transcripts for cassette reflections and interviews also gave ample opportunities to act as coach.

In these ways, then, I began to take on the role of consultant—a person seen to be knowledgable about management and leadership processes as well as knowledgable about the process of partnerships for professional development.

Consultant

The principals often utilised the researcher in the role of consultant.

As important as the relationship with their partner was in their professional development programmes, it was increasingly evident from the grounded theory that my professional relationship with the individual principals was also valued. These principals did not have people coming in to their schools with the time to sit and talk with them about the larger issues in their schools. In this way a partnership was formed with each principal in the community of researchers. To this collaboration I brought knowledge of theory which complemented their practical leadership knowledge. The principals expressed a need for someone other than another principal to help them solve issues within their school. There was a real need for somebody to fill the consultancy role for these principals. The Inspectors in the Education Boards before the administrative reforms disbanded them, used to fulfil a similar function by visiting schools on a regular basis to discuss school development plans and talk about how things were going in the schools. The principals all stated that they had valued someone fulfilling this role for them in the research.

As a consultant I was increasingly able to cater for specific professional development needs at the group and school level that had been identified through careful analysis of the data. The close association I came to enjoy with each of the principals meant that I

began taking a personal interest in how each of them were working towards their professional goals in their own schools. This helped the principals to clarify what their professional development needs were, and what area they would like to focus on. Before interviewing the principals during the research they often wanted a professional conversation on the day-to-day issues of running a school and dealing with staff. This role was researcher-as-consultant. The principals would say "Have a look at that" or "What do you think of that?" The principals often wanted another professional opinion on their latest actions or on the different issues with which they were dealing.

The principals sometimes did not know how to achieve the professional outcomes they desired and in this way part of the consultancy role became that of solution giver. It was, at times, very difficult to isolate one role from the other. In the role of consultant it was possible to bring outside perspectives about the next steps in the principals' action plans. Issues that they might face could be pointed out as well as and sharing knowledge of the literature to assist them in these matters. Assistance was given to develop action plans in some schools, and implement plans in other schools. The role of consultant was one of helping the principals to help themselves and never at any time was it necessary to actually do the work for them in their schools. I did offer the service of being able to act as a consultant to run workshops in their schools during the course of the research, but there was only one occasion when I worked with a principal and his staff in the role of consultant.

The individual letters to the principals provided many opportunities for consultancy. Through these letters further knowledge of the theory of educational leadership could be brought to the principals as well as ideas for further actions and contacts they could make. Pieces of literature which outlined theory relevant to their area of development were also sent. In this way the role of resource investigator became apparent.

Resource Investigator

The researcher took on the role of maximising the use of resources within the community of researchers and finding additional resources to assist each principal to achieve their goals.

One principal told me that he was going to act as consultant to another principal on evaluating his school culture. I shared with him the research on "The Pot of Gold" (Wadsworth, 1990) on school principals as consultants, which affirmed his actions.

We discussed an article that he could use as a framework for the evaluation. I said:

> I could send you a copy of some really good norms for school culture. It's called Good Seeds Grow in Strong Cultures (Saphier & King, 1986). I

> mean, look at the seeds here—he has asked you because of your strengths. He has seen the culture in this school.
>
> (F/N:25/6/93)

This principal later described how he viewed my main role. He saw it most definitely as a resource investigator. He said:

> Your main role: putting new ideas to people and other people in front of us, to make us think through what we are doing and why we are doing it...Partnerships has heightened my professional reading. All the snippets that you send out I certainly look at.
>
> (F/N:22/4/94)

During the first meeting with one principal outlining the reasons behind the research, she shared her philosophy of leadership. She talked about developing a community of learners within her school and the importance of valuing diversity on the staff. It reminded me of a chapter in Roland Barth's (1980) book *Run School Run* which was then sent to her with the first letter which formally invited her to be part of the project. She responded:

> Thank you for the chapter from Roland Barth's book. I agree entirely with his views and believe that when a sound philosophy drives a school, diversity in most other areas, especially programme development, is a strength.
>
> (F/N:30/3/93)

This principal later again pointed out how beneficial this aspect of my role was by saying:

> You feed in professional knowledge from sources that we don't have the time or inclination or whatever, to read for ourselves.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

Feeding in this knowledge from professional sources was a way of linking theory to practice and practice to theory. As resource investigator this was an effective way to affirm and or challenge these principals' practices. Another principal stated that she felt I had some answers for them and was the one to "ask hard questions to" (F/N:16/2/94). Her partner said "I suppose I regard you as a fund of information" (F/N:16/2/94).

It was again in the role of a solution-giver that I worked with individual principals on how to achieve their professional goals by providing them with resources that would assist them. Opportunities were sought to utilise the strength within the group and from time to time, where appropriate, it was suggested that some of the principals contact others for certain information. This also was the role of resource investigator.

One principal asked if we could always set aside time at the full group sessions for the discussion of "issues of the day" so that they could hear the views of the others—the group as a valuable resource—on these topics. At these times, other resources were shared and identified. At the full group sessions the principals themselves often made the offer of their time or school as a resource for other principals to utilise if they felt that it could assist them. The strength within the group was strong. It could and should have been utilised more fully.

As part of being a resource investigator I then took on the role of convenor and co-ordinator of meetings and full group sessions.

Co-ordinator/Convenor

An important role for the researcher was to set up group meetings and organise speakers and consultants to provide further professional development.

One of the findings from this research was that the principals did not have sufficient time to be able to establish and organise professional development sessions for themselves. This supports findings in previous research (Robertson, 1991). An important role in this research was setting dates for future meetings and circulating agendas to the principals for additions and reflections. Bringing the appropriate resources to the principals at the full group sessions was paramount. Knowledge of how precious time was to these principals made me very accountable to the careful and most effective use of their time when they devoted a full day to attend a group meeting of the research team. Each full day session was evaluated and the principals were asked what was the least valuable. After one session one principal stated "Everything seemed to have value today. Not just the food!!" When group meetings were carefully co-ordinated to meet the specific needs of the principals it was beneficial for all concerned.

Activities and conditions at the full group sessions were set up in a way which enhanced the likelihood of changes in behaviour occurring. In this way, the role of the researcher became that of catalyst of change.

Catalyst/Assumption Challenger

The consultant creates the necessary conditions for change in behaviour to occur.

In creating the conditions that were conducive to change occurring I took the role as catalyst in the process. The observations and the reflective interviews within partnerships were the most obvious opportunities which were conducive to change then occurring in the principals' practices. The full group sessions were also used to create the necessary conditions for change. It was important to get the group working more as a 'team' and a

consultant was brought in to work with the group through activities designed with this purpose in mind.

The principals were struggling with conflicts of values within their school and the dilemmas they were facing were causing them endless stress. Another consultant was brought into a full group session to get the principals to identify and articulate their values, and then to utilise the strength of these values in pursuing their professional goals. In this way, the conditions were set up to enable changes in their leadership behaviour to occur. One principal described how beneficial he found this particular workshop and how it would change his future practice. He stated:

> I enjoyed or benefited from [consultant's] session because he gave us a strategy that we are reluctant to use in a 'conflict' situation. Perhaps we need to be told that some strategies are OK.
>
> (F/N:14/10/94)

The group sessions' agendas were organised around what the data revealed the principals were asking for. Sessions were set up for skill practice; for developing community; for setting professional goals and action plans. In these ways the principals were involved in role play or workshop activities where they were forced into confronting their leadership. One principal said that he found one of the workshops interesting "as I could see the role that I usually take being enacted before me" (F/N:14/10/93).

Part of being a catalyst or assumption challenger meant being able to provide outside perspectives to the individual principal or group. The principal-as-colleague was often too close to the situation to provide the objectivity required to challenge certain ways-of-knowing. There was a need for outside intervention in principals' professional development to ensure that new perspectives were made available for reflection and to challenge assumptions.

One principal described the value as he saw it like this:

> I think there is somebody that has to have an overview, coming in with other ideas because you see many more principals than the partners do, because they only see one but you see the lot.
>
> (F/N:15/2/94)

This demonstrated too, this principal's awareness of the necessity for outside intervention to ensure that new perspectives were made available for reflection. One principal recognised the value of my working with his whole senior staff as part of his process of achieving his professional goal, to provide challenges to the group and then walk away from the situation. He described it like this:

> I think for us, the sort of role that you played for us last year as a facilitator and probably by coming in as a devil's advocate, or somebody who is an independent. You can ask thorny questions without seeming quite as pointed.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

Often that ability to stand outside the situation and ask questions about the ways in which a group operates can have the effect of providing challenges to assumptions as described in Schutz (1964) in his classic story *The Stranger*. Challenging the assumptions of the group, and the way they operated together in full group sessions and in their partnerships in these sessions became another important role in the research—that of group dynamics adviser.

Group Dynamics Adviser

In the facilitation of the process the importance of being a group dynamics adviser for leadership development of the group became apparent. The group dynamics needed to be conducive to the partnerships, and the community of researchers, operating in the most effective way. An important part of facilitating group dynamics was to make sure the first level needs of these principals were met. The setting for group sessions was warm, quiet and comfortable and out of the way of distractions from the principals' schools. There were no phone calls or other interruptions. Music was often a part of these sessions, and there was always a lunch provided. Part of the developing group dynamics here was that the principals were important people and their commitment to this research was valued. These points were made to the principals.

Group dynamics adviser meant pointing out to the group how they had responded to various situations. In the first full group session the first activity was the principals working in pairs—not with their partner—to listen to the most fulfilling part of the principal's role for this person and then utilising this to introduce the principal to the group. It was a way to start bonding the group as a group of researchers who would get to know each other well. The international consultant on Peer Assisted Leadership, Ginny Lee from the Far West Laboratory in San Francisco, then put the principals in groups to discuss the Leadership Framework (see Appendix D). She drew their attention to the fact that there was sometimes more than one right answer and asked them how they were achieving consensus on their choices in the activity. At this same group session it was obvious that there was a male domination of conversation. Some of this was occurring because two of the more vocal male principals had been in the preliminary study and had many experiences to share with the group. It was pointed out to the group that it was important for everybody to be able to take an equal part in discussions.

Part of the group dynamics was starting the sessions with a karakia and also having a prayer before we ate our food at midday. The importance of partnership at all levels, between the pakeha and Maori in the group, was pointed out.

One consultant was brought into the third full group session to help to form a sense of community (see Chapter Four for details). The consultant and I sat and observed the group processes. After the exercise we talked to the group about their experiences and what had happened. They all stated that they had learnt a lot from the exercise and the way each of them had reacted.

More group dynamics advice came on the same day (14/10/93) from the other consultant who came in the afternoon to work specifically on articulating educational values in the resolution of conflict situations and the alleviation of stress (see Chapter Four for more details). As a group, we then discussed the importance of the articulation of values in leadership actions.

There were many other incidents of being a group dynamics adviser such as at the final group session. One principal was extolling the benefit of being at this particular full group session, and how he felt so much better about the Education Review Office and the reviewing process now that there had been critical reflection on the topic by all the members of the group. One principal pointed out that the very member of the group who would have benefited most from that day was not present. He was back in his school trying to prepare for an effectiveness review. We talked about this as a group. The situation epitomised the findings of this research and I pointed this out to the principals. We had just been talking about the importance of principals talking together about these issues, and the irony was that when they most often need to get out of their schools and see the "big picture" they were back in their schools buried in reacting to day-to-day matters. These were all part of the learning experiences of the group. As a group they were beginning to see the structures that were oppressing them and in seeing them, were able to move out of them and therefore developed feelings of empowerment.

Part of group dynamics was the establishment of the norms of the group. This became another important role.

Norm Establisher

During the first two full group sessions many norms were established. The most important one was the articulation of the importance of trust. This was discussed with the principals but one principal asked specifically if we could all sign a declaration of our trust and confidentiality within the group. We established the norms of trust and confidentiality within the group. One principal talked about the full group sessions and

the ethos built up, and how the principals shared things of a personal kind with me because they trusted me. She also showed me that she was aware that I never betrayed the trust given by stating "you almost never reveal anything about us back to the group. You don't just assume that would be OK" (F/N:25/10/93).

We also discussed our professional ethics and the ethics I adhered to as a university researcher. We established the norm of commitment to professional ethics within the group.

This group was established to focus primarily on leadership issues and a model of professional leadership development for school principals, and this became a norm. All sessions were focussed around leadership development. This was not the norm in the other groups these principals met in. The norm for this group, too, was that these principals were willing to share and offer support to their colleagues.

At the second session of the full group, we established guiding principles for the working together in partnerships (see Appendix M). Such principles as "being open to ideas" and "being non-judgmental" became norms for the modes of operating between partners and within the group. The principals worked as a group to decide on the principles that they thought were important.

We established the norms of being able to give evaluative feedback to our colleagues when requested. Norms of openness, honesty and support were established. Everybody in the community of researchers took on the role of norm establisher at some point of time. This was why this group of school leaders enjoyed unique professional interactions. Another norm was that notes would be taken and reflections would be made about all aspects of the programme. This was one of my most important roles in the community of researchers and the principals were aware that everything that was said or done would be observed and noted.

Observer/Note-taker

Observing and note-taking were the primary tasks in my role as researcher. This was my primary reason for working with the principals over two to three years. The principals were always aware that I was researching the process and that "everything was data" and my principle purpose was documenter, researcher and analyser. It became fairly evident early in the research that the principals were reticent to write anything down about the research process or their leadership actions. As an observer and note-taker I wrote sections of this report which was sent to the principals concerned for their feedback and approval to use the writing in the final document. The case study on emancipation (Case Study 2)

was read with interest by the principal concerned. He made these comments to me by phone after reading them:

> I'm most impressed with all this. You write it down, and I read it back and it sounds different, but that is exactly what happened. The key word is "emancipated." "Counter-hegemonic"—I like that! I am never sure how to say that word, but that is exactly what it was!
>
> (F/N:11/11/94)

Observer and note-taker were important functions. Once again, it provided the outside perspective—enabling the principals to see their actions from another angle. It was also affirming for the principals to be able to see these links to the theory, and how their practice then became theory.

There were many lesser or minor roles that I undertook in the research. The following short sections outline each of these.

Scribe

In the full group sessions I acted as scribe by writing up main points made in discussion. An example that demonstrates this was at the full group session when we were discussing the guiding principles that should guide the Partnerships' programme. The principals all gave their points which I wrote up and later typed and sent to each of them as a record of what we had agreed upon in the group session. The principals often wanted copies of overhead transparencies that we had developed as a group and group feedback sheets of information from group discussion.

Discussion Leader

At full group sessions in particular, I often took the role of discussion leader as topics were set for discussion. These topics often arose from listening during the individual interviews with the principals about what was important to them at the time. By utilising an interactive interviewing style the principals were led into discussion. This was also linked to the role of task facilitator.

Task Facilitator

This took place again at full group sessions when I assisted the group to work through a particular task and analyse a problem. One principal had asked that the item of Principals' Individual Contracts was put on the agenda for the final group session. This was not only put on the agenda but a resource person was also invited to speak to the group about his perspectives on the effects of individual contracts on learning programme

within schools. This gave the discussion a critical perspective and the principals were able to bring their knowledge to the situation and hear the different views within the group.

Another example of acting in the role of task facilitator was in assisting the group to discuss the dilemmas they were facing about effectiveness reviews in their schools. One principal had recently been a reviewer; two other principals had recently had effectiveness reviews carried out; two more principals had dates set when their reviews would take place. As a group, we worked through the task of analysing the issues related to effectiveness reviews and looking for leadership actions and strategies that would best be suited to the situation that principals would find themselves in. These sessions were similar to Bailey's (1987) study groups which also focussed on a particular issue the principals were facing.

A role that Everard and Morris (1985) did not identify was that of confidant. This became one of the most important facilitator roles in this research. This role was integral to the research and to the facilitation of the change process. Change begins at the personal level and unless the researcher comes to know the group as persons, the intimacy and reciprocity required for openness and development and a more in-depth account of what is actually happening in the research is unlikely to be achieved.

Confidant

There was a very high level of trust shared between researcher and individual principals.

Most often too, these principals required the active listening of a confidant. Letters or cassette reflections often contained snippets like the following two examples:

> Something else to share with you, that I am telling you in strictest confidence, is that this is going to be my last year as an active principal. I shall be making a formal announcement of it probably next month.
>
> (F/N:12/5/94)

> There's no need to write all that down. I'd hate it to be read by anyone else...I really have no right to be making those comments.
>
> (F/N:2/6/94)

The principals shared things in confidence about their partnership processes. They believed that if they did not tell me these thoughts I would get an inaccurate view of the research process. One principal was concerned that his partner had been judgmental about the way he operated in his school. He told me so, confidentially in a cassette reflection:

> As [partner] sat through this I had some reservations about him being subjected to my recorder playing and for the role in which I was playing.

> ...I had felt some reservations about going public on this as it seems a bit out of kilter with some of the management styles which currently are being practised.
>
> (F/N:30/4/94)

At another stage the same principal voiced concern that he and his partner had not really been carrying out the reflective interviews in the way they were asked to that his partner just stayed in 'conversation mode'. During the next shadow visit we further practised this skill and talked about the importance of incorporating reflective interviewing in each shadow visit.

Another principal shared his concern at the imminent retirement of his partner and the effect that was having on him. He felt it impacted on how well he was able to look forward to the long term aspects of a partnership relationship and in the achievement of long term goals. Four principals shared the disappointment they felt when their partners did not turn up on the day they had arranged for a shadow visit or when their partners could not stay for a reflective interview and give evaluative feedback after a shadow visit.

The first ten minutes in each school were often spent in an active listening mode, as the principals talked about some of the latest issues and dilemmas they were facing. One of the principals talked about how he used me as a "pin cushion, someone to bounce ideas off and talk things through with, things that were affecting me" (F/N:18/2/94).

Another principal said he enjoyed the fact that I had the "big picture" as my visits to many different schools meant that a wider perspective was brought to the group. He explained it like this:

> You can see trends emerging or you can see things that others do that makes it easier. You don't always get that when you all meet together.
>
> (F/N:15/2/94)

This principal was talking about the fact that things that were happening in other schools could be shared without mentioning the schools' names and therefore betraying the trust invested in me. The trust within the group was being extended to all of the players.

In summary, all of the principals described my roles in different ways and for different principals I played different roles at different times.

An important issue, however, was that the principals would not come to rely too heavily on the roles I played and that they would see the roles of their partner as taking more and more effect and more importance than the roles of researcher. For this reason, nearer the end of data gathering longer periods of time were created between my contacts with the principals. The roles of researcher and facilitator of the Partnerships' programme

were vital, especially in the early stages of the research, while the strength of the partnerships was still developing. Once the partnerships had been established for two years the patterns of behaviour seemed to have been institutionalised into their professional practices. This is how one principal described how she felt about her independence in the programme now:

> I feel that we are at the stage now that you have set us up and we are carrying on on our own.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

All of the principals valued the input of the researcher, and stated they would feel the loss of a facilitator, an academic who was interested in their professional development programme, at the end of the research. However, they also stated that they would continue with the partnership programme in some form or other. In the initiation of partnerships there were also some other factors which seemed to influence the selection and development of an enduring professional relationship.

SELECTION OF A PARTNER

The principals said it was important that they had some say in the selection of their own partner and that the partners should not be arbitrarily allocated to them. However it was not always an easy task to find a suitable partner for a principal. The impression management that had been kept in place when principals met together meant that principals usually did not have any in-depth knowledge of how other principals operated in their schools. Sometimes the principals themselves suggested two or three options of partners they felt they might be able to form a successful partnership with, and then the necessary approaches to the principals were made. This research indicated that a similar size of school as well as a degree of respect for the partner's leadership of her/his school were two of the main considerations that these principals had taken into account initially or believed were important in retrospect.

