

University of Southern Queensland

School Leadership and Cognitive Interests

The development of a leadership framework based on
Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests

A Dissertation submitted for the research award of Doctor of Philosophy.

Submitted by:

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Abstract

This dissertation reports on an exploration of school leadership from the perspective of how school leaders bring multiple cognitive interests to bear in their leadership practice. By analysing the discourse of practising school leaders this study has enabled insight to be gained into school leaders' reflections-on-actions in given leadership situations. On the basis of the analysis of discourse it is concluded in this study that school based leadership, and school leadership preparation, can be enhanced when illuminated through a cognitive perspective grounded in Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests (1971). Recommendations are given in this dissertation for the development of an approach to school leadership preparation built on a cognitive interests framework. Based in qualitative research techniques the main evidentiary material was elicited by the use of semi-structured interviews, and the collection of narratives, and was analysed with a variation of Membership Categorisation Analysis (Sacks, 1972).

Certification of Dissertation

I certify that the ideas, experimental work, results, analyses, and conclusions reported in this dissertation are entirely my own effort, except where otherwise acknowledged. I also certify that the work is original and has not been previously submitted for any other award.

Signature of Candidate

Date

Signature of Supervisor