SIMILAR SIZE OF SCHOOL

The preliminary study indicated that the principals felt they benefited the most by working with principals from similar size and type of school, and this was also the basis upon which most partners were selected in the research group. The findings from this research also indicated that this was a very important factor in the successful development of these professional partnerships.

This programme, therefore, had an intermediate school principal paired with another intermediate school principal; two teaching principals paired with two other teaching

principals; a normal school principal with another normal school principal; and two urban non-teaching principals working together.

It did not matter if the principals' goals or visions for their schools were quite different, or that their school communities were quite different, or the distance they needed to travel, but the fact that they had a similar number of teachers seemed to be a contributing factor in developing successful partnerships. The principals felt they were then able to relate fully to the experiences of their partner. They also were able to ask the most appropriate questions to assist the principal to reflect on their leadership. The principals in these partnerships acted as consultants in their partners' schools. As one principal said "similar school sizes means facing similar sorts of problems" (F/N:1/12/92).

Some of the characteristics that the principals rated as important in a partner were only realised after working with their own partner for some time. They were not necessarily apparent at the beginning of forming a relationship but were deemed necessary if the relationship was to develop any further. This was problematic in itself in the initial selection of partners. The principals were not looking for somebody to constantly give them affirmation. They felt it was not of prime importance that their partner was philosophically similar to themselves, but they felt it was important that their selection of partner was based on honesty and a respect for any difference in leadership styles.

TRUST, CONFIDENTIALITY AND PROFESSIONAL RESPECT

Partners who were willing to debate ideas were valued as well as those who were good listeners. This is how one principal described it:

> An open and receptive mind is important. Not a wholesale acceptance of anything and everything, but a willingness to consider multiple options and ideas. Sound self-esteem, is helpful in this as in all aspects of life. Honesty, reciprocal trust and respect are essential. Philosophical similarity is not paramount, in my view.
>
> (F/N:1/12/92)

Trust.

One of the first themes to be fully saturated was that all of the principals agreed that for the Partnerships' relationship to develop fully it was imperative that there was full professional trust between the principals concerned. Each of the partnerships began tentatively, with the principals ascertaining the level of trust they were being afforded and over a period of time they became more and more open with each other in direct relation to the degree of trust offered. The principals recognised that they were unable to maintain a bluff if they wanted to develop professionally and that to gain as much benefit from the

partnership as possible they needed to share some of their feelings about the concerns they were experiencing in their schools. To do this, they needed to trust that their partner would maintain the confidentiality of information.

Confidentiality.

One of the principals described the importance of confidentiality of information and trust in this way:

> That confidentiality is so important. We share a lot of things. He knows I wouldn't tell a parent anything. It is a privileged position and you can never betray that trust and you have to know that.
>
> (F/N:26/8/93)

Often the things that the principals shared with each other were things that they felt they were not able to be share with anyone else in the school. They felt others were not in a position to understand the full extent of the principal's responsibilities in their schools. It was not important whether the principal agreed with their partner or not. Healthy debate was valued. But it was important that the principals respected each other's difference in leadership styles.

Although the sharing of a similar philosophy was not seen to be important, offering professional respect for the way the other principal ran their school, was an important factor in the formation of a partnership.

Professional Respect.

The often unstated ethic which went hand in hand with trust was the professional respect for their colleague. One senior principal described their relationship as it moved from trust to respect in this way. In April 1993 she talked about the trust they shared:

> I think we are beginning to trust each other. We are both very professional but relaxed with each other because of course we have had a few years working together [in other ways]...I think we will get to know each other very well and will be prepared to offer assistance to each other.
>
> (F/N:29/4/93)

But sometimes a deeper respect is not enjoyed until the full trust and openness have been shared. This occurred in the later stages of this partnership development. Almost exactly a year later, in April 1994, this principal felt she could finally respect her partner as he was fully open with her and shared his faults and limitations.

Before full trust was enjoyed, sometimes principals feared that being too open with another principal would lead to a lack of respect from their partner, especially if they

conducted the operations in their schools in quite a different way. One principal reflected early in the programme, after his first shadow visit with his partner, that he was concerned that his partnership was not going to develop successfully as his partner did not seem to respect the way he did things in his school:

> I found [partner] difficult to understand at times and was a little concerned that during his time to discuss things with me he seemed to be a little judgmental about what we discussed. I feel a bit apprehensive about the partnership at this stage.
>
> (F/N:22/4/94)

Usually, however, and also later in this partnership, the principals told me how much they admired or respected their partners and how this professional respect for differences was perhaps even more important than sharing a common philosophy. However, one principal, who had been very compatible with two different partners, did ponder about the issue of the possibility of not getting along with a partner. He seemed to indicate that a respect for differences was most important:

> I have often thought what if by chance you were paired up with somebody where that compatibility didn't really work out. I don't think that is too bad a thing providing you can agree to differ. You can still watch another person work and say that I wouldn't perhaps make too strong a comment about what they do, but I probably wouldn't do it that way myself. On the other hand you may be able to influence each other for the positive.
>
> (F/N:15/8/93)

The principals were always told that this programme was not an opportunity for them to tell another principal *how* to lead. This programme was an opportunity to reflect upon their own leadership and to assist another principal to reflect on their own leadership.

Inherent in the development of a successful partnership with full trust, confidentiality and professional respect was the regularity of contacts over a period of time. This was the underlying reason why the partnership development took time to fully develop the open relationship between two colleagues to where they were willing to lower their guard and expose their needs in order to specifically work on their own professional development. One of the main determinants of a successful relationship developing after the partner had been selected, therefore, was the regularity of contact that the principals were able to commit and maintain throughout the programme.

REGULARITY OF CONTACT

The maintenance of regular contact was particularly important at the beginning of establishing a professional relationship as rapport between the two principals developed. The longer the period of time that principals had between visits, the more likely it was that

there was no continuity in their focus. It was also extremely difficult then to build the necessary intimacy to be fully open about the issues affecting the principal in the school. Even after a partnership had developed it was important that contacts were regular to maintain the framework for professional development as discussed in the previous chapter. Without regularity of contact there was no "conscience-type" effect of the partnership which ensured that action plans were systematically carried out. The sessions with the partner then became "one-off" type affairs which were not professionally as fulfilling as those developed through more regular visits.

Another reason for the importance of regular contact was that the greater benefits of partnerships were experienced after a period of time of working regularly together. This proposition was also supported by previous research (Barnett, 1990). The more regularly the principals worked together the more likely that the Partnerships' programme would become institutionalised into their daily practice. In this research the principals did not experience or realise the full benefits of the programme until they had worked in partnership for approximately one year.

One visit per term for each school, when combined with the full group session, ensured that each month there was a contact. That is, three visits to each other's schools over the course of a year, and although minimal, it was sufficient to be able to assist with the progress towards achieving professional goals.

It was vital, however, that the necessary skills and procedures were taught to the principals so they could participate more effectively with their partner in their leadership development to maintain the professional respect and openness between partners.

SKILLS AND TRAINING

The principals required training and practice in the skills with which to be able to carry out the programme.

The skills of observation, critically reflective interviewing and giving evaluative feedback needed to be carefully understood if the process was to be carried out effectively. The principals found the processes they were taught interesting and valuable and all said that they were skills they seldom previously used. One principal said the following about the second full session day:

> Today's session has helped clarify reflective interviewing and made me aware of the process and the skills.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

Another principal stated how important he also found the practice session that day on reflective interviewing:

> I found that the questioning sequence was a help in structuring the interview. I must make a point of learning that sequence off by heart!
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

To this end there is a need for an outside facilitator, with a good knowledge of the processes of supervision and the theory of leadership, to ensure that the principals have the skills to keep functioning effectively. There needed to be in-depth training, practice and a formal structure for critical reflection to occur. At the next full group session, three months later, there were more sessions to practise reflective interviewing. The principals were then asked to reflect about how they had felt during that session. One principal responded:

> Felt self-conscious about my questioning...felt maybe it wasn't objective enough.
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

Another reflected about what the necessary characteristics of reflective interviewing were:

> Reflective, that is, truly reflective, interviewing needs: experience, practice, very good personal compatibility, commitment from both sides.
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

To the question "What could have helped make the reflective interviewing more effective?" one principal's response was "my being versed in a range of starter questions" (F/N:4/8/93).

Thus, the principals began to recognise that this skill of reflective interviewing was more complex than they had realised and that the more practice they had, the more effective were their reflective sessions. Tuition in the skills and a commitment to the procedure were noted by one principal as factors which had influenced the two different partnerships that he had been involved in:

> I felt that last year [preliminary study] with [partner] was less satisfactory because his commitment to the programme was, perhaps, less *genuine* than this year's partner. In mitigation to last year's partner, we have had better tuition in the procedure this year [principal's own emphases].
>
> (F/N:4/8/93)

Therefore, an over-riding factor in the ultimate success of partnerships for professional development was also the commitment the school leader had to prioritising their time for their professional development.

COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The principals had to be committed to their own professional development to not let the processes of the Partnerships' programme be superseded by other events. Their time was scarce, but some principals always managed to meet their partnership commitments and others did not. It was a matter of priority. The level of commitment the principals had was ascertained by how successfully they could prioritise their partnership interactions within the hustle and bustle of their normal working conditions. One principal gave this advice at the end of the preliminary study when he talked about the problems encountered during the year: "Time! It is important to see the partnership as a vital part of professional development and make time for it" (F/N:1/12/92).

Another principal stated this proposition in the following way in her final reflection in the research:

> [The greatest limitation] Time factors—fitting in times to visit/be visited, balancing this with all the other aspects of the day/job. Realising the importance and benefits of visits has made it easier to prioritise these times.
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

When the principals showed an equally full commitment to establishing and building a professional partnership with a colleague, the partnership was more likely to succeed. The principals had to prioritise the time set aside for partner's visits and their own visits to their partner's schools. If they changed their visiting dates this often did not suit the timing of the other principal's actions and the opportunities to receive evaluative feedback on particular aspects of working towards professional goals were then lost.

When this occurred it led to disappointment and disillusionment within the programme and partnership. One principal talked about how the shadow visit was set up, but then the partner could not attend and the programme had to go on as planned. "I don't want my staff disadvantaged because I haven't done the work with them" (F/N:26/8/93).

This principal reflected that she had been as committed as she felt she could be to the requirements of the programme but she felt that her partner had not been as committed to his own development as he could have been, when it was he who had asked her to be part of the programme. On another occasion this principal felt concerned that there had not been time to set a focus before the late arrival of her partner and said that she would need to phone beforehand in the future to make sure that this was done. Another principal talked about how frustrated he felt when his partner had changed a shadow visit date because he then had to organise his programme around that particular date.

Professional development such as in this model which did not entail an outlay of money and could be carried out on any particular day, was often the first thing to be cancelled when there was pressure at work.

Some principals had put mechanisms in place to ensure that the time for professional development was not eroded away. For example, some principals asked their secretaries not to allow any interruptions during their interview time with their partner. Some principals did not go into their school on the mornings of the full group sessions so that they did not get caught up in school proceedings which would detain them. There seemed to be no difference between teaching and non-teaching principals' ability to prioritise their professional development time. But there were differences between principals. Some principals allowed phone calls and other visitors to intrude on the time allocated for working with their partner. They cancelled visits at the last minute because other matters had arisen in their schools. They did not attend all the full group sessions or only attended for half a day.

When time was set aside for the Partnerships' programme, and the principals met together, it was very important that they maintained a degree of stringency within their interactions.

NECESSITY FOR STRINGENCY

The lack of time, and constant pressures on that small amount of time available for principals' professional development, meant that once they had made the commitment to their professional development a degree of stringency needed to be maintained within such a programme of professional development if the full benefits of the Partnerships' programme were to be reaped. The principals did have to make a conscious effort to be more formal than they were normally, when working with their partner. This then ensured that they would in fact interview each other, and record behaviours during observations. If the degree of formality or stringency was not maintained the principals lapsed into conversation and provided each other with much support but very little challenge. One principal described how they would need to continue to be stringent to make sure that the reflective interview did take place when they worked together:

> Formal structured interviews have to be planned for. That is the only way because otherwise you don't let it happen. [You have to say] that "We will start our interview now." Because they are very worthwhile.
>
> (F/N:16/2/94)

Implicit within the need for stringency was the need to maintain the regularity of visits to schools as previously mentioned.

The development of these professional partnerships between these school leaders was problematic. There was no simple formula that would guarantee success but all of the previously mentioned factors did appear to have a marked effect on whether the partnerships would develop into a working relationship where the principals were committed to each other's schools and their colleagues ongoing professional development. Some of the factors that were influential in the formation of successful partnerships were obviously inhibitors of successful partnerships developing when they were not achieved in this research. For example, if a degree of stringency and formality within the visit was not maintained and the processes were not correctly carried out then this affected the development of partnerships and became a problem. If there was not regularity of contact, this also became a problem in the research study. Therefore, there is a degree of overlap between this last section and the next section which describes the problems faced in the research.

PROBLEMS FACED IN THE RESEARCH

Although the research study was generally beneficial to all participants there were some problems experienced throughout the process of developing professional partnerships with these 12 school principals. One of the major inhibiting factors to the successful development of partnerships was the social, political and economic climate in which these principals were working. This was described in Chapter One. Ironically, at a time when support and development was most needed, it was not always able to be enjoyed. The principals had many new, time-consuming responsibilities devolved to them in the administrative reforms. The lack of time to get everything achieved was constantly mentioned by the principals and they felt that their job conditions were at times inimical to continuing professional development. Due to this pressure on their time the principals often faced feelings of indispensability and guilt of being out of the school for their own professional development. Part of this guilt arose because some principals felt that others believed (as they did perhaps themselves) that once they were in these positions of leadership they should not require further development. In fact, belonging to such a group therefore indicated, to some, a leadership deficit such as Barth (1986) also noted.

The loss of two principals through stress-related resignation and the retirement of a third principal had an effect on three of the six partnerships. The in-depth "navel gazing," as one principal described the reflection on practice, initially caused some of the principals to experience a loss of confidence in their ability to lead a school. This was a problem in the research and needed to be carefully worked through in the development of partnership. It was sometimes easier for these principals not to confront their own leadership style and to simply work with their partner on problem solving of the day-to-

day issues. Therefore, there was a degree of stringency needed if they wanted to maintain their new ways of working with a professional colleague and break from established habits.

Some outside factors such as family deaths and illness for three of the principals, the secondment to the Education Review Office for one principal, the consultative process within a community about whether there should be a special education facility sited on his school grounds was a problem for another principal as well as effectiveness reviews for five of the principals, all impinged on the amount of time that there was available to commit to a professional development programme such as required of these principals in this research study. The lack of full attendance by the group at the group sessions was also an inhibiting factor in the development of a community of researchers and the continuity of the programme. The lack of full attendance also had an effect on the development of individual partnerships as much of the skills development and training and the meeting of specific professional development needs was carried out at these workshop sessions. Those principals that then missed these sessions not only needed to be "inducted" but also needed further opportunities to practise the newly learned skills with their partner in the school setting, without always receiving the assistance they required.

Each of these problems is now discussed in turn in the following section.

JOB CONDITIONS

The job conditions of these principals often seemed to inhibit their own professional development actions. They seemed to have too many demands on their time. Whenever the principals were asked about what they felt was the greatest limitations to this type of collegial professional development, they all said the time in making it work. In his final reflection one principal encapsulated every principals' opinion on this matter:

> TIME—to get together. TIME—to think reflectively. UNFORESEEABLE INTERRUPTIONS—the exigencies of the service throw up barriers to achieving all we want to in terms of getting together.
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

Another principal talked about the irony of the situation of time constraints in this way:

> Time constraints—when you need it [partnership's support] most, it is usually when you are under the most pressure [and are unable to get the time to enjoy the support].
>
> (F/N:1/8/94)

The principals therefore recognised that they were not as reflective as they would have liked to be. Often they had to put strategies in place to help achieve their goals. When I

asked principals why they had not carried out the reflective interview, for example, they would tell me that time was the main reason. But, some principals were able to prioritise this professional development time more successfully than others, and none more so than the teaching principals. This could be depicted by the analogy of their responding to emergencies, like a doctor in a busy accident and emergency clinic, that Barth (1986) speaks of. There were many occurrences which forestalled the planned shadow visits in their schools. On one occasion it was an angry parent arriving unannounced; on another it was a meeting with social welfare officials. One day I arrived at a school on the planned day to find the principal was caught up with the police on a suspected physical abuse case; another day at a different school the principal was taking the caretaker who had a heart attack to the hospital. On another occasion, the principal I had arranged to visit was unavailable when I arrived because he had had to take a class due to a teacher's absence. These were all daily occurrences in the lives of these school principals and did make the process of working through a professional development programme more demanding. Another principal told me her shadow visit was cancelled because her partner was attending the funeral of a staff member's family and then later, had other professional commitments:

> No, [we haven't met] because I set it all up and then [partner]went to a funeral... and then [partner] was involved in [professional contract] so we have not found the time to get together but I will have another go next term.
>
> (F/N:26/8/93)

Some partnerships therefore, did not have as many shadows in each other's schools as others. But when they did make the time to visit each other's schools, the conditions were still not conducive to concentrating on achieving professional goals relating to school development plans.

Even in their own schools when their partner was visiting them the principals sometimes found it difficult to concentrate on their professional goals. In one school, one issue for the whole first year of the research was so dominant and volatile that the principal was dealing with one crisis after another. This situation overshadowed any other efforts to think about other matters in his school. He found it very difficult to concentrate on setting any professional goals or to see any value in shadowing his partner in his school. He told me that the issue had been "so overriding that I have just not been able to do my normal work" (F/N:18/11/93).

Even when the principals came into the Educational Leadership Centre workshop situation their minds were not freed from the clutter of the concerns of their school. Often their reflections at the beginning of workshop sessions shared these concerns:

> This morning my mind is on the Annual General Meeting [of Board of Trustees] being held tonight and the school audit on Wednesday for which I have work to do.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

Getting out of their schools into their partner's schools was problematic for many of the principals. One principal felt that the way she was going to overcome the lack of time for meeting within the partnership in the future was to use the telephone more. She said "I can see in the future a lot of it will be done by telephone" (F/N:26/8/93).

The use of the telephone and fax within the partnerships had been extremely supportive. Another principal commented that just knowing that she could phone her partner meant that she very often then did not need to. The face-to-face visits to each other's schools were a vital part of this professional development model but if they could be supplemented by telephone and fax exchanges, as they were in this research, then they would continue to meet the needs of these principals. A third principal described how she should have made use of the telephone to ensure her face-to-face visit was more beneficial to her. In this way, the phone conversation would have complemented the shadow visit:

> I should have organised the way the observation should have gone over the phone so that it wouldn't have mattered if [partner] arrived after we started. He was held up, as principals often are, and thus we didn't have the few minutes privately before my staff arrived.
>
> (F/N:25/10/93)

Some of the principals looked for other ways to maximise the amount of time spent with their partners. One principal told how he was trying to compensate for the lack of time to carry out the reflective interview at a previous shadow visit. He was seeking another situation in which his partner and he would be together to continue where they left off:

> But once again time intervened and [partner] had a commitment to get back to school before one o'clock and still we haven't had time to have our reflective discussion. We have our principal's conference in Wanganui next week and we have promised ourselves that we are going to bring our notes to it and take a bit of time to try and sit down there.
>
> (F/N:3/6/93)

Two of the principals always travelled together to and from the Educational Leadership Centre workshops so they could discuss their partnership programme. Four of the principals planned to attend the same professional development courses to spend more time together.

Sometimes the feeling of a lack of time to get everything in their schools completed made these principals feel guilty when they did prioritise their own professional development.

GUILT

With time being at a premium in the day-to-day practice of these principals at least half of the group at some stage in the research made comments which indicated the guilt they had experienced at certain stages. One principal described it like this at the start of a full group session "this is my release day, perhaps I should be at school working on my administration" (F/N:3/5/94).

The administration tasks seemed to take precedence over studying their leadership practice as there was always so much to get completed. This was of concern. But a greater fear was voiced by three principals who mentioned they were worried that something would "happen" in their schools while they were absent. One of these principals stated that his staff and community felt that he was out of his school too often and he added that something always "seems to happen" when he was away from the school. This was his reason for not attending one of the full group sessions. Another described how he felt at the start of this same full group session:

> Not the best time of the week for this type of meeting...didn't feel too good as hadn't been able to complete the shadow notes or tape. Many things to do. Have been out of the school often lately and feeling guilty as teachers want to see me to discuss many things concerning them. Upcoming Board of Trustee Annual General Meeting this week on my mind as well.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

Sometimes the guilt was provoked by other people who gave the principals the feeling that they should not be in need of further professional development. One senior principal's chairperson of the Board of Trustees told him that "We employ you to be here managing the school" and could not see that his professional activities in his role on the executive of his Association were anything more than "socialising" (F/N: December, 1992). One rural principal found he was beginning to cope with his feelings of guilt about being absent. He said "it is getting easier to leave school. I am learning to trust my staff and realise that the place won't fall down without me" (F/N:3/5/93).

The principals often indicated feelings of indulgence in partaking of these professional development activities.

DEFICIT FEELING/ REMEDIAL PROGRAMME

Two principals initially indicated that they felt that belonging to such a programme indicated a deficit on behalf of the principals who were there. One of these principals told me that some of the principals obviously got a good deal out of it because of overt "personal problems." These other principals with personal problems were being open about the issues and dilemmas that were facing them in their schools. When they lowered the bluff they were not seen to be as effective as the other principals whom this principal mixed with who did not admit to such concerns.

This principal's view appeared to change very rapidly as she then reflected on the lack of hierarchy in the group and how every one listened and learned from everyone else. She reflected that often it was the younger less experienced principals who had the best ideas. Her partner had discussed the Partnerships' programme with his Board of Trustees. He told me laughingly that they had thought it was a bit of a joke. In relating part of the discussion to me he said "one of the Board members laughed and said "Is [partner] developing you or are you developing [partner]?" (F/N:16/2/94).

This type of attitude from a governing body did not help to set the right culture for lifelong learning to occur. This principal also took the longest period of time out of the members of the group to begin to reflect on his own practice.

LOSS OF PARTNERS

One of the problems faced by three of the principals in the research was the imminent loss of a partner through stress-related leave in two cases and retirement in the third. In the case of the imminent retirement of his partner the principal concerned found it quite difficult to discuss his long term goals and hence feel any long term nature of the partnership. This had an effect on their working relationship nearer the end of the research period.

In one of the stress-related instances the prolonged absences of the partner made it difficult to establish a bonding relationship. The other principal who took early retirement because of stress-related illness, did not share his concerns with his partner, although they had been working together for nearly one year. The day he made the decision that he could not face going back into his school again, he had been to his partner's school carrying out a shadow visit. This leads to the discussion of another problem faced in this research. The dilemma here is that the Partnerships' programme sometimes engendered feelings of insecurity and lack of confidence before a greater confidence took hold.

LOSS OF CONFIDENCE

This loss of confidence may have been one of the triggers which caused the two principals to resign from principalship during this research. Their interview transcripts portrayed a growing disillusionment with education generally and their own inability to adjust to the changes thrust upon them. One of the principals who took early retirement allowed me to interview him three months after he had left his school. This is what he told me:

> I just found it was taking me longer and longer to do everything and I wasn't doing it as efficiently as I was three years ago...I felt like I was dabbling in this and dabbling in that, and felt like I just needed to shut my office door and sit down and write...the whole thing blew up in my face after a morning in [partner's] school. It was a good morning. I just got back and looked at the piles of paper and said "What the hell as I doing?"
>
> (F/N:8/12/93)

When asked whether he felt there was any connection between the two events—visiting his partner's school and then coming back to his own school and feeling that he could not continue—his answer concerned me as it indicated a loss of confidence combined with a lack of fulfilment in the new role of principal of a self-managing school:

> Yes, I think that is very true. I'd had a good morning in [partner's] school. He was interacting with kids and I went back and said "I'm not doing enough of that." Over the years, with Tomorrow's Schools, it [working on educative leadership] had dropped as a proportion of the day's work. I got back and just saw two monstrous piles of paper, and then my Board chairperson dropped in and wanted something straight away and I thought "This is the last straw." That was it. It put me over the top.
>
> (F/N:8/12/93)

This principal did say however, that he felt the Partnerships' programme had helped him. He said there were times when he felt he could not really afford the time but had made the commitment and was always pleased he had. He said "It was very worthwhile to get away from that paper, so it depends where you put your priorities" (F/N:8/12/93). The Partnerships' programme had assisted him to see himself more clearly by observing his colleague. However, he did not like what he saw and became demoralised.

Another of the principals, who stayed with the research, spoke of the self-doubt he had experienced initially:

> Partnerships also engendered some self-doubt for me and the researcher's role as a confidante and conduit in providing relevant readings (e.g. Southworth, 1994) helped allay some of those doubts.
>
> (F/N:4/8/94)

Other principals in the research talked about the loss of confidence they had experienced. This was reported in Chapter Five. However, they managed to work through it, and valued the ongoing support of their partner in assisting them to do this. While this was a problem in the research, it was also a necessary stage in the leadership development of these principals as will be highlighted in the conclusions of this study. To break established habits and confront their own leadership these principals had to move out of the comfort zone of taking their everyday practices for granted.

BREAKING ESTABLISHED HABITS

The model required the principals to work in ways which were very different to the way they usually interacted with each other, and it required them to use skills that they were not in the habit of using. This was a problem for the principals to overcome. The principals slipped easily back into old habits of just conversing with their partner and not carrying out the processes of reflective interviewing and giving evaluative feedback. A deliberate use of the researcher's presence helped to institutionalise some of these new practices. Some of the principals were more faithful to the process. These degrees of fidelity to the research model had an influence on the developing partnerships.

OUTSIDE FACTORS

There were many happenings which occurred in these principals' lives which affected the amount of time they were able to commit to the Partnerships' programme. These were factors that occurred over and above the other day-to-day happenings in the school.

Deaths and Illness

Two of the principals experienced family bereavements. One principal lost her husband after a long illness and one principal lost his nephew in a boating accident in which the body was not recovered for some time. He assisted with the search. These events naturally overshadowed any other professional commitments that these principals had as part of the research programme. Their partners were unable to shadow them but in both cases the partnerships developed successfully after the trauma had passed. The two principals who had stress-related illness and absences before they took early retirement also had an effect on the developing partnerships. Regularity of contact was not maintained in these partnerships.

Secondment to Education Review Office

One principal was seconded to a one term appointment to the Education Review Office. This created a gap in the regularity of visits at a key stage in the development of the partnership and possibly resulted in the non-development of a fully institutionalised relationship.

Special Education Unit and Community Consultation

One principal had a year long conflict situation in his school community with the consultation processes as to whether there would be a special education unit built on his school grounds. This is also discussed under "job conditions." The support of a successful partnership could have been invaluable in assisting this leader to make the educative decisions that were required of him, but was never developed to the extent that it could have assisted in this way.

Effectiveness Reviews

The Education Review Office effectiveness reviews had an effect on some developments in the one school where the partnership relationship never fully developed but each of the others utilised the review as part of their professional development and shared the situation with their partner to fully benefit from the reviewer's visit.

LACK OF FULL ATTENDANCE AT THE GROUP SESSIONS

The full group sessions could have provided near ideal conditions for the development of skills, partnership and community. However, there was always someone away due to illness or pressure of work and this made it difficult to develop a community of researchers. On the morning of the session there would be a fax awaiting which informed of the impending lateness of one principal or the absence of another, or yet another would tell me they had to get back to their schools in the afternoon. These dates were always established well in advance (often two months) and these other factors would take precedence over their own leadership development in this particular research. The days' programmes continued successfully but there had to be special compensatory visits to the absent principals' schools. They too, often felt their absence had placed them at a disadvantage. One principal, at the end of the second session, described in his written evaluation how he felt after missing the first session:

> At the moment I feel very lost. Why? It's a pity I did not attend the first meeting. Result—I feel like I am now catching up—trying to catch up.
>
> (F/N:3/5/93)

This principal only attended two of the four group sessions in the first year and none in the second before he took early retirement due to a stress-related condition. Another attended only one full group session before he took early retirement. Two other principals only attended two out of the four in the first year but one prioritised the time in the second year to attend both sessions while the other attended only one of the two sessions. However, there was either full attendance or only one session missed by the other eight principals.

In summary, there were many factors which affected the successful development of principals' partnerships. Educational leadership takes place in a dynamic, changing environment with a variety of personnel to deal with and a multitude of tasks to carry out. The people that the school leaders work with, and the context within which they were working, often affected the successful development of partnership. One principal was extremely committed to his own professional development. He was stringent in carrying out all aspects of the programme as requested. He attended all full group sessions, made reflective taped recordings at regular interviews and worked hard to develop partnership but was not successful. It therefore needed to be a two-way commitment.

The development of institutionalised partnerships is a complex task. There were other problems in the research which related specifically to the model of research and they are described in the Chapter Seven as methodological implications.

To all of these principals, the successes of the programme far outweighed the problems, however these principals were also cognisant of the difficulties inherent in developing, then maintaining, an effective partnership for the purposes of professional development.

Chapter Seven: Main Findings and their Implications, Further Recommendations and Conclusions

This study has shown that peer partnerships did assist in the professional development of these 12 school leaders in many ways. The principals who committed themselves fully to their partnership and the programme stated consistently that they were provided with support and challenge as they carried out the professional leadership of their schools.

This chapter begins with a summary discussion of each category of major findings and the related propositions. The discussions of the sociological, methodological, educational leadership and professional development implications then follow and the limitations of the research are also outlined. Finally, a substantive theory for school leadership development is proffered tentatively during which the thesis is summarised.

SUMMARY DISCUSSION OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The study of the Partnerships' programme led to the development of four major categories of findings: a) enhanced critical reflection; b) increased professional interaction; c) educational leadership development, and d) a structure for school development.

A) ENHANCED CRITICAL REFLECTION

The roles of these principals within the new administrative arrangements were complex and sometimes ambiguous and they differed to some degree from school to school. For this reason, professional development activities needed to be centred on the issues, problems and dilemmas the principals faced within their own schools. The principals worked in conditions where tasks were characterised by their brevity and fragmentation and the principals often became immersed in reacting to everyday crises. The principals' job conditions seemed to be inimical to reflective practice occurring with any regularity. This study found that opportunities for reflection needed to be structured into the principals' practice for it to occur systematically. As Argyris and Schön (1978) stated, outside intervention was needed in the organisation of the learning process to ensure that critical reflection took place.

The political influences on schooling in New Zealand at the time of this research also led many principals to the defensive and protective practices of impression management

as described by Goffman (1959). Prior to the study there were very few opportunities for these principals to observe other principals in their schools. Reflection on their own practice was also achieved vicariously as they observed their partner in action and assisted their partner to reflect on that action.

More importantly, from the observation of and reflection with other principals, the principals in the study gained other perspectives on current issues or ways of acting and knowing. These outside perspectives provided challenges and were essential prerequisites to critical reflection occurring. It was not until this critical reflection began that the principals' everyday practice moved towards praxis. Informed committed actions became more apparent as the principals consciously planned future steps in their strategic plans in the light of their previous reflection and the outside perspectives gained from the literature and views of the researcher and other principals.

B) INCREASED PROFESSIONAL INTERACTION

The involvement in the study led to greater professional interactions between colleagues where educative matters relating to the school were the focus. The principals said that, apart from their involvement in this study, they did not interact in such a way with other colleagues. This finding has been supported by other researchers such as Apple (1986) and Barnett (1989). The principals described their new interactions as "much more professional." They valued and respected the ability to act as consultants to a colleague and to assist a colleague to reflect on their leadership as they reflected on their own. They said there were few other opportunities to discuss and deal with leadership issues with their professional colleagues outside of this programme.

The principals modelled collegial supervision to their staff and in many schools the interactions extended to other members of staff. There were some interactions between the members of the research team when specific knowledge or expertise was required.

There was an unexpected and unplanned level of interaction between the researcher and each principal even though a review of research had highlighted the special significance for practitioners in collaborating with a university researcher in such studies as Barnett (1990), Stevens (1986) and Wadsworth (1990). The principals valued my regular visits and the chance to talk over current issues that they were facing in their schools.

C) EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

These principals stated that they had felt isolated in their schools, particularly since the 1989 reforms. The market forces of competition for students between schools had made

them feel more vulnerable to the perceptions of community and colleagues in relation to how effective their school was. The political influences within education had meant that the definition of their role as principal had become increasingly ambiguous. Close association with another principal through involvement in this study gave them support and affirmation for the actions they took in their school. They began to be more focused on their leadership actions and increasingly became open to new ideas. This led the principals to further reflection on their practice through double-loop learning and specifically planned actions. The principals also demonstrated intellectual independence in being able to set their goals and work towards achieving them.

These principals gained a degree of agency or empowerment. They realised that they were not the only principals who felt the way they did about issues that were affecting them and they acted with more confidence about changing some of the conditions in which they worked. When these school leaders became aware of their values and beliefs they were able to open themselves up to the possibility of changed behaviours. The collaboration with their colleagues in an open, trusting manner assisted them to deconstruct the dominant discourses affecting their role in the school. Actions taken with Board of Trustees, Education Review Office and teachers within the school are examples discussed earlier of how the principals became aware that they did not have to continue in the ways they previously had. By the end of the study, emancipatory behaviours were starting to be more apparent mostly at the school level, but also at the regional and national level.

Involvement in this study provided these principals with the necessary skills and attitudes to be reflective practitioners and they all stated that they would continue to establish similar ways of working with other colleagues which would continue to systematise their reflection on practice.

D) STRUCTURE FOR SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

One of the major findings of the Partnerships' study was that it provided the principals with a structure to carry through their school development plans to completion. The partners became a conscience to ensure planned actions were carried out as also experienced in Ramsay, et al, (1990). The Partnerships' programme required the principals to reflect regularly on their actions in their school development process. They recorded specific goals and worked systematically towards them. Many of the principals stated that the Partnerships' programme had assisted them to achieve an end result, as previously their professional development and pursuit of professional school goals had been ad hoc and often unplanned and unaccomplished.

The principals usually had a vision of a perceived outcome that they would like to attain, but did not always know the steps to take in order to reach this goal. Action research techniques helped these principals to work towards achievement of a vision for their school. This required cycles of action and reconnaissance and reformulation of action plans. The professional partner was of invaluable assistance in providing outside perspectives and possible solutions and strategies to implement.

The principals all stated that the Partnerships' programme assisted in their leadership development. They said they were more focussed on their educative role within school leadership, and appreciated the support and challenges that assisted them to set and achieve personal and professional goals.

What, then, were the sociological implications of these findings?

SOCIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The research findings demonstrated that the principals had usually retained a bluff exterior and worked at impression management when they were with their colleagues in professional situations prior to being involved in this study. A disruption was therefore needed to discredit the impression, and in this study this disruption was provided in two ways: one, by requiring the principals to work in different ways with a professional colleague, and two, by using the pressure of the researcher's presence to see that this occurred. The findings therefore gave empirical evidence to Goffman's (1959) notion of impression management and Schutz (1964) belief in the necessity of the stranger. Schutz notion of typification of the principals' daily practice was apparent. With the presence of the researcher as the stranger the typifications were challenged to the extent where their normally constructed world was no longer possible and matters that were more educational were moved to the forefront. As the stranger provided these challenges and disruptions, everything was placed in question rather than leaving every day practice as taken-for-granted behaviour. Ethnomethodological techniques were utilised to provide the disruptions. A deliberate use was made of the Hawthorn effect of the presence of the researcher to push the principals into working together in particular ways by going out to observe the principals working in their partnerships and providing coaching in their schools.

The ability of the researcher to stand outside the situation and ask questions about the principals' practice, had the effect of the stranger by providing challenges to assumptions held. This helped the principals to deconstruct and then reconstruct their reality. Their reality had been constructed by the societal and political influences at the time and they needed assistance to take a critical look and reconstruct their view of their roles as

Foucault (1977) described as being important in the process of change. Some sort of dissonance was necessary for change to occur. The principals faced dilemmas when their roles required them to act in a way which was in conflict with their moral reflection and educational values. After deconstruction of their multiple roles the principals were able to see that other principals were facing the same dilemmas. This helped them to realise that it was not them as individuals but them as New Zealand school principals who were experiencing these difficulties. They were then able to view the situation more critically and gained a sense of empowerment from this knowledge.

When the principals were situated within this challenging environment some of them initially experienced a lack of confidence in their existing practices. However, this loss of confidence in a previous way of acting, also set the basis for change to occur and the findings indicated that this happened in this study. This was part of the disruption, where the principals were nudged out of their comfort zones and began to look at things from a critical perspective. Some of the principals involved in this study described this loss of confidence stage when they first started reflecting more critically on their practice but they gained in confidence as the study continued as Waters-Adams (1994) also found in his study.

Hence also the necessity of the critical friend, the trusted principal, to provide support and affirmation for new practices and for leaders to become more comfortable in operating in a state of constant flux. The critical friend also provided evaluative feedback and assisted in processes of reflection with skilful interviewing and observation. This evaluation was invaluable in the setting and appraisal of professional goals. With their professional colleague as their critical friend, outside perspectives were available to these principals which further challenged previous ways of knowing and double-loop learning was achieved.

Therefore, to summarise, this study added empirical evidence to the idea that if we believe knowledge to be socially constructed as Berger and Luckmann (1971) proposed, then it often needs to be deconstructed to create a dissonance, and this was seen to be important in the process of change. The principals demonstrated that an awareness of their situation or conscientization as described by Freire (1985) led to feelings of empowerment. This has been described by Giddens (1993) as feelings of agency—the belief, that these principals developed, that it was possible to act otherwise.

The findings had also indicated that these principals were experiencing what Foucault (1977) described as the "gaze" where they had felt very vulnerable to the ever-watchful eye of colleagues and community. For this reason they had built up their boundaries with greater impression management and had previously let nobody into the inner accesses of their schools and practice. In this study the critical perspective was shown to be effective

in assisting these principals to reflect not only on their practice, but on educational leadership, and education in New Zealand generally. It is doubtful whether a positivist or interpretive framework would have achieved the same results.

In summary, the main thrust of my thesis is that leadership development programmes which will move principals on from the world of everyday practice to the world of praxis require the nudge of "the stranger" and the support of the "critical friend." The professional partnerships, established and supported by a university researcher, can achieve this type of professional development. This was, to a major extent, due to the theoretical underpinnings of the methodology.

METHODOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The methodology incorporated a combination of different approaches all centred around the theoretical underpinning of praxis. The principals were assisting in researching a model of professional development as they were participating in professional development. The research methods were designed not only for data collection but to provide professional development opportunities. There were seven main methodological implications. These were related to: praxis; the inability to establish a community of researchers; the apparent lack of time for professional development; the viability of principals using action research techniques for school development; the necessity of skill development; the institutionalisation of the partnerships' programme and finally, the issue of reflexivity.

PRAXIS

The vehicle to achieve praxis was critical reflection and the professional development model helped the principals achieve praxis by challenging them with outside perspectives and helping them to see beyond their own school site to the larger picture of what was happening in education generally in New Zealand. Helping them to see that they were part of a much larger system, in which the issues they were feeling were being experienced by other principals as well, gave these principals the agency to realise that they could act otherwise.

The most vital move in "the practical realization of interests" (Giddens, 1976, p. 53) was in allowing another principal access to the inner realms of their practice and being allowed to observe the usually sheltered actions of a colleague. The support gained from the critical friend assisted them to be firm about their educational values and to use these as a guiding force in taking a stance on issues of importance in their schools. The principals realised that they could take an educative stance with the Education Review

Office, and also with their own Board of Trustees. They were supported and challenged to do this by the outsider and the critical friend. With effective reflective interviewing, the partner principal could challenge the principal's ways-of-knowing and lead them to double-loop learning where they began to reflect upon the reflection of their practice. The methods of evaluative feedback and reflective interviewing were important in leading the principals into critical reflection on practice. This led to a critique of dominant ideology which assisted them towards achieving praxis through taking emancipatory actions. This critical analysis was paramount to a commitment to being self-reflective.

ESTABLISHING A COMMUNITY OF RESEARCHERS

One of the main methodological implications was the inability to be able to fully establish a community of researchers as described by Carr and Kemmis (1986). There were some developments but not as many as had been initially expected. There could have been many reasons for this. Some principals did not feel that they had anything in common with other principals in the group. The full trust did not automatically extend to the full group. If it took one year to fully establish trust within the partnership, then it would seem it would take longer than the time given to establish full trust within such a group of principals. It was difficult to work at group dynamics and building a community of researchers when there was a lack of full attendance at any one full group session.

Reciprocity and negotiation of developing theory was not always easy to achieve. To persuade the principals to read chapters of the report, or articles written relating to the findings, proved a difficult task. The only way to get the principals involved in the research side of the programme was during interviews and the full group sessions, where the necessary reflection time was built in to the programme. The principals were given selected literature and research findings to read and comment upon.

The principals did not appear particularly interested in the research side of the programme and did not often challenge or research my actions as a member of the community of researchers. However, this is not a reason to not utilise collaborative action research as a methodology. Collaborative action research, such as this, was important due to the pace of change in education. This study did something with and for the principals while the research was being carried out. They have already been affected by this theory. They helped build it. It is grounded in their experiences. The processes of the research led the principals to emancipatory behaviours and agency through their involvement in the programme although the extent to which they were researchers is debatable.

The process of change takes a considerable length of time. Schools, teachers and principals are conditioned into thinking in terms of one year lengths of time—for classes,

for school years, for school goals, for professional development. This study has demonstrated that these principals were in a continual state of becoming. It could be argued that they were only at the end of the research ready to begin to move more fully into critical reflection, theory building, examination of their practice and the social issues related to their leadership.

ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

In working towards developing a community of researchers the demarcation line between academic researcher and the provider of professional development was very foggy. My role was not only that of researching the model of professional development, but also that of developing leadership with each principal. A unique relationship was developed within this community of researchers as my own past experiences of principalship assisted me to more fully understand the tensions, issues and successes being experienced by these principals.

My dilemma was wanting to assist and model the practices of coaching, but also wanting the principals to become independent of my role to a degree where they would continue with the programme after the research had ended. The full scope of the research methodologies was being realised. The processes involved in the research were as important as the gathering of the resulting data as Lather (1986) stated they should be in research that is praxis.

After initially trying to isolate the role of researcher on the one hand and being part of the actual professional development these principals were experiencing on the other, I came to realise the role confusion no longer presented an issue if the community of researchers and praxis were the ultimate goals. To some degree, the principals were also researching the process. They were involved in setting the research directions and assisting in my reflections. There was inclusive leadership of the community demonstrated from time to time as the principals made suggestions as to what they wished to achieve during a particular full group session.

TIME AVAILABLE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Perceived lack of time is another important methodological consideration. This model required the principals to give three full days per year to the full group development days plus carry out six visits to each others' schools. This was not in place of their other professional development, but worked alongside it and complemented it. Therefore they still had time out of school for their association conference and other professional development seminars. Some of the principals made very little time available for further

professional reading or reflection activities such as the cassette recordings. They seemed to be already overcommitted in the time they had available. It was interesting to note that there was not a perceived difference between the amount of time a teaching principal could devote to the programme and that of a non-teaching principal. More interestingly, time available seemed related to the amount of priority the principal placed on the development of their leadership through involvement in this programme.

USE OF ACTION RESEARCH FOR SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

Although the principals did utilise action research as a tool to lead them more easily to meeting their professional goals the initiation of a more formal approach to this process came through building the research around their practice, trying to demonstrate how they were in fact carrying out action research, and that they could further develop this with their partner's assistance. The links between theory and practice were important. The theory provided a frame of reference for the principals. It provided analytic tools to use in the problems that they faced. I had hoped they would have wanted more articles to read, more theory to support their actions, but this was not generally the case, although they were always pleased to receive articles.

This study highlighted what Johnston (1994) also claimed, that action research is not a natural process for these principals but this study did help the principals to become more systematic about their action processes. Action research took outside initiation and facilitation to occur. The principals often had strategic plans but they often had difficulty with implementation or they had set goals or visions for their school but were often at a loss to know which steps to take to actually achieve that vision or final outcome. The action research became a strategy that they could use to assist them.

The findings indicated that a greater emphasis can be placed on the importance of either the research aspect or the action aspect of action research, depending on the interests and goals of the participants involved in action research. My own interest and over-riding goal was to develop and publish a grounded theory of professional development for school leaders. The principals' main interests and goals related specifically to their own schools and leadership practices. Therefore I placed a greater emphasis on the research process and recognised the importance of the writing of a final report. The principals did not always record written evaluations of their action steps, or record their next action steps. This was a concern that Hodgkinson (1957) had voiced.

The principals were often sketchy in their depth of reflections and data gathering. They needed prompting to do this. The research design then offered opportunities and prompts to write and reflect on future goals and actions at interview and full group

sessions. Without these prompts to do so, it is unlikely the principals would have written about their school development process. The principals were content to move to the next development phase and leave any writing of their goals and actions to the university researcher as Hammersley (1983) also indicated they would be.

NECESSITY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Another methodological implication was that many of the skills needed to work effectively in collegial supervision were not known or used frequently by the principals before involvement in this study. The skills necessary were those of: observation and recording behaviours objectively; reflective interviewing; giving evaluative feedback; oral and written reflection; setting professional and personal goals, and using action research. The skills taught were not familiar to these principals. They stated that the skills were not part of their normal practice and that they often had difficulty using them in their schools when they met together. The principals admitted that they often stayed in discussion mode rather than moving into the more formal reflective interviewing. They did not always record behaviours during observations or set a specific focus on which to receive evaluative feedback.

It required a level of stringency, practice and the assistance of an outsider to formalise the situation. More time should have been spent in the field with the principals, coaching and tutoring them as they worked together, which I was not always able to provide. It is paramount that the skills of critical reflection are taught and supported in the field. This point is discussed more fully in the section on professional development implications.

INSTITUTIONALISATION OF PARTNERSHIPS

The institutionalisation of the partnerships through this study was problematic. Sickness, retirement and change of schools as well as the ability to find a partner who had equal commitment to the programme all had an impact on the ability of these principals to maintain an ongoing partnership with the original partner that they started out with. However, the Kolb (1984) learning theory cycle that was at the basis of praxis provided opportunities for metareflection; reflection on the impact and importance of reflection. This in itself led to the institutionalisation of reflection on practice as the principals recognised the importance and the value of reflection in assisting them in their educative leadership role.

There needed to be continuing outside facilitation built into such a programme to ensure the support and challenge to maintain the impetus was provided. These principals may not continue with the partnerships established during this programme but they said

they will look for similar professional interactions with their colleagues in the future. This in itself will cause difficulties as the partners they choose will not have had the necessary skill development to help them move the interactions to those which are more challenging and reflective than the normal interactions that school leaders share. External support is vital in maintaining the institutionalisation of the Partnerships' programme.

REFLEXIVITY

The final methodological implication relates to reflexivity. A reflexive approach is, I believe, not only paramount but unavoidable when conducting action research. Action research provides the vehicle for a reflexive approach. As part of the community of researchers I became part of the study. This caused a degree of role confusion, but ultimately the reciprocity achieved helped provide the richer data that Lather (1986) believed was desirable. There were issues in this reflexive approach. The degree to which the principals questioned and examined my motives and practice was negligible, but it could be debated that with interactive interviewing as described by Oakley (1981) and collaborative action research communities developing a critical theory, as described by Carr and Kemmis (1986), that the issue of reflexivity is not as great as in traditional sociological research methodologies because in action research studies the researchers not only admit to subjectivity, but are mindful of the effect they have on the research findings and that the research processes and findings have on them. Although I was effectively an outsider my prior experiences of the principalship gave me a credibility perhaps not enjoyed by all academic researchers. This research was designed to create as many reflective opportunities as possible. I would argue with Watson (1987) that reflexivity can be achieved in action research projects such as this. The findings indicate the reflexive nature of this research. The experiences in this research contributed to my own professional development to a large degree through being open to the environment and being shaped by it.

However, this was not without its attendant danger. If reflexivity is about examining yourself and what you believe and becoming self-aware as Gouldner (1970) espoused, then this can become an issue when a piece of research takes place over a longitudinal period of time. The changes and professional development that I experienced during the four years through the reading of the literature, and the challenges, discussions and debates about the Partnerships' programme, meant that at the end of the study many earlier ideas and beliefs had been further developed. Postmodernist perspectives about research and leadership were a later influence. Alison Jones (1992) also experienced this after her longitudinal ethnographic research had been completed. At a later stage I fully realised the importance of principals being able to deconstruct and then reconstruct their

roles and how the Partnerships' programme was assisting them to do this. Such a Partnerships' programme could also play an important role in helping principals to analyse their particular style of leadership with reference to the leadership literature. This in no way compromises what was achieved during this study but future programmes would have more emphasis placed on this aspect.

Although all of these partnerships will not necessarily continue as such, the overall impact of the study was still considerable. The principals felt refreshed and motivated, and were more easily able to focus on the educative leadership aspect of their role. The role model of peer coaching and supervision that they set, provided an impetus for other staff members to be involved in similar ways. The principals gained confidence in working collaboratively and as consultants to each other in what Wadsworth (1990) has described as the pot-of-gold that those involved in such studies as this, can find at the end of the programme.

The principals who fully committed themselves to this programme described it as the most important personal and professional growth opportunity they had ever been involved in. This programme obviously then had many implications for educational leadership.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IMPLICATIONS

One of the main implications from these findings was that these school leaders needed assistance to be able to examine and negotiate competing values to maintain a focus on what was important in education to fulfil their educative leadership role. Within the climate of market forces in education these principals needed help to sharpen their focus on educative leadership to resist the forces of managerialism. The Partnerships' programme gave them opportunities to focus on the quality of learning processes rather than on just what was efficient in their schools. This study supports what Alcorn (1993) stated: that principals have the contradiction of trying to retain "...a sense of allegiance to education and to the profession...at a time when the official emphasis is on divisiveness, competition, and concentration on the local scene" (p. 6). The principals said that involvement in this study had assisted them to regain a sense of allegiance to education and their colleagues because since the reforms the competition for students in schools had caused a subtle but very apparent loss of collegiality. They recognised the need to be able to resist the forces of market place schools and concentrate on building community within and between schools. The methods in this professional development programme required them to do this so that they had real experiences of the benefits of working collegially and sharing in the full group sessions. The principals stated that the norms and group dynamics of the study group were different to any other group to which they belonged.

Some of the leadership theory stated that educative leaders need to involve others in democratic practices of building communities of learners and then lead in a democratic style (for example, White, 1982). This type of leadership requires the skills to build relationships which was the essence of this professional development programme. These principals explored articulating their values, negotiating through conflicts of values and becoming reflective about their actions and the effects they had on learning processes in the school. As Sergiovanni (1991) said taking a reflective stance to their leadership should greatly increase their chances of succeeding in this. There needed to be prior reflection on administrative action and this would then become the hallmark of educational leaders. Further involvement in this study could have led the principals to more fully reviewing their leadership style with the assistance of their partner. To some degree, Barnett (1990) attempted to achieve this with the development of the leadership framework. Although the principals in the present study were introduced to the framework at the beginning of the research, it was only after 18 months in the programme that some principals at a stage where the challenge to the *style* of their leadership would have been acceptable.

The study of the literature also revealed that to be transformative and emancipatory in their leadership style, school leaders need to be involved in the small p politics within schools and within schooling in general. The principals in this study began to do this. They began to be more assertive, confident and politicised. Leadership with an emancipatory intent is paramount and as Regan (1990) stated, it is not an activity for women alone. These principals would require further outside assistance to develop the necessary skills to facilitate the process of achieving a type of leadership which was more emancipatory with a social justice agenda. A programme such as this could have been better utilised to help the principals become aware of current leadership theory and then work together towards achieving some of the goals highlighted as important in the literature such as developing a moral, democratic leadership style.

So what are the implications for professional development, if these areas of educational leadership are crucial for school leaders in New Zealand?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

This study has revealed many implications for future professional development of school principals in New Zealand. First there is the principle of training prior to taking up the position. Following on from this is the need for continual renewal and the requirement for such. Reflective practice has been a buzz word in the literature for the past decade but it will remain an espoused theory unless professional development courses build experiences of it into programmes. Peer coaching has been shown in this study to be an effective method for school leader professional development. Training for Boards of

Trustees is a matter requiring further consideration. Principals not only need development in the area of interpersonal skills but also support at the school level for the development of their leadership ability.

PRIOR TRAINING

In New Zealand at the time of this research school leaders were not required to have any further qualification other than a teaching diploma. Many principals did have a first degree and some principals had Masters degrees or doctorates but they were few in numbers. The school leaders involved in this research had not been involved recently in any study programmes on leadership at the University and therefore their knowledge of current theory and practice was not strong. They stated they enjoyed the articles that were sent to them, but that they themselves did not usually find time to research them for themselves. If these principals had been involved in accreditation programmes which required them to study the literature on educative leadership, the change process, school review and development processes, community leadership and leading for equity, and also to reflect on practice through case study, problem solving and action research techniques, many of the methods of this study were have been more familiar to them. New Zealand school principals at this time learnt on-the-job which even further highlights the importance of there being policy at the national level which sets in place structures to further support their leadership development. This is discussed in the section on support at the school level.

CONTINUAL RENEWAL

One of the implications for professional development of school practitioners that has arisen from this research is that there should be a requirement for all practitioners within education to demonstrate every two years how they have maintained their growth in the profession. This is found in other parts of the world such as in Israel and in Japan (see for example, Tanaka 1993). In these countries there is a very high commitment to continuing professional development education. In Israel this commitment is at the institutional level with a large majority of teachers every year being involved in professional development programmes due to incentives such as financial benefits, reflective training time, and money for tuition and travel being granted by the Ministry. In Japan teachers are responsible under law for engaging in continual self-training throughout their career. At the national level in these two countries there is not only an expectation but a requirement. The long term effects would be maximised.

As Burke (1987) stated there will always be a case for induction, renewal or redirection and if New Zealand policy makers took up such an idea, New Zealand schools could be revitalised. The current Ministry of Education teacher development contracts for the implementation of the new curriculum statements goes part way towards achieving this, but there are many schools not receiving the advantage of belonging to such programmes.

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Some of the necessary components of leadership must be learned not taught as Bennis (1989) so succinctly stated in response to the question as to whether leaders are born or made. The implication of this therefore is that it would be naive to believe that to espouse the importance of being a reflective practitioner would change somebody's practice in such a manner that they became reflective. This study supported Houston and Clift's (1990) finding that practitioners become reflective through *being* reflective and then *further* reflecting on its use. Therefore professional development programmes have to look for ways that practitioners can be involved in critical reflection on their practice during the programmes. Once they have realised the benefits of this they will be more likely to become more reflective in the future. The development of reflective practice is therefore *through* reflective practice. Many of these principals stated that they had not previously been involved in written or oral reflection practices such as were required in this study. They had previously not been involved in opportunities to systematically reflect on their practice with the assistance of a colleague as they were in this programme. Professional development programmes need to involve reflection and peer support.

PEER COACHING

There has been much work on the importance of peer coaching in the development of teachers but little research on the same processes when applied to the principalship. The same principles should apply. This study demonstrated the apparent absence of reflection in principals' daily practice. This model was based on the premise that reflection will lead to professional development and a Partnerships' programme will lead to reflection. A model was needed that would advance the act of reflection and utilise the professional knowledge of principals more fully. The reflective interview was a structured interactive process with a colleague. School leaders need to be taught the necessary skills of reflective interviewing and given opportunities to practise them in preservice, graduate or professional development programmes. There needs to be a belief that principals are still part of the learning cycle. So much that is written about appraisal or coaching or supervision leaves the principal out of the process. This study demonstrated that these

principals gained as much through peer coaching as research has revealed that classroom teachers do, and in so doing, set powerful role models to their staff about the importance of continuing to develop professionally and being seen as a lifelong learner.

TRAINING FOR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Another professional development implication highlighted in this research is that the education and training of Board of Trustees was a full time job for these school leaders. There is a need for principals to include members of the Board of Trustees more in leadership training and make it a requirement of them to do so if they elect to be a board member. Principals described difficulties in getting trustees to attend training sessions held locally. The principal is sometimes the sole memory for the institution if the Board of Trustees changes each three years. The principal has to re-establish a new Board of Trustees and develop shared values and beliefs and redefine roles and portfolios of responsibilities.

The Board of Trustees is a voluntary position and the importance of running schools is perhaps too great a task for volunteers. Many of the principals in this research did the majority of work that Boards of Trustees were responsible for. Principals have to carry out policies that Board of Trustees have developed, even if they do not agree with their intent. The dilemma these principals felt of both being on the board but not recognised as part of the board by the board, is at the root of many of the contradictions that New Zealand school leaders are facing. These principals often talked about the Board of Trustees as if they were not a member of it. A more inclusive, democratic leadership style perhaps would have alleviated some of these dilemmas.

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Another recommendation to professional development groups is to offer courses that assist school leaders to deal with conflict resolution. If there needs to be a period of dissonance for change to occur, and a re-examination of values, there will of necessity be a conflict of values. Principals found it hard to be truly educative leaders when they did not always have the skills to resolve values dilemmas. There needs also to be much more emphasis on interpersonal skill development in graduate, preservice and professional development courses. They sometimes preferred to act in autocratic ways as there was then less chance of conflict arising if they did not consult. The principals felt that any issue was likely to divide the community as there were many different values held on every issue that arose. Principals need to be clear about the shared educational values the

school is striving for, and let these educational values set the direction for decisions to be made.

Programmes aimed at leadership development need to have a focus on the articulation of educational values and beliefs and the ability to lead from a strong educational platform which is shared by those affected by the leadership decisions made in the school.

SUPPORT AT THE SCHOOL LEVEL

Provision of professional development for school leaders is at present haphazard and ad hoc. There needs to be support at the school level for change and development to occur. One day courses at development centres do very little to assist in the professional development of school leaders. Earlier research has demonstrated that principals can act as very good consultants to each other (Wadsworth, 1990) and this research has also highlighted this. However, outside support was still necessary in this process. Policy makers should consider the importance of the outside facilitator or developer for schools and further extend current systems such as the Advisory Service and Teacher Development contracts which at present support schools but are inadequately resourced to provide the regularity of contact required. Some schools are not involved in the Ministry of Education teacher development contracts. Other schools are involved in up to three at any one time. Involvement of schools needs to be more carefully monitored on a national database to ensure equity of provision. Every school should be part of a cluster which has a professional development facilitator. School boards could look at developing policy which recognises the need for continual growth of all school staff, and recognises the principal as learner, and set in place resourcing which assisted groups of schools to share together such a valuable resource person. This person could be released from one of the schools in question on a rotating basis so that over a period of time, many people took responsibility for acting in the role of outside facilitator of professional development support and challenge to the schools involved.

The school leaders needed assistance to get such programmes for reflection on practice initiated as indicated by Alcorn (1985). The initiation of these partnerships would not have occurred without my involvement. Action research is unlikely to occur without the guidance, the theory and knowledge to support its processes. Professional development programmes need to assist principals to be able to analyse their institution for the moral and ethical considerations. As Hodgkinson (1982) said metavalues such as managerial efficiency may be good for the school but this does not necessarily make them right. Therefore principals need training in critical reflection and structured time made available for it to occur.

There need to be more training programmes however, that involve more than just the principals. Staff and Board members and other communities members all need to be involved in the analysis of the institution. Principals need assistance in how to build community and lead democratically. Principals also need training in managing the boundaries between themselves and the community. They were much more vulnerable and open to the community during this research. The demarcation line between principal and staff and community will now always be blurred and principals need to be able to operate in such a context to build community.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

One of the main limitations of this study was that the interpretation was made almost solely on the perceptions of these principals about their experiences and the processes of the partnerships. As revealed by some of the limited observations, these perceptions, or espoused theories, were not always consistent with the reality of the theories-in-action or my interpretation of the principals' perceptions. My perceptions were based on the principals' statements, not on any observations of actual change. Therefore data gathering through interview and reflections limited the extent of the overall knowledge of what actually occurred in the Partnerships' programme in action. The data would have been richer if time had allowed for greater periods of observation to take place. However, as this data was collected over a longitudinal period, with six different partnerships being studied, one can feel some confidence in the substantive theory developed.

These findings also revealed that as Smyth (1984) found in his research, a researcher of peer supervision is also a teacher of peer supervision and if more time had been able to have been spent in the field working with the principals the development of the necessary skills to enhance critical reflection in and on practice could have been further developed.

Another limitation was the degree to which it could be ascertained that it was a representative group of principals. To agree to be involved in the first place could have either indicated a lifelong commitment to professional development and better leadership, or perhaps a realization that if they did not join such a programme they would not survive in the present context.

A further limitation could have been that the principals were not required to work in a particular way. Because they were given the autonomy to develop a model of partnership that worked best for them, it was then difficult to get the principals to implement certain methods without being too directive, and yet if they did not implement the particular methods they may not have attained the most value out of the programme.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There are many areas for further research that have been triggered by this study. A study is needed of secondary principals to see if they can be successfully involved in peer coaching programmes which involve evaluative feedback. This study could also be extended to leaders in other fields of senior management in private enterprise.

There still needs to be continued study into the viability and feasibility of being able to develop a community of researchers with a group of school leaders. Is it possible to achieve the type of critical community as described by Carr and Kemmis (1986)?

A longitudinal ethnographic study of a partnership and its development would provide interesting findings. This would be especially important if the study also included utilising the model to explore the true meaning of democratic leadership and how it would be possible to achieve and what difficulties would be faced.

Further research could explore the links between this type of formative leadership development programme and the summative principals' appraisal as carried out by the Board of Trustees. The Education Review Office guidelines for appraisal of school leaders, out in draft form for submissions at the time of this research, would be an interesting link to the Partnerships' programme.

Research is needed to further develop the main categories identified in this study and in particular, how to develop critically, reflective practitioners. The research is never completed but just becomes a strategic link in our knowledge about school leaders' professional development.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

> Substantive theory in turn helps to generate new grounded formal theories and to reformulate previously established ones. Thus it becomes a strategic link in the formulation and development of formal theory based on data.
>
> (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 34)

A grounded substantive theory was developed from data collected from a group of primary, intermediate and secondary principals in graduate research in 1990 (Robertson, 1991). This research study was in response to the stimulation of implications of that particular research. Even as the last word was being written, the next questions were being asked. How then, to establish a model which takes all the earlier substantive theory into consideration? How then, to get school leaders to be involved in professional development which acknowledged the realities of the daily practice of school principals and the philosophic, values and visionary elements in the principal's role?

How could a model offer opportunities for values development and the resolution of value conflicts and have a strong emphasis on educative leadership? It would be a model that encouraged reflective practice and experiential learning rather than offer a priori theoretical models and therefore would be needs-based, participatory and collaborative. Such development would take place over a period of time and be focussed on problem resolution and the resolution of leadership dilemmas. Therefore there would also be an emphasis on inter-personal skills such as communications, presentation skills, stress and time management. The model would have to provide release time for teaching principals and be able to use a variety of time options both in term time or non-contact time such as vacations and weekends. It would also acknowledge the needs of individuals for stimulation, freedom, creativity and fun; and be provided by people credible to the field of education, often by practitioners and consultants in partnership.

It became obvious at the end of that research in 1991 that establishing individual professional partnerships between principals working in their own schools and combining it with regular support in a group workshop situation would be a model that could take into consideration all of the substantive theory established in the earlier research. Many of those propositions were saturated again in this research. This is not surprising as Glaser and Strauss (1967) say that grounded theory is always only the beginning—never the final word:

> The sociological perspective is never finished, not even when the last line of the monograph is written. Not even after it has been published, since therefore the researchers find themselves elaborating and amending their theory, knowing more now than when the research was formally concluded.
>
> (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 256)

There were two statements in the previous theory which were the key to developing this model and are at the basis of this formal theory. The first was that professional development had to acknowledge the reality of the principals' job conditions and their daily practice. The second was that the professional development programme should be provided by practitioners and consultants in partnership.

Missing from the earlier theory was how this would be accomplished. Missing was the emphasis on the change process. *How* do professional developers get school leaders to see that change in their leadership behaviour is necessary? Challenge is needed. This research study has shown that partnership supervision can provide that challenge as can other outside perspectives from members of the research group involved in emancipatory action research. The group was as important as the partnership—the variety of perspectives, the development activities provided, the skills and support provided through the group situation all served as professional development opportunities. The partnerships

also needed continuing support from the researcher at the school level. In-depth data on the development and on site practices of principals' partnerships had not been gathered in other related studies (for example, Barnett, 1990).

The context for adult learning needed to be carefully considered. The saying "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink" had relevance. Consideration was needed not only about how to get the horses to the water—which the reality of the job conditions of school leaders often stopped them doing—but how to get them to drink once they were there. For many of these principals the attendance at their Association's annual conference or their monthly meeting of the regional principals' association, and perhaps a professional development seminar or workshop slotted in here and there when a brochure caught their attention, typified their professional development activities before involvement in the Partnerships' programme. They told me they seldom, if ever, had had to confront their own leadership on those occasions. Therefore there was never any impetus to change when back on the school site. As one principal so avidly put it, it is imperative that a programme assists a principal to see a need to change, and to want to change, before change will take place:

> We get a bit long in the tooth for change and apart from all that, no matter who your partner is or where you work or anything, before you are going to change, you have to want to change. Nobody will ever change me unless I want to change.
>
> (F/N:26/8/93)

No one will ever change unless there is a disruption. The principals as professional partners provided this. The university researcher provided this. The partnership of the two together was an effective combination. My thesis is that both are necessary.

So if the reality of these principals' jobs was to be acknowledged, establishing a programme which supported their daily practice was paramount. It was important that in such in a programme of professional development the people involved could see the direct relevance of their activities. One principal said that that was the key feature of the Partnerships' programme:

> That is the beauty of this programme. We can relate what we are thinking and feeling and doing, to what we are feeling at the time, not to some academic or theoretical thing that we think might happen—it is happening and we talk about it.
>
> (F/N:18/5/94)

Professional development activities far removed from the reality of their work served no purpose. The principals needed be working with the personnel, the issues, the every day concerns that they were currently facing to see the need for development.

The last principle of *who* provides the professional development has been the thesis presented in this research. It needed to be provided by practitioners and academic specialists in partnership. The practitioner consultant, their partner in this study, provided the evaluative feedback necessary for development. This principal will not be able to provide this assistance unless somebody else was involved in improving the educative nature of the professional relationship that they developed. This was where the partnership with the academic specialist came in. This person provided the challenges, the critical perspectives, the skills and the theory to support the principals' practice.

These principals needed a conscience (partner) and a guide (academic researcher) in order to carry out the professional development programme which contained all of the above principles. The principals needed to be supported and encouraged as well as challenged in their professional development activities for changes in behaviour to occur. Outside perspectives are paramount in the change process.

This research set out to establish whether partnerships could assist in the professional development needs of these 12 school leaders. The findings have shown that these school leaders believed the Partnerships' programme assisted them in many ways. This required extensive data to be gathered and analysed to see if all of the above factors and others were in fact able to be met. Judgment has still been made on their accounts not my observations, but in doing so it has highlighted the question that I was asked at a conference during the study. "*How* did you find 12 principals willing to put themselves on the line in this way?" These horses all got to the water *and* were motivated to drink. How do we convince all school leaders of the importance of such continuing growth and development? How do we get principals to plan their professional development so that it includes more than the annual attendance at a conference and the occasional seminar? Does this need to be mandated or can it be achieved through preservice and professional development programmes?

A FINAL WORD

If study programmes such as this are not set up to support principals could Goodlad's words written nearly 20 years ago in the U.S.A. become a portent for those in education in New Zealand *today*? These words signal a new era for educational leadership theory:

> We corrupted the educational process through over cultivation of the system. And now as we reflect on all this—and reflection is a luxury in which we too little indulge—we become dimly aware of something missing. That something is what motivated most of us to become teachers or educators in the first place...to put education at the centre again, [to]want to become educational leaders again, not mere managers.
>
> (Goodlad, 1978, p. 324)

Are his continuing words going to be the lament of school leaders in New Zealand in another 20 years *hence?*

> We have yielded to the pressures and temptations of becoming experts in fiscal and personnel management, public relations, collective bargaining, and the political process. Few of us are trained or experienced in any of these, even though we must take responsibility for them. What we are trained and experienced in, most of us, is education—its traditional and emerging goals, its historical roots, alternatives, curriculum, counselling, instruction.
>
> (Goodlad, 1978, p. 331)

School leaders in New Zealand need to keep education at the centre with critical reflection on their practice. They need to hold fast to their educative leadership role and be wary about becoming "mere managers." These 12 school leaders believed that involvement in the professional partnerships' programme assisted them to achieve this.

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APPENDIX A: PRELIMINARY STUDY SURVEYS

MIDYEAR EVALUATION

- What have been the benefits/ difficulties in working with your facilitator?
- What were some of your early feelings/expectations about partnerships at the outset of the contract?
- What difficulties have you experienced?
- What benefits do you feel there have been? For you? For your partner? For your school? What is the most important personal need that you feel is being met by partnerships?
- What do you hope will happen next?
- Anything you would like to recommend?

END OF YEAR EVALUATION

- In thinking about partnerships, what would be your responses to the following questions?
- What part, if any, has partnerships played in your career?
- What kind of partnership ideas, formal or informal, are currently occurring in your organisation?
- What are the characteristics of a good partner?
- What problems have you encountered in the Partnerships' programme this year?
- What problems /highlights have you encountered in cross-race, cross-gender, cross-level partnerships?
- What benefits accrue to your organisation from the Partnerships' programme?
- What has been the most important role that your partner has played for you?
- What do you consider are the greatest benefits of the Partnerships' programme?
- For my research group next year, what considerations do you feel I should take into account?
- In what ways could the training have been improved?
- Would you have found videos of people carrying out shadowing/ reflective interviews helpful?

APPENDIX B: CONTRADICTORY DISCOURSES

About Tomorrow s Schools

- Accountability
- Efficiency
- Performance Objectives
- Power 'over'
- Commodification of education
- Performance appraisal
- Chief executives
- Managing directors
- Market driven
- P-R specialists
- State corporate managerialism
- Value-added production unit
- Effectiveness reviews
- Financial entrepreneurs
- One of 'them'
- Greater parental involvement
- Greater business involvement
- Individualism and competition
- New Right Ideologies
- Accountability—Audits
- Markets = politics

About Effective Leadership

- Substitutes for leadership
- Affiliateship
- Leadership from within
- Leadership 'to'
- Empowerment
- Leader of leaders
- Moral leadership
- Educative leadership
- Professionalism
- Cultural/pedagogic leader
- Collegiality
- Facilitator
- Collaborative
- Community of learners
- One of 'us'
- Democratic control
- Participatory
- Community, social good
- Shared purposing
- Shared visions
- Responsibility

APPENDIX C: CASSETTE DIARY GUIDELINES

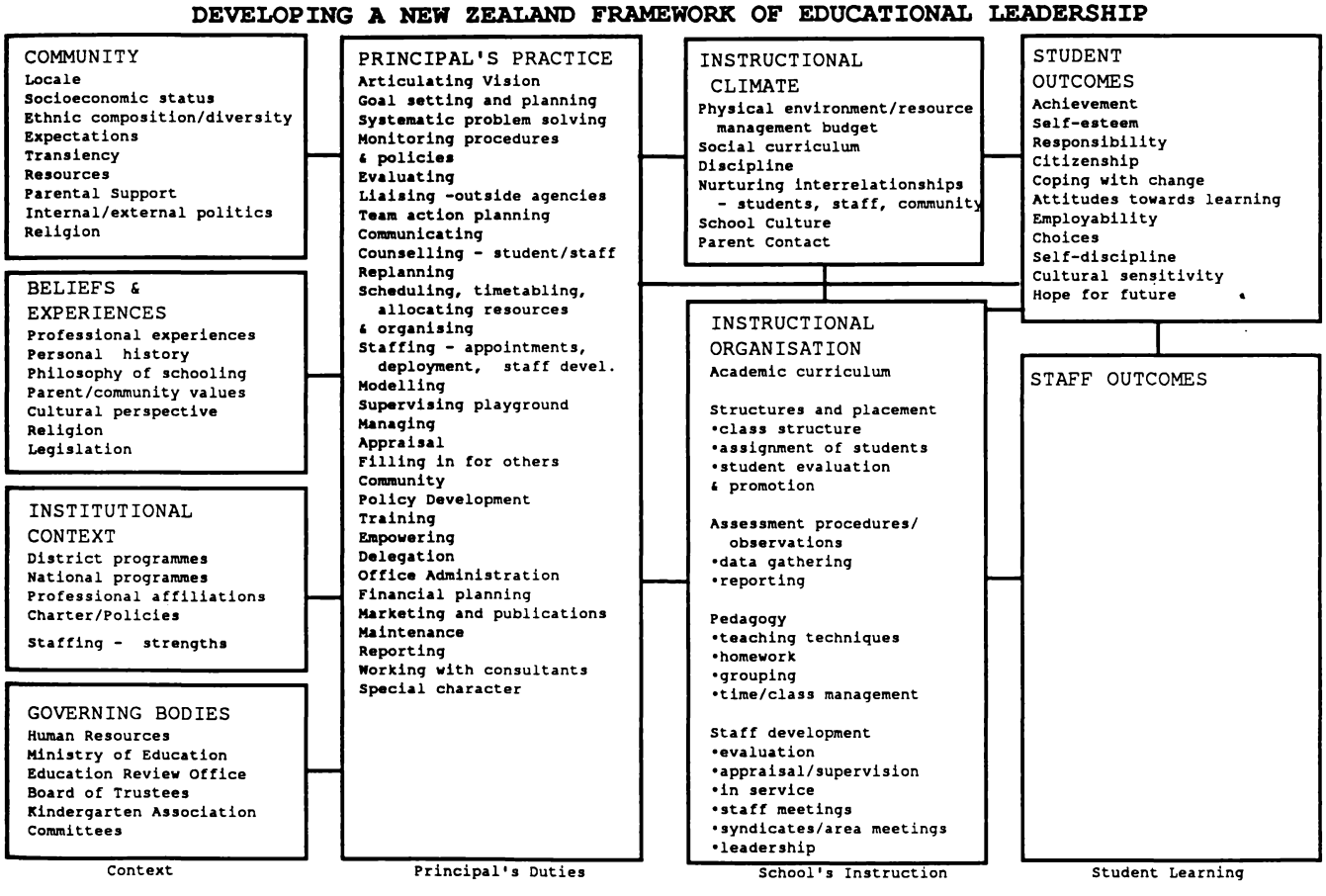
After any leadership event/action that you feel is worthy of mention...for example, it could be:

- after today's session;
- after a shadow;
- after a phone call from me or your partner;
- after an incident related to a professional goal;
- after a reflective interview;
- after reading a piece of literature;
- after visiting your Partner's school;
- on arrival at school;
- as you leave school.

Talk about...

- What did you do?
- How did you feel?
- What did you decide?
- What influenced your decisions?

APPENDIX D: THE LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK



APPENDIX E: AGENDAS OF FULL GROUP SESSIONS

1. PROGRAMME 7 APRIL 1993 SESSION ONE

1. Introductions: Opener... in pairs. Not partner...
2. Outline of proposed programme:

First Term:

- 7 April : First group meeting—investigating leadership styles.
- Further skills in creating a shadowing record and conducting the context interview.
- Introduction to audio journals and/or written journals.
- Set dates for context interview and shadow.

Remainder of April

- Undertake context interview in one school
- Undertake shadow in other school. Take notes. Discuss.
- Second group meeting 3 May 1993 9-12noon
- Debrief from shadows. Bring notes taken during shadow.
- Further skills in conducting a reflective interview.
- Setting professional goals and/or focus for continued work together.

Second term:

- One shadow and one reflective interview (at least) in each school
- Jan meets separately with each pair.
- Some beginnings: action research.
- Resource production—case records.
- Video as kit.
- Continue reflective diaries.
- One group meeting—August—action learning sets and group problem solving

Third term:

- Continue with the pursuit of professional goals.
- Conduct one shadow and reflective interview in each school.
- Continue reflection.
- Gather feedback from various sources re achievement of goal.

- Set new goals
- How will we know the professional development programme is making a difference?

1994

- New goals. New context. New reflections.
- Shadows and reflective interviewing.
- What developments will we make?

3. Workshops and skill building—Ginny Lee:
   - a) Examining our own leadership: and establishing the groundwork for the context interview
   - b) How to shadow
     - ~ sharing experiences and knowledge gained in 1992.
     - ~ what to look for/ how to record.

4. Reflective audio diaries:
   - The leader as learner
   - Tapes will be replaced monthly and typed up for return and additions/ subtractions can be made.
   - keep it brief.
     - ~ after every shadow/reflective interview
     - ~ during week when something occurs related to professional goal

5. Set dates for context interview and shadow.

2. RESEARCH STUDY 3 MAY 1993 SESSION TWO

9:00	Karakia Opener: share a leadership act that is ahead of you this week. A staff meeting, a meeting with parents, visiting classrooms, writing to Ministry
9:15	An unstructured reflection (with music) what have you thought about the process so far—5 minutes. On unstructured reflection sheet—at the beginning of today's session...
9:20	Debriefing from shadow : small groups not with partners (4's): What worked best? What was hardest? What was the most beneficial?

How did you feel?

One person to record to feedback to whole group-

9:40 Feedback—collect as data

9:50 Directly to flip chart—what are some guiding principles we could have for these partnerships? e.g. leaving self-esteem intact. non-judgmental.

Ethics: Principals drive the research process. Discuss the importance of honesty and the need to tell the research from the inside-out. A need for confidentiality not just within partnerships, but between partners and myself; and between members of this group from group sessions. Give out ethics sheet for each principal to sign.

Collect cassette diaries—named...and give out new ones.

Give out guidelines for reflective comments.

10:10 A look at notes...from the principalship—one day in life of principal:

A sharing of how they took the shadowing notes—no right and wrong—just different ways which worked best for each recorder.

10:20 Workshop on reflective interviewing—a very necessary skill at end of shadowing.

Activity:

In pairs: each recall/imagine what your day was like...last Friday. If your partner had been with you on Friday, was there a situation that was a leadership activity/ teaching/learning encounter that they would have seen? List one or two activities you did and jot down what they were. Just use a few words to describe each.

Now one person in the pair tells the other person what the situation was...

Then the other person, the questioner repeats: Last Thursday I saw you...

Tell me what was the purpose of that?

Tell me...when...why...how...

The person then responds...then questioner follows up with more questions. Why? or So What questions.

After two minutes...swap...now repeat the process:

How did you find that? How did you feel?

Flip chart: What are some cautions for the questioner??

10:40 Break

11:00 Each principal takes 5-10 minutes to write down some questions relating to the shadow—using the three types of questions: (A must at the end of the shadowing session to sit somewhere away from each other and plan the interview. (Discuss how later in programme when setting specific professional goals for quality feedback, will be in a

	position of 'judging' or offering positive and negative feedback on how well the goals were achieved—at the request of the principal.)
	"Last week I saw you...tell me what...how...when...why"
11:10	Each principal finding a quiet spot in room to carry out their reflective interview using their shadow notes.
11:30	Prompted reflection (5 minutes)
	The reflective interview
	How did it feel?
	What was your experience?
	Is it useful? How? Why? When?
	Short feedback to whole group
11:35	At least 30 minutes for each principal to work with their partner. A discussion on where to from here; setting new dates; making plans.
12:00	A closing: 5 minutes reflection onto back of unstructured reflection sheets—at end of day's session.
	Karakia and waiata.

3. RESEARCH STUDY 4 AUGUST 1993 SESSION THREE

12:00	Lunch—Arrive hungry! We eat at 12!
12:45	Reflective interviews—further opportunities to develop skills:
1:25	Written reflection time
1:30	The importance of critical reflection.
	Workshop: Giving evaluative feedback and setting professional goals and focus for leadership development.
2:30	Group problem solving
	Establishing personal goals for 1993/1994
3:15	Written reflection time
3:30	Setting new dates and content for full group sessions in October and December and partner's visiting times.

4. RESEARCH STUDY 14 OCTOBER 1993 SESSION FOUR

9:00	Relaxation and visualisations
9:30	Reflections
10:00	Muffins!
10:30	Strengthening partnerships
	Building "community"
12:00	Lunch
1:00	Building your "educational platform"

Exploring values and beliefs

3:00 Afternoon tea break

3:15 Reflections

Action research model

Sharing ideas

Where to from here?

4:00 Day finishes

Intended Outcomes:

The aims of today are that you will:

1. Experience a way to enjoy two hours relaxation in ten minutes;

2. Review knowledge about the power of visualisation for leadership;

3. Enjoy some quality time with your partner and other members of the group in discussion and activity;

4. Build your 'educational platform'—reflecting and articulating the assumptions, values and beliefs that lie behind your views on educational matters;

5. Be able to re-formulate plans with your partner, share ideas and review the action research model as a method of gaining new perspectives for leadership development.

6. Enjoy top quality presenters in an aesthetically pleasing and comfortable environment, with nice food, refreshments and company.

7. Relax. Enjoy. Reflect.

5. RESEARCH STUDY 14 MARCH 1994 SESSION FIVE

9:00 Welcome and karakia.

9:15 Reflective interviewing: With kit booklet. A quick review.

Activity:

All write down one initiative you undertook in your school in 1993, that your partner may not have been aware of.

Tell your partner.

Carry out reflective interview.

When finished: Discuss whether they asked about the bottom line—what benefits were there for children's learning in the school. Did you ask your partner this? Could they articulate it?

Then: Under this framework

- Think of one learning/teaching initiative in your school for 1994:
- What are you doing?
- Why are you doing it?
- What benefits are there for children's learning?

- Write this down, individually, on prepared sheets.

Then share with your partner.

Add any ideas/notes that arise from discussion.

Ask the principals to compare the two reflective sessions—they are basically the same, but is it easier to concentrate on just three questions?

Level one questions: What are you doing? All the information?

Level two questions: Why are you doing it? All the purposes and reasons.

Level three questions: Linking to philosophies/visions/goals/ children's learning.

Be directive: ask them to do two things at next session together.

Follow the three question framework; tape it for me or reflect to me after the process of following the three questions.

10:30-11 Morning tea

11-12:15 Role plays

Jot down a real problem or interaction with potential for conflict that has occurred recently e.g. dealing with deputy principal's disloyalty; trying to form working relationship with dominant Board of Trustees' chairperson; taking a responsibility from a senior staff member because you felt they could no longer do it; an angry parent wanting child's class changed; an annoyed teacher not feeling supported; a teacher not getting given the responsibility that they wanted for this year; the appointment of a new staff member; disloyalty among staff members.

Active listening: share the incident with your partner—partner listening only, no discussion.

Swap—share other incident.

Select one of the two: decide on a role and role play it with each other, with the opposite person being the principal in the incident, and you take the part of the other.

List all situations up to the whole group.

Choose one pair as volunteers or give them my prepared notes for a group role play.

Shift two people into the spotlight—principals play the opposite person—one of the group play the other principal. Observers—note down when you hear values being expressed. What is important to the two people? What else could they do? Repeat role play with two different people?

Choose a different situation for role play.

1-3 Action research—share Alcorn's (1986) work (20 minutes)

Share principal's examples. Ask others to write about theirs.

1-1:30 Jan first shares 2 examples of action research:

	Ask all individuals/pairs to write a narrative of their action research process—indicating where, if at all, their partner fitted in.
1:30—2:00	The action research process—the need to gather information from other sources as well.
2:00 -2:45	Planning with partner Get planning for 1994—an action plan with partner's involvement
2:45	Sharing ideas for plans for 1994 with rest of group—an evaluation of this session. Reflections: At this point of time, what are your thoughts about partnerships as a form of professional development? What are the first of the key steps in your action plan for 1994? Put an asterisk by those which your partner will be involved in. What was the most valuable part of today's programme for you? Why? What was the least valuable? Why? Are there any other developments/directions you would like to see this programme take? What are your thoughts about the programme for the year ahead?

6. RESEARCH STUDY 1 AUGUST 1994 SESSION SIX

8:30	Welcome and discuss agenda. Make changes...ring New Zealand Education Institute Field Officer. Principal as change agent ... discuss importance of ... refer to Sergiovanni's (1991) article. a) Get principals to carry out reflective interviews in pairs on how they view their role as change agent in their schools. What change have they effected? How effectively? b) Give out change inventory (Hall & Rutherford, 1983)...the principals as change facilitator...what style? Work individually then read about the results...discuss in pairs
9:30	Principal's case study—article to read and make notes on it and a comment on the end for me. Principals sketch out own chronologies of previous 18 months and outline a short case study of what they did in their partnership: how it changed; developed; benefited; frustrated; could have been better; will be in the future—individually and in pairs to discuss.
10:30	Morning tea
10:45	Written reflections. Some final data gathering for my research...
11:15	Give out draft of Job-embedded article, based on this research. Principals read individually and make comment on the sheets. Then group discussion.
12:00	Lunch

1:00	Issues for school leaders...
	a) Individual contracts—are they a good idea? What do you know about them? Will you have any say in the matter? What do secondary principals or overseas research have to tell us?
	New Zealand Education Institute field officer visits to answer questions or be involved in discussion for 20 minutes at 1:40pm.
	b) Effectiveness reviews—sharing experiences; involvement of partner; effect on school improvement.
2:30	Moral dilemmas for school leaders—problem solving in groups.
	Sharing with full group.
3pm	Finish.

APPENDIX F: INITIAL FIELD DATA

- Name:
- Age Group (circle One): 20-30; 31-40; 41-50; 51-60; >60
- Ethnic Group:
- Medical History/Information:
- Family Commitments/Responsibilities:
- Work History(a brief outline of schools and positions held)
- Number of Years in Principalship:
- Number of Years in this Position:
- Description of School (from Charter?) Include size; staffing, location; community composition; Board of Trustees
- Your reflections about the school and community:
- Description of staff and reflections on your perception of the working relationship that you have with them:
- In what way do you hope your involvement in Partnerships over next 18 months will assist you in your principalship? Are there any specific leadership issues that you can see now that you would like the opportunity to address?
- Anything else?

APPENDIX G: CHRONOLOGY

PRELIMINARY STUDY

December 1991	43 early childhood, primary, secondary educational leaders selected for Ministry of Education contract on curriculum leadership development
	12 consultants selected to work with the educational institutions
3 December 1991	Initial seminar with consultants on peer-assisted leadership—What is it? Why is it needed? What is its aim? What is their role in the development of partnerships?
27 February 1992	Full group session
	Shadowing techniques
	Reflective interviewing
	Leadership Framework
	Selection of partners; development of programme
2 June 1992	Full Group session
	Development of partnerships—sharing progress
	Debriefing on shadowing and reflective interviewing
	Advanced reflective interviewing
	The New Zealand Leadership Framework
	Evaluations
4-25 August 1992	Four regional group interviews
18 September 1992	Consultants training day
November 1992	Made resource video of four partnership's experiences plus script
1 December 1992	Full group session
	Evaluations
	Sharing experiences
December	Five individual interviews

THE RESEARCH

1993

January 1993	Developed directions for 1993
	More emphasis on skills to carry out the Partnerships' programme
	More emphasis on a suggested framework
	Work though group sessions to develop a community of researchers
February 1993	Research group selection begins
3-10 February	Initial phone calls to principals
19 February 1993	Follow-up letters sent to principals from preliminary study
	Follow-up letters sent to new principals in research
25 February 1993	Sent all principals copy of the Principals' Partnerships article (Robertson, 1992)
2- 5 March 1993	Phoned all principals to discuss letter and article and to make a visiting time
4-15 March 1993	Visited all principals
	Field Data sheets given to principals to fill in and return
17-21 March 1993	Individual letters and articles relating to area of interest for professional development sent to all principals
7 April 1993	Full group session—9/12 attended
	Ginny Lee—Peer-assisted leadership consultant from USA works with principals
	The context interview
	The leadership framework
17 April 1993	Attended course on Creative Management of Change as own professional development
20 April 1993	Attended ethnography seminar
22 April 1993	Worked with two new partnerships, bringing them up to date with full group session exercises that they had missed
24 April 1993	Letter sent to all Board of Trustees congratulating them on supporting their principals continuing professional development

26-28 April 1993	Phoned all principals to check on progress and whether carried out first visit to each other's schools and remind of full group session
3 May 1993	Full group session—11/12 attended
	Research Ethics
	Guiding principles for partnerships developed
	Received 4/12 cassette reflections
	Reflective interviewing
	Unstructured reflection
30 May—2 June 1993	Made contracts with all principals either by phone or letter
	Returned transcripts of cassette reflections to four principals with individual letter of reflections
1 June 1993	Shadowed the shadower in one school
2 June 1993	Gave individual seminar to principal who missed full group session
7-25 June 1993	Researcher carried out Context Visits to all schools and followed with individual letter and transcripts of discussions
9 June 1993	Sent letters to all principals with Guiding Principles and next full group session meeting time
June/July 1993	All principals shadowed, observed and carried out reflective interviews in each other's schools
4 August 1993	Full group session—9/12 attended
	Giving high quality feedback
	Goal setting
10 -27 August 1993	Visiting all principals in their schools; some individually; some in partnership
	Letters written to all principals
16-24 September 1993	Wrote to four developing pairs of principals to remind them to do another shadow and attend the next full session
	Rang other 2 principals who were then sick or partnerless
September/October 1993	Development of Kit of booklet and tape for supporting of partnership's programme
	Principals continuing with shadowing and reflective interviewing
13 October 1993	Phoned one of each partnership to prompt for full attendance for tomorrow

14 October 1993	Full group session—10/11 attended (one at calf club on postponement day)
	Reflections
	Building partnerships and community. Articulation of values in educational leadership
7-12 November 1993	Phoned all principals
15-30 November 1993	Visited and observed all principals working in partnership
December 1993	Wrote methodology chapter

1994

January 1994	Presented paper on methodology at N.Z.R.E.A. conference
	Met with John Smyth and discussed research process and findings
8 February 1994	Phoned all principals to discuss their plans for 1994 and make interview dates
15-26 February 1994	Interview all principals, type and return all transcripts with personal letter and article in some cases
14 March 1994	Full group session
	Reflective interviewing
	Role plays Action research
28 March 1994	Phoned most of principals again to ask them to keep notes of their process and to prompt them to action before 1 August session when I want them to write about their process.
12 April 1994	Sent all principals an article being submitted to Australian Journal—for comment and discussion
April/May 1994	Principals met in partnerships for shadowing and reflective interviews
June/July 1994	Principals met in partnerships for shadowing and reflective interviews
1 August 1994	Final full group session
	Reflection on two articles—Job-embedded professional development and action research case study
	Issues: Effectiveness Reviews; Individual Contracts
	Final Evaluation
10 September 1994	Letters of thanks to principals and Boards of Trustees
21-30 October 1994	Three case studies written and sent to principals for comment and feedback

APPENDIX H: FIRST LETTER TO PRINCIPALS (PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE)

15 February 1993

Professional Partnerships

Dear

I am pleased that we will again have the opportunity to work together again over the next 18 months. The continuing development of school leadership, and of the teaching and learning programmes in our New Zealand schools, is of paramount concern and interest to us both. Therefore I believe that this research which I am offering you the opportunity to be part of is both exciting and necessary.

The principles of Partnerships are that:

- It is a site-based problem solving approach to principals' professional development...it is therefore concerns-based;
- It is collegial and developmental over time, both within the partnership and within the group;
- Principals can expand and apply their knowledge of administrative practice by reflecting on their own personal experiences as well as reflecting about the experiences of other principals;
- It allows principals to make connections between theory and practice and form links between the multitude of facets of their daily leadership in the school.

I would like to outline in this initial letter what I believe the commitment would be for you, to enable me to carry out this research successfully. It is important that this programme is regarded as top priority in professional development by you and that your Board of Trustees resources it sufficiently for you to make it work well. Your Board of Trustees will be asked to indicate support for your commitment at the final stage of acceptance into the research. The research programme becomes the framework in which all other professional development activities take place.

Your commitment would require:

1. Conducting at least one shadowing visit and reflective interview in your partner's school each term—prioritising these and not letting the hurly burly of school life encroach on your own professional development;
2. Attendance at group meetings once each term. These will incorporate guest speakers on issues of leadership; good professional debate and challenges and opportunities to share the happenings in individual schools, and within Partnerships, as well as to participate in group problem solving activities on current issues within your school;
3. Allowing me to gather field data in the way of information about your school/ staff/ aspirations/ community/ professional goals and personal biography; and then to write and speak about your leadership development in my research (see research ethics attached)
4. Agreeing to let me interview you and observe your shadows, reflective interviews and leadership in the school *on occasion* and utilising the transcripts for the theory of the research. All transcripts of interviews will be sent back to you to vet and change according to your wishes.

5. Agreeing to keep a Process Journal which will contain short reflective comments on issues, developments, thoughts that you believe are of interest to the research as a whole. there will be guidelines/assistance for this. This is part of the reflective process.

This commitment by you brings benefits for you and responsibilities for me. I realise that I don't need to 'sell' Partnerships to you as a tool for professional and leadership development but I would like to note down what I believe are the greatest benefits for you. They are the opportunity to :

1. Look in depth at your personal leadership style and set related personal/professional goals for the current year(s);

2. Share concerns/ issues, innovations with a colleague and receive in-depth feedback and support during the development of these;

3. To enter another school leader's domain and watch them in action—legitimately; therefore having the opportunity to reflect upon your own style of leadership and 'way of doing things' in assisting your partner reflect upon their leadership;

4. Have the input from a group of 12 motivated, excellent school leaders who have joined together for the purpose of their continued growth and leadership development through the achievement of professional goals;

5. Have my professional input as an educational consultant, plus my commitment to your continuing professional development This will ensure access to overviews of current professional literature and research and opportunities to take part in workshops with internationally recognised course leaders and practitioners;

6. Have your own appraisal carried out successfully and educationally in a way which best enhances the learning and teaching programmes in your school.

I hope that I haven't given you so much information that I have put you off. Of paramount importance is that the principals in the research group WILL guide the process—of the time allocation, how they go about their partnership and development; but I have tried to outline the framework within which it fits.

I will phone you next week to discuss any issues and concerns you may have and arrange a time that is suitable for me to visit you at your school.

Yours sincerely

APPENDIX I: FIRST LETTER TO PRINCIPALS (NEW TO PARTNERSHIPS)

Dear

I am pleased to be able to follow up our initial phone call with this letter which outlines in (too much) detail the proposed leadership development research programme that I am offering you the opportunity to be part of over the next 18 months.

The continuing development of school leadership, and of the teaching and learning programmes in our New Zealand schools, is vital. Also the support for school leaders which this programme of *Professional Partnerships* provides is more necessary in this current educational climate than ever before.

Programme:

The research programme will take place over 18 months as follows:

- There will be regular meetings of the full group—one per term. These will incorporate guest speakers on issues of leadership; good professional debate and challenges and opportunities to share the happenings in individual schools, and within Partnerships, as well as to participate in group problem solving activities on current issues within your school;
- There will be individual seminars/consultancy arranged to meet the specific needs of pairs or small groups of principals to help them attain their professional goals. e.g. communicating vision to community; collaborative decisionmaking; the process of change and being a change agent...whatever the professional goals are that you will set for yourself;
- There will be three shadows and reflective interviews by pairs of principals throughout each year—these can be carried out at times to suit yourselves. i.e. staff meeting time, Board of Trustees' meetings, one afternoon or evening;

The principles of Partnerships are that:

- it is a site-based problem solving approach to professional development and it is therefore concerns-based;
- it is collegial and developmental over time;
- principals can expand and apply their knowledge of administrative practice by reflecting on their own personal experiences as well as reflecting about the experiences of other principals;
- it allows principals to make connections between theory and practice and form links between the multitude of facets of their daily leadership in the school.

The intent is to provide opportunities for practicing principals to observe one another, discuss their observations and to gain new insights about their leadership practices.

I would like to outline in this initial letter what I believe the commitment would be for you, to enable me to carry out this research successfully. It is important that this programme is regarded as top priority in professional development by you and that your Board of Trustees resources it sufficiently for you to make it work well. Your Board of Trustees will be asked to indicate support for your commitment at the final stage of acceptance into the research. The research programme becomes the framework in which all other professional development activities take place.

Your commitment would require:

1. Conducting at least one shadowing visit and reflective interview in your partner's school each term—prioritising these and not letting the hurly burly of school life encroach on your own professional development;
2. Attendance at group meetings once each term. These will incorporate guest speakers on issues of leadership; good professional debate and challenges and opportunities to share the happenings in individual schools, and within Partnerships, as well as to participate in group problem solving activities on current issues within your school;
3. Allowing me to gather field data in the way of information about your school/ staff/ aspirations/ community/ professional goals and personal biography; and then to write and speak about your leadership development in my research (see research ethics attached);
4. Agreeing to let me interview you and observe your shadows, reflective interviews and leadership in the school *on occasion* and utilising the transcripts for the theory of the research. All transcripts of interviews will be sent back to you to vet and change according to your wishes;
5. Agreeing to keep a Process Journal which will contain short reflective comments on issues, developments, thoughts that you believe are of interest to the research as a whole. there will be guidelines/assistance for this. This is part of the reflective process.

This commitment by you brings benefits for you and responsibilities for me. I believe that some of the greatest benefits for you are the opportunity to:

a) Look in depth at your personal leadership style and set related personal/professional goals for the current year(s);

b) Share concerns/ issues, innovations with a colleague and receive in-depth feedback and support during the development of these;

c) To enter another school leader's domain and watch them in action—legitimately; therefore having the opportunity to reflect upon your own style of leadership and 'way of doing things' in assisting your partner reflect upon their leadership;

d) Have the input from a group of 12 motivated, excellent school leaders who have joined together for the purpose of their continued growth and leadership development through the achievement of professional goals;

e) Have my professional input as an educational consultant, plus my commitment to your continuing professional development This will ensure access to overviews of current professional literature and research and opportunities to take part in workshops with internationally recognised course leaders and practitioners;

f) Have your own appraisal carried out successfully and educationally in a way which best enhances the learning and teaching programmes in your school.

I hope that I haven't given you so much information that I have put you off. Of paramount importance is that the principals in the research group will guide the process—of the time allocation, how they go about their partnership and development; but I have tried to outline the framework within which it fits.

I will phone you next week to discuss any issues and concerns you may have and arrange a time that is suitable for me to visit you at your school. Do take the opportunity to phone your proposed partner before that time and see how they feel about the research programme being offered. Associate Professor Peter Ramsay and Professor Noeline Alcorn will be supervisors for this research.

Yours sincerely

APPENDIX J: FORMAL LETTER OF ACCEPTANCE TO RESEARCH

15 March 1993

Dear

This letter is to formally offer you the opportunity to be involved in my research programme over the next 18 months—to October 1994. I hope that you feel you have a good overview of the project and feel confident and excited about the prospect of undertaking fulfilling professional development during that time.

You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time because I am working for you and want you to feel in charge of the input that I offer. The 12 principals in this research (see attached list) will help set the directions that we take within the framework of the literature and the related research that I share with you.

I require from you a short letter stating the following:

a) Your proposed commitment for 18 months;

b) Your recognition of the right to withdraw at any time;

c) Your understanding of the requirements of the project.

This project offers you the opportunity to become more reflective about your practice, to engage in professional dialogue with colleagues and to develop improved strategies.

Your first group session will be on 7 April from 1—4.00pm and will be with an international consultant from the Far West Laboratory in San Francisco who has worked with school leaders in a Partnerships' programme for the last five years. This will be an exciting session and also our first opportunity to meet as a full group and learn more about how the programme can develop for each of you.

You should have all received the initial field data on each of the schools and principals that I am working with. Some of the information you may be able to photocopy from your Charter statements. Please bring this completed to our first group session if you haven't already posted it.

Don't forget, you will also have the right to delete/wipe anything that you feel is detrimental (or not what you meant to say) to you/ your partner or school and community before anything is used for publication with a wider audience. Everything is treated anonymously and with the greatest loyalty and respect to you as one of our valued school leaders.

I look forward to hearing from you as soon as possible with the letter and the field data.

Yours sincerely

APPENDIX K: LETTER TO BOARDS OF TRUSTEES

Dear Board Members

I am pleased to welcome your principal to an 18 month research contract that I am conducting on leadership development, appraisal and support for school principals with the assistance of a professional colleague. Your principal is one of 12 who have been selected for this group.

The programme was trialed last year with 43 educational leaders in the region and the findings were exciting in terms of growth and support of these principals. I believe that this year will have even greater benefits.

The programme requires the principals to 'shadow' each other once each term and to set professional goals and work towards achieving these. They conduct reflective interviews and gain new perspectives into their role and the way they carry out their responsibilities within the school.

Also the group meets as a whole group once each term to share innovations and developments, strategies for dealing with educational issues and to participate in professional development opportunities. I work as a consultant with all of the principals in their schools and at group meetings throughout the duration of the research at no additional cost to your school.

I would like to thank you for supporting your principal in this professional development opportunity and I am certain that your school will realise many benefits. I would also like to offer your school $300 towards Teacher Release Days to assist your principal in leaving the school to attend sessions. Could you please send me an invoice for this amount stating that it is for Teacher Release Days for Principals' Professional Development?

Thanking you once again. It is excellent to work with Boards of Trustees who recognise that the most valuable resource in their school are the teachers, especially the principal.

Yours sincerely

Jan Robertson

Director—Educational Leadership Centre

Senior Lecturer—Professional Studies Department

APPENDIX L: ETHICS STATEMENT

3 May 1993

I, Jan Robertson, as researcher and professional colleague will sincerely treat all information given to me as confidential. I will not state or publish anything that could be detrimental to a colleague's personal/professional career, or damaging to their particular community. This includes cassette transcripts, written reflections, and my own observations. I will abide by the NZARE code of Ethics.

We, the principals, will abide by the N.Z.E.I. Code of Ethics and will keep in confidence all information received from our partner or other principals in this group.

APPENDIX M: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The principals who met together on 3 May 1993 felt that the following principles were important for principals who were involved in professional partnerships for leadership development and support.

They felt that the principals should:

1. Be open to new ideas. and new ways of doing things.

2. Be non-judgmental when discussing their partner's leadership style and ways of doing things.

3. Be aware of the importance of confidentiality between partners and within the larger group sessions between partners.

4. Be reflective, and prompt reflection; not be advice giving.

5. Keep factual records.

6. Share notes with the partner concerned.

7. Prioritise the times spent together and not let other things encroach.

8. Ensure that the day of the shadow visit continues as near to normally as possible.

9. Have an uninterrupted session in which to talk and reflect on the shadow as soon as possible after the shadow has been carried out, preferably the same day.

PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF YOU FEEL THAT WE HAVE OVERLOOKED ANYTHING

APPENDIX N: EDUCATIONAL PLATFORMS

There are 10 major ingredients that should be included in any educational platform. It often helps to write these down to help to clarify them.

1. The aims of education—a general statement; then, in order of priority, the three most important aims of education for the youngsters in this school.

   General:

   The three most important aims:

   a)

   b)

   c)

2. Major achievements of students this year: (the ones you specifically deal with)
3. The social significance of the student's learning: for entering world of work? Or good citizenship? Or cultural heritage of our civilisation?
4. The image of the learner: What are your assumptions about how one learns? An empty vessel? All the same?
5. The value of the curriculum: what are your attitudes about the value of parts of the curriculum?
6. The image of the teacher: what is your view about the role of the teacher?
7. The preferred kind of teaching style: Teacher dominates; fostering inquiry; discipline
8. The kind of language used in learning situations: can you describe it?
9. The preferred kind of teacher-student relationship:
10. The preferred kind of school climate:
11. The image of parents: Another increasingly important part of an educational platform in New Zealand is the relationship with parents. What images do you have about parents involvement in the education process?

Reference: Sergiovanni, T. J. & Starratt, R. J. (1979) Supervision: Human Perspectives. USA: McGraw-Hill.

APPENDIX O: EXAMPLES OF ACTION RESEARCH

EXAMPLE ONE:

Cycle One:

Principal attends a January course with partner where they discuss goal setting, monitoring progress, achieving community visions for school.

Definition of problem: How do I know how good *our* school is?

Diagnostic phase

Data collection: Reads literature; talks with other principals and own staff; discusses with school advisers.

Diagnosis and planning: Decides to take content of course to staff and devote teacher only day to this discussion. Sets up folders of material. Plans Teacher Only Day around material.

Intervention phase

Action and observation: Holds the Teacher Only Day with staff. invites Jan along to take part in discussion and provide some observations and outside perspectives to staff.

Reflection: Staff hold varying views on what information should be monitored and who should receive what information. Reflects that there is a lot of variance within the school and sees that unity of purpose among staff must be achieved along with careful monitoring of the progress through the years. Re-reads relevant documents. Talks to partner. Wonders what parents really expect from this school.

Cycle Two:

Redefinition of problem: How good do the parents think the school is? What are their expectations?

Diagnostic phase

Data collection: Surveys staff at staff meeting to see what they believe are the most important things for children at this school. Staff all then go away and individually write their own assessment of what they felt children should achieve in every curriculum area by the time they leave this school. Uses same survey form and sends to all parents.

Diagnosis and planning: On receiving surveys back from teachers and parents, meets with partner and discusses findings. Researcher visits as well and discussion of future

action plans takes place. Decides to compile all the data under the headings of the questions and take back to staff to show what staff believe on one side and what parents believe on the other.

Intervention phase

Action and observation: Holds another staff meeting and asks staff to compare with what the parents are expecting with their own expectations. much discussion, debate and celebration.

Reflection: Where are the widest gaps between what staff and community expect? Are we able to demonstrate the progress of children in this school? What do other schools and communities feel is important? How do they monitor it? discussion with partner. Where do we go from here?

Cycle Three:

Redefinition of problem: How do we develop performance objectives from these consultations?

Diagnostic phase

Data collection: what are performance objectives and how are they developed uniquely for each school? what performance objectives do we have in place? What others do we need? Which ones do we already monitor effectively?

Diagnosis and planning: Compares school and community expectations again. Discusses with partner who has also surveyed community. Rings adviser and asks about next steps. Faxes him a copy of their 8-page report on the goals for their school. Decides to have joint staff meeting with staff of partner's school with adviser to facilitate discussion to help each staff develop performance objectives.

Intervention phase

Action and observation: Joint staff meeting. Almost last week of year. Share different community expectations. Good debate with different perspectives on what is important. develop performance objectives. Staff really motivated and enjoyed the social gathering.

Reflection: The new curriculum framework and contract work means many staff are involved in developments in 94. What are the linkages between these performance objectives and the framework? How can we report to parents on the findings and the progress we have made? How will these discussions enhance the Education Review Office visits imminent in 1994?

EXAMPLE TWO

Cycle One:

Definition of problem: the announcement of an effectiveness review in 4 weeks time. How do we best portray what is happening in this school?

Diagnostic phase

Data collection: Meeting with senior staff and two of the reviewers. Asked us to nominate five or six curriculum areas where we felt we could celebrate some success. Also decided to focus on assessment and evaluation as a result of the previous review and the work of the contract that the school had been involved in. Re-read previous review. Discussed with staff the expectations of the visit.

Diagnosis and planning: Discussed upcoming Education Review Office visit with partner. Discussed the initial review he had in his school. Asked him to be present on the day of the principal's interview.

Intervention phase

Action and observation: Education Review Office visit the school. Partner attends on the day of the principal's interview. Specific focus: how well do I project an image of a principal who knows what is going on in the place? What were the positive points of the interview and what areas did not go quite so well?

Reflection: partner provides written feedback on the observations at the interview (see Appendix Q). How do we continue to fine tune our assessment and evaluation? How well will the report demonstrate the true picture of education at this school? What have been other principals' experiences?

Cycle Two

Redefinition of problem: report is not an accurate statement of fact. What can be done about it?

Diagnostic phase

Data collection: Discussion with other principals and Education Review Office personnel at New Zealand Education Institute conference. Discussion with partner. Discussion with board of trustees.

Diagnosis and planning: How can it be the whole board of trustees fault—lay people that they are—that things can't be shown? How educationally sound is this? Decides that: most of the things they were looking for were in the new curriculum areas; that the school was working hard at bringing in a whole new system of assessment and evaluation which was still developing; and how can lay people have full legal responsibility for something that they really have no hand in? Decides to write letter

to Education Review Office outlining the concerns and stating that the school is unwilling to accept the report written in that vein.

Intervention phase

Action and observation: Writes letter to Education Review Office. Receives phone call from Chief Executive Officer. Reviewers visit school again to debate and discuss issues. New report is sent to school which meets with principal approval.

Reflection: As educational leaders it is important to only accept things which are in the best interest for children's learning. This has had an effect nationally on the reporting of effectiveness reviews as reflected at next principals' meeting that Chief Executive Officer then visited...how then can we go on from here and improve learning in this school? It must not just be data collection for data collection's sake.

Cycle Three:

Redefinition of problem: We need to be aware that we need to show the added-value over two years, and that we can use that recorded data to improve the quality of instruction to add even more value. How can we do this?

Diagnostic phase

Data collection: what is happening now? Who has responsibility for which curriculum areas? What are the areas for specific focus in 1994?

Diagnosis and planning: a need to further develop curriculum leadership. Discussion with partner of plans for this in 1994. Decide to hold joint curriculum leadership development day with senior staff of both schools.

APPENDIX P: EVALUATION OF RESEARCH

1 AUGUST 1994

WRITTEN REFLECTIONS (Confidential)

Name:_____

1. Tell me how you would explain this research (that you have been involved in) to somebody who asked about it.

2. If you look back now what are the most important things that have happened to you over the past 18 months?

3. What are the greatest limitations/weaknesses of this type of collegial professional development?

4. What are the benefits of it for a principal?

5. Do you have any plans to continue with your present partner or to re-establish a different partnership in the future? Why? Why not?

6. Anything else you would like to add.

APPENDIX Q: EXAMPLE OF OBSERVATIONAL FEEDBACK

Warts 'n all Sample of Shadowing Record.
Note "Good Idea" additions!

Creating a Shadowing Record

1. Record observable events without making inferences or judgments
2. Summarize conversations, noting key words and phrases
3. Describe physical settings and the nonverbal features of interactions
4. Include time notations
5. Include people's names
6. Go back through your notes at the completion of the shadow to fill in any missing information

0820 - DP Meeting: Discussion re acceptance of student [Guided discussion but did not intervene]
0830(ish) - Preparation for Assembly [Guidance given to new Student Council team. Explanation of Fund-raising scheme.]
0915: Call to Principal (Cont. Primary)
Discussion re Bi-lingual class.
0960: Interview with students [Close eye contact] - sympathetic but positively firm approach - positive suggestions + challenges but left them with knowledge that they would be watched.
10:00: Discussion on staff management - need for humour as a component
1015 D.P.'s: Discuss problem with pupil (Joanne) Analysis of problem through looking at the nature of the students concerned. Complimented DP on providing a different viewpoint.
1105 Jan A R# Re application for Trusted Class" status. Outlined
1120: Disc" with class tchr re Casey
Joanne: listened to Tchr's students account of incident (listens attentively) Offered further involvement - asked for

Nic Kelly Sales Director
KT Footwear
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Papatoetoe
Auckland.

$35:00 each for 10 pairs

hyrne Picture problem-solving
Resource-based.

Trusted Class
1/2 Sch rules
for inside at
interval 1/hour
D/Tchr removes
label - off for a certain
time - clear rules
for stated

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Epilogue

As the reader will now be aware I did not meet the demands of a critical theory study. I had high aspirations but these were not fulfilled or clearly detailed or developed in the report. My use of the terms 'emancipation' and 'praxis' lacked depth and this study was not 'critical theory' as defined by Bleicher, (1980), Connerton, (1975), Cox (1980), Fay (1977), Grundy (1993), Habermas (1974), Thompson, (1981) and others. I also did not clearly demonstrate to readers of the report how reflexivity was achieved and therefore must withdraw from that claim.

In the prologue I mentioned that there were many difficulties in attempting a critical theory study in an area such as presented in this report. The first difficulty was the political climate that principals were operating in. It effectively silenced them through their feelings of isolation and vulnerability to the community in which they worked.
As already stated I doubt if these principals would have joined the research if they had felt this research had a critical theory agenda. Given Cox's (1980) definition of that field I would concur that my research study is more appropriately placed elsewhere, but it is necessary to understand the context in which the research took place to understand though, why some components of critical theory were used and why critical theory in the Cox (1980) sense would not have been easy to undertake. While an account is given on pages 7-10 of the thesis report of the changes in New Zealand education, the intensity of the situation is probably understated. These climatic conditions affected the journey the principals and I took in this research study.

The Climate

From the beginning of the reforms to education administration in New Zealand in 1989 it was evident that they were being swept along in a wave of general reform based on the writings of the American economist Milton Friedman (1962). Put in simple terms, these reforms, in the public and private sectors in New Zealand, were typified by the concept of "free market" where the market determines what is needed, where good businesses survive and poor ones go under. It is based on competitiveness between providers. Thus part of the philosophy was that even in the public sectors, such as in education and in health, there must be a purchaser as well as providers. The education reforms were based on the principles of choice and "user-pays" amid debates of whether education was a private or a public good. There were many elements of the educational climate at the time of this research that have been highlighted by writers and researchers. The thrust of neo-liberalism through the New Right (for example, Grace, 1990; Maharey, 1989; Snook, 1995; Wilkes, 1989), and the growing gap between rich and poor schools

(Gordon, 1993) were key themes. The influence of Treasury papers (The Treasury, 1987) which suggested inter alia a lessening of state intervention in education and moves to privatisation and voucher systems for schools were also apparent at this time. Further to that, there was a managerial discourse which argued that New Zealand school principals should be the managers of their schools rather than the educational leaders (Codd, 1990). There were contradictory discourses (Codd, 1993). For example, the Government's policy document, Tomorrow's Schools, stated that professional leadership was the role that school leaders were expected to take (Lange[1], 1988) and Ballard and Duncan (1988) from the Implementation Unit had outlined a similar role. However, a mere six months after the introduction of the administrative reforms to education in New Zealand, the Government commissioned a major review of the reforms, chaired by the ex-secretary of the Treasury (Noel Lough) and included members from the Treasury, the State Services Commission and the Ministry of Education. This committee (commonly referred to as the Lough Committee) argued that principals should refrain from wanting to be instructional leaders of their schools. In their evaluation of the new administrative system the committee criticised the fact that principals were still trying to identify "as professional leaders rather than managers" (Committee to Review the Implementation of Education Reform in New Zealand, 1990, p. 18). This was followed by a change of Government, as well as the Minister of Education, and further moves towards a New Right ideology on the appropriate role for school leaders were apparent. Again just six months after the Lough Report, came the report commissioned by the Business Round Table, the Sexton Report, which gave further support to managerialism. Sexton was from the British New Right - an "expert" brought in to review the reforms. He found the idea of the system of Boards of Trustees seriously flawed and believed they should have more "power, responsibility and means of total management" (Sexton, 1990, p. 23).

As my study progressed, I, became increasingly concerned that many New Zealand principals would accept, without much questioning, this management paradigm. My earlier research had revealed that principals were finding it very difficult to think about educational leadership when working on such managerial terrain (Robertson, 1991). In my view, Codd (1990) was correct in asserting that "the terrain of education is being subjected to an oppressive ideological onslaught" (p. 19). As noted above he referred to this as the ideology of managerialism. Constant policy changes, responsibilities for funding and budgeting, along with changed and unclear roles, were new sources of dissatisfaction identified by principals (Wylie, 1992). The schools were now market driven and principals believed that competition was being fostered between school communities.

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[1] The Hon. David Lange was the Prime Minister (of the Labour Government) and the Minister of Education at the time of the reforms to education administration in New Zealand.

During these first years of the education reforms in New Zealand principals and Boards of Trustees were suffering from a deluge of paper and the learning curves for the new roles and responsibilities were too great for many (see McConnell and Jeffries, 1991; Ramsay, Harold, Hawk, Kaai, Marriott & Poskitt, 1990; Robertson, 1991; Wylie, 1989). Principals felt their workload had become too heavy (Wylie, 1989). School principals were thrust into new roles and responsibilities for which they had little prior knowledge and minimal training. Unfortunately, too, two sources of support service to schools, the Department of Education and local Education Boards along with the Inspectorate, had been disestablished. It had been hoped that the teacher advisory services would fill that gap but they were never given sufficient resourcing to be able to fully meet these needs (Ramsay, 1992). The environment in which the principals were working became increasingly inimical to professional development and school development projects were under threat (Edwards, 1991a). Later research found that principals were, on their own account, "beginning to show signs of strain in maintaining the higher workload involved in school self-management" (Wylie, 1994, p. 66). Principals experienced an isolation from each other and claimed a loss of confidence and a decline in job satisfaction. Statistical evidence revealed that twice as many principals than in previous times, left the profession in 1994 (New Zealand Principals' Federation, 1995).

The speed of change in the reform of education administration was unrelenting. Research during the first year found that principals had felt that the process had been "rushed and contradictory" and that "there was an increasing emphasis upon the management role of the principal with a corresponding decrease in professional leadership" (McConnell & Jeffries, 1991, p. 5). The principals were so busy reacting to the new demands placed on them that I felt they were in danger of being caught with their heads down with no time to climb the tallest tree (Covey, 1995) to see what was happening to their role as school principals and what was happening to the quality of schooling in New Zealand.

This, then, was the context at the beginning of the present study. This was an environment in which Snook, (1995) suggested that a top-down hierarchical model derived from business was deemed more appropriate than what had been traditional in schools. An environment was being created in which "government and business have suggested that partnership is a crazy goal and mutual antagonism preferable" (Snook, 1995, p. 67). Doing critical theory in such a climate would have been very difficult, even dangerous for the participants, although perhaps, very necessary.

What I aimed to do in this environment was to develop a model of professional development that would create a challenge to habitual ways of knowing and practising. This would be achieved through critical reflection on practice. The model would provide structures that would support the principals at this time, assist them to theorise

their practice and to recapture their focus on leadership (Giroux, 1983). Wylie's (1994) research concluded that "it is not clear whether New Zealand education can continue to rely on people carrying such loads without some relief" (p. 140). It was hoped that the model of professional development developed in the present study would go some way to providing some relief for the 12 principals involved in the research. I believed, along with Edwards (1991b), Sergiovanni (1992) and Southworth (1995), that the way these principals viewed their primary task and their school would ultimately affect how successful their school was, and ultimately the quality of education in New Zealand. Ramsay (1992. p. 17) also had this belief. He stated:

> If research has one message to tell us, it is that the quality learning in our schools depends very much on the professional qualities of our school leaders. My greatest single fear is that as principals have moved away from their professionalism to an understanding of the mysteries of Apple Mac and of the accounting data bases, that we will lose the genuine thrust of New Zealand education.

Southworth's study on school leaders in England had found that the principals were "individually caught up in the managerial 'web' of ideas because they had never been offered a substantial opportunity to critically reflect upon their own assumptions about leadership" (Southworth, 1993, p. 83). I had felt there was a particular role for me as a researcher in assisting school leaders to refocus on educational leadership and that it would be both "a political and social action" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 152). However, as earlier stated there was the issue of whether this was achieved in this study. It will have been obvious to readers that my aspirations were not met. The principals were (initially anyway), as I was (initially also), looking for ways to operate more effectively within the prevailing order, hence a problem-solving orientation as defined by Cox (1980) is more appropriate for this study.

The second major difficulty was that it was probably beyond the scope of a doctoral student, operating alone in the field, within limits of time, to achieve a critical study in which changes in the prevailing order of power relations was the intent. With a research team, with more grounded theory studies in leadership, with further experience in attempting critical theory, perhaps the procedures and resulting outcomes might have been more radical. However, in my position and within the educational climate described above, I was also effectively "muzzled" by the reform processes.

Thirdly, everything took much longer than I first believed that it would. The process of change is complicated and problematic. The job conditions for school principals were inimical to this type of study and to get these principals to be open to change and delve into themselves to examine values and beliefs was a complex process. As one principal said (on page 283 of the report) "...before you are going to change, you have to want to

change." This summed up the research process of professional development with these principals. They had to see a need for change before they would change, and often I had to use my presence as a researcher to get them to try new ways of working and then reflect on its effectiveness. They would not necessarily change or adopt new behaviours because I asked them to. The impetus for change, for political action needed to come from them and this has led me to much further reflection on how to develop principals and teachers who are "change agents" (Fullan, 1993) and how to develop critically reflective leaders or "resisting individuals" (Giroux, 1986, p. 39) when school leaders are products of a system that does not encourage critique and challenge. It also made me ponder on the concept of indoctrination in relation to research methodology.

My difficulties in actually developing a "community of researchers" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986) are outlined on page 269 of the report where I intimate that perhaps this concept is antithetical to practitioners' ways of working. While I tried to take the route to critical theory, and while there were some signposts pointing to it, it was never fully achieved. This is a pity, for perhaps that is what is really needed if the movement towards "New Right" philosophies in education is to be resisted.

If reflexivity was achieved in this research, it was not developed sufficiently within the report to be convincing. The reciprocity and interactive interviewing approach that I used in the research was not given sufficient attention in the writing of the report. A natural sharing of similar concerns, personal worries about children, professional worries about my research, being willing to be questioned on my proposed career path and "where to" after the research, were very much a part of my approach and if highlighted would have given some depth and credibility to a claim on reflexivity being achieved.

Not shown is how the researcher was herself researched by the participants, an aspect Gouldner (1970) would claim as being imperative in a reflexive study. Perhaps this is only possible in groups where the community of researchers are all colleagues with similar positions in education. To these principals, I was the researcher, they were the practising principals. They did not show any real desire to research me, even though I would have been open to it, as pointed out on page 78 of the methodology of the research study. The principals were given opportunities to research my intent as they were encouraged to read and discuss the critical theorems that I was developing from the research and in all of the interactive interviewing, but very little occurred.

Only hinted at again on page 273 of the report is the effect that the research process has had on me and my theoretical positioning. If this addendum had been a part of the original document, as a study on a study, then it would have indicated a level of reflexivity had been achieved. Therefore a claim to reflexivity being achieved has been unsubstantiated in the research study.

As will be completely transparent to the reader there were many changes and misunderstandings and contradictions in my theoretical location as I struggled to meet the needs of these principals in this research study. I definitely started with the sound liberal/ progressive belief that would have located this thesis somewhere in the human relations orientation. If the inference was that this study was in the radical tradition, then that is completely withdrawn. It was not so much that a radical tradition was a part of the research agenda but a realisation of how powerful the model would have been if it was critically based and how a more radical agenda would have been followed if one had been used. I wrestled with this perspective throughout the study. This will be developed further in the last section of this epilogue when I explore my own journey.

So what did I achieve with the 12 principals in the research group?

The principals' journey

I found it very difficult to politicise these principals. As other researchers have found (Smyth, 1994) the "politics of fear" had effectively "muzzled" them. Getting them beyond the facade they kept in place for their colleagues and allowing another principal to observe them in action in the school, openly and honestly, was much more difficult than first imagined. To get them this far was a major achievement.

As recorded on pages 16 and 17 (and examples are given on pages 140-142 of the study), I was always ideologically open with these principals by sharing my concerns about what was happening to school leadership in New Zealand and elsewhere and what I believed was important for school leaders to focus on. I made no secret that the reason I wanted to establish partnerships and develop a community of researchers was because of my concern about the impact of the reforms on school leaders' ability to be able to retain the role of educational leader. I worried constantly about my role in this research and what part I could ethically play in helping these principals to become more aware of the social and political forces behind the reforms. Part of the journey described in the prologue was a movement from progressive liberalism to aspects of critical theory. Left alone these principals would not have been the professional leaders with a focus on educational matters and the improvement of learning in their schools. Left in a progressive-liberal field with no alternative routes signposted and signalled, this study would have been less rich. The principals and I may have been seen to be in a position of seeming to support the change if we had not critiqued the effects of managerialism and kept the focus on educational leadership as the primary role for school leaders. The principals found it easier to reflect on managerial matters than on areas concerned with the social order.

However, while the report may not have made it clear, after being in this study, all of the principals were at least aware of what the political social situation was and how it affected their ability to continue to be educational leaders. A number of them learned about the "New Right" beliefs and had a greater knowledge of the possible effects of their views on educational policy. Certainly all knew about the cult of managerialism by the end of the study. Some had even begun to resist it. This is one of the things that I have not brought out strongly enough in the report. There are hints of this occurring (for example, on pp. 142, 268, 270) but a deeper search of data indicates that there were examples of the issues of immediacy that could have been developed further. Towards the end of the study I realised how fully the issues of immediacy could develop into national issues and political action. A statement in one of Smyth's earlier studies (1986) had particular relevance to me at this time. He said:

> Emancipatory practice has as its basis a need for these different perspectives to challenge habitual ways of knowing and acting. Critical reflection on current issues and concerns, no matter how minor, leads to issues of greater bearing on education as a whole. By teachers starting with issues that have immediacy, relevance and practicality for them it is possible to bring to the surface larger questions for scrutiny that address the philosophical issues embedded in teaching practices.
>
> (Smyth, 1986, p. 42)

In fact, one principal did take his issue of immediacy further and brought to the surface larger questions for scrutiny. He objected to the wording in his Education Review Office report which he felt would ultimately damage the quality of learning programmes in his school and elsewhere in New Zealand if left unchallenged, to the regional level - and then onto the national level where he rallied support from other Intermediate principals at their conference, and got changes made to the Education Review Office processes that were more professionally satisfactory to him and his colleagues. "Changing educational practices and institutions, therefore not only requires the involvement of practitioners in changing their practices, but also in confronting the constraints on their action. The strength of reaction to considered change often surprises action researchers; they often feel as though the process has suddenly 'become political' (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 206). This is what happened to the principal in the case study outlined on pages 201-207 of the thesis report. This principal did become (much to his own surprise) a political activist, making change in policy documents and subsequent wording of school review reports at the national level. The changes most other principals made were of lesser moment. They may be summarised as follows.

Two principals worked together in their own local communities to develop a shared educational vision for the children of that particular school community. They consulted with staff, community, children and sought outside expert advice to guide them in their

collaborative action research processes. They attended a summer course together and then assisted each other to work through their own individual processes by shadowing each others' leadership actions and giving evaluative feedback on professional goals, by conducting reflective interviews and planning together future actions, by sharing professional development activities with the two school staffs combined.

Another pair of principals decided to work together on a shared unit of study with the staff and children from both schools involved. They planned the unit together, had combined staff meetings, and the children and parents of the two communities worked collaboratively in both schools to achieve their professional goals.

Yet another pair of principals decided to work together to develop their senior management team. They released their deputy principals from duties to work shadow each other. They conducted shared senior staff meetings. In a climate of competition between schools these types of examples were highlights in the research.

One pair of senior principals moved more slowly in the change process and were just beginning to see the signs of benefits of the model near to the end of the research period (see page 171 of the research report). The other two pairs were affected by loss of partners and sickness and their process of change was not as marked as in the other pairs.

The findings highlighted their changed behaviours. In summary, what were the new behaviours and changes these principals made?

- The principals had all, most importantly, refocussed on educational leadership as their primary role in their schools.

- They had changed some of their practices (e.g. ways of conducting Board of Trustee and staff meetings) at the local level and they reflected on them.

- They had legitimate access to observation of a colleague's practice, as occurs in other professions, such as medicine and counselling.

- The principals did not maintain a bluff exterior about not requiring any assistance but demonstrated an openness to development within the research group.

- The principals respected all voices in the research group, irrespective of the amount of experience, and there was no hierarchy apparent in this group.

- The principals demonstrated that reflection on and in practice was actually occurring.

- The principals heard more varied perspectives than they would normally hear in principals' groups.

- The principals each had a professional partnership which gave support at Education Review Office Effectiveness Reviews and Board of Trustee meetings and on the school site at staff meetings and with other professional developments they were involved in.

- The principals initiated other professional interactions between staff of their schools.

- The principals enjoyed the collegiality, sharing and support from their professional colleagues in the research group.

- The principals were receiving evaluative feedback on their leadership practice.

- The principals were beginning to use collaborative action research to set and achieve school goals.

Most importantly the principals in the study began to focus more fully on what they believed was most important for them in their role as educational leaders of their schools. One senior principal said to me "I'm buckling at refusing to fall in line with accruals and all these things that they are wanting us to do." When I asked another urban school leader whether he reflected more on what was happening to school leaders in New Zealand generally because of the study he replied rather morosely to me (in field notes only - not reported in study):

> All the time. I fear for them. I think that we will just end up as administrators. There are five [principals in Hamilton] off on stress leave already this year ... but as New Zealand principals I believe we are not going to sit back and take it and there will come a time when we will kick back.

He stated that the partnership's programme had assisted him to realise this. The principals were all aware of the rhetoric and policies which were dividing and isolating them from their colleagues. One principal put it this way (in field notes only - not reported in study):

> We all have come through teaching where there was sharing and you worked together and I believe strongly that the Government is trying to change that. So we are becoming much more competitive. But we say we don't want it that way.

Her rural partner responded in agreement.

> Yes and that is the sad thing. It is happening out here in the country. There is competitiveness between schools and it is a big change in a whole lot of things. It is wrecking a neat system.

They stated, however, that their partnership had helped them to hold onto their feelings of collegiality and collaboration. The partnership appeared to strengthen the bonds of collegiality. As already noted, the links between schools grew as a result of the principals partnerships - joint staff meetings; shared units of work; shared development of senior staff. In these ways the philosophy of partnership and collegial development was not only pervasive between schools but within schools as well. On page 207 of the report one principal is cited as saying:

> It is fully accepted that this [Partnership] is a part of this school and a part of what we do. And if I am talking about something [we will do], my partner's school will often be suggested [by other staff].

Given the educational climate, these were quite considerable achievements by the principals. Of course, as has been admitted several times, they are modest when viewed in the light of the need to challenge the existing social order. As Cox (1980) has stated, this was an excellent example of problem-solving which gave these principals ways of working within the existing order which resolved their frustrations and anxieties.

The principals' journeys were unique and varied. They all reached different destinations, they all took different routes along the way, they all took wrong turns and right turns but most importantly, they reflected on the turns they took and planned future routes in the light of this reflection. They started with the small issues but this led them to reflect on larger issues as they had their view of the world challenged by the processes of the research. Therefore, there was a definite link between the principals' continual learning journey and my own as I searched for new ways of working within this group as the principals faced new dilemmas and challenges to their practice.

The conclusions to the research make no indications of it being a critical theory study. The liberal-humanistic interpretive framework is apparent here. I stated on page 284:

> These principals needed a conscience (partner) and a guide (academic researcher) in order to carry out the professional development programme. The principals needed to be supported and encouraged as well as challenged in their professional development activities for changes in behaviour to occur. Outside perspectives are paramount in the change process.

To be a critical study (Cox, 1980) there would need to be reference to the intent of the researcher to change the power relations within education administration and the social world, and there was not. At best, this study made some indications of the route to take to get school leaders to become more critically reflective about their practice and education generally. Perhaps this then could lead into a more critical study if it was not curtailed at that point.

So just as the principals' progress through this research can be likened to a continual journey of self-development and learning, so too was mine, and still continues to be.

My Journey

The conducting of this research and subsequent writing of the report, prologue and epilogue have been learning adventures with many challenges, before, during and after the research was completed. As McWilliam (1993) stated, I found that it was indeed a difficult task to write a doctoral dissertation during a time of "galloping theory" when the challenges to and disagreements about traditional notions of developing and interpreting theory were abundant. The atlas of educational theory was not neat and tidy and there were many different interpretations as to what were the best routes to take. As Gibson (1986, p.3) stated "it is vital to grasp from the outset that there is no such thing as unified critical theory. Rather, there are critical theories." Carr and Kemmis (1986, p. 131) have also stated that "...it needs to be recognised that the term "critical theory" can be interpreted in various ways. In a similar vein, Bronner (1994) stated that we must recognise the fluid character of critical theory; that it is no longer identifiable with any school but that its continued relevance depends upon the willingness to confront old assumptions from the standpoint of new conditions. Lather (1992) and Yeatman (1992) both talk about postmodern critical theorising.

The most important aspect of the use of the action research process to reach my destination was that later actions were made based on previous reflection and analysis. When this was combined with a continuous reading of current literature, paradigmatic changes were likely to occur and indeed did, as I crossed several paradigmatic borders, as readers will have been aware as they read through the thesis report. This process of continual review has highlighted my own multiple perspectives from liberal-humanistic, critical theory and postmodern discourses, and my movement around each of these from 1992 - 1995 as I conducted the research.

Why was this so? The principals' problems and dilemmas changed dramatically throughout the research and I searched for answers and new explanations, and indeed new theoretical underpinnings with which to work more effectively with the group of principals. Much of the literature on the change process that I had studied had not dealt with the issues these New Zealand principals were facing. Very little had been posited on principals' issues in the New Zealand context. I selected components from critical theory and explored these concepts with the intent of helping these principals resist the New Right. I had long discussions with colleagues about the dilemmas the principals were facing and as I listened to the principals' explanations as to was what occurring, and continued with a review of the literature, I developed subsequent actions in the light of this. Action research processes do not lend themselves towards a tidy depiction of methodology and findings and researchers find themselves wallowing around in the field as they simultaneously gather and analyse data. It is difficult to depict the resulting theory when it is constantly evolving over a long period of time. McWilliam (1993) summed this up when she said that "depicting theory as a tidy point of embarkation and results-as-findings as a convenient point of disembarkation misconstrues the reflexive nature of educational enquiry and the epistemological assumptions within which it locates itself" (p. 202). I found this particularly so in this action research study, and not only did the principals make personal journeys over the period of time, but I found that I did as well. How to capture this in a research report was no easy task.

Other theorists have also noted their personal journeys and changed theoretical positioning over the course of their studies. For example, Patti Lather (1986) stated that it was possible to use a research approach which was not impositional but had an emancipatory or critical stance. However, in 1992 she indicated that she had doubts about such a position. She said "In my own work for example, I have tried to turn the gaze upon myself as well as others, as I look at the sins of imposition that we commit in the name of liberation." (p. 129). This indicates her change in orientation. In New Zealand, Alison Jones moves from the positioning of neo-Marxist critical ethnographer in her dissertation research (Jones, 1989) to a Foucauldian discourse interrogation of this research which highlights the importance of reflection on researchers' interpretive frames of positioning (Jones, 1991).

I feel that I have been in a constant state of becoming. This epitomises what Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1994, p. 18) described happens to researchers as they move towards postmodernism as a theoretical framework:

> We see ourselves taking part in an ongoing project of critical questioning and negotiating of meanings and premises of postmodernism. The dance continues, because in postmodernism there is no end point. When you get there, there is no there.

And what Lather (1991, p. xix) experienced as she struggled with "what it means to do research...in a time noteworthy for broad based questioning of the foundational assumptions of Western knowledge." I, too, experienced these struggles, working in a research climate which was both exciting and frustrating. Punch and Wildy (1995) call for grounded theory studies on school leadership which they stated were non-existent at their time of writing. It is hoped that this study has added something to the field.

I believe as Peters, et al (1996) do that the origins and trajectory (of critical theory) suggest the need to renew and rework critical-theoretical precepts in the light of changing historical conditions" (p. 12). They go on to state:

> Critical theory is meant to provide a guide to action: in particular, it is meant to enable agents to determine their true interests and, thereby, produce enlightenment. They are, therefore, considered to be inherently emancipatory since they will free agents from distorted ideological practices and forms of coercion which are at least partly self-imposed. Yet it is this very conception of the humanistic, self-reflective, unified, individual subject that is considered problematic from the viewpoint of poststructuralism.

I plan to continue grappling with this issue. Gore (1992) stated, in a Foucauldian critique of critical theory, that many approaches have tended to focus on the macro issues of ideologies and institutions but neglected many of the specific practices of schools and school leaders which constitute the dominant discourses. At the beginning of this study I believed that critical theory *could* provide the theoretical underpinnings in this study at the *micro* level so that these principals would be able to identify the "spaces of freedom" within a critical study and which changes could safely be made. However, in hindsight, or moving on through the process of writing this epilogue, perhaps a postmodern perspective of discourse analysis which focuses on the relationship between individual subject and discourse and opens up space for the expression of different selves (Foucault, 1972; Parker, 1992) was where I was heading when I made the remarks about discourse on pages 140 and 266 of the report. This may be the more suitable location for future studies of this type.

As Lather (1991, p. 1) stated:

> To write postmodern is to simultaneously use and call into question a discourse, to both challenge and inscribe dominant meaning systems in ways that construct our own categories and frameworks as contingent, positioned, partial.

methodology. Postmodern discourses give researchers room to move in "the contingent, messy, boundless, infinitely particular, and endlessly still to be explained" (Spanos, 1987, p. 240) and problem-solving theories are useful here. However, as Lather (1992, p. 96) said in a later piece of work:

> Awareness of the complexity, contingency, and fragility of practices we invent to discover the truth about ourselves can be paralysing. Taking into account Martin Luther King's caution regarding paralysis of analysis, reflexively getting on with doing such work may be the most radical action a feminist researcher in education can take.

This "paralysis of analysis" could be stifling to researchers if it inhibits their getting down to action. Imagine spending all of the summer break poring over the map to decide what journey to take, only to find the vacation break has come to an end before you have started. There is always something to be learned from every study, every learning journey. We need to take the time to reflect on the routes and turns that we will make, start our journeys, and then revisit our work to make a study of the study we have undertaken. Research on research is what is needed all the more in education today.

I cited Glaser and Strauss (1967) in the conclusions to the report. They said:

> The sociological perspective is never finished, not even when the last line of the monograph has been written. Not even after it has been published, since therefore the researchers find themselves elaborating and amending their theory, knowing more now than when the research was formally concluded. (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 256).

The writing of this prologue and epilogue have been testament to that.

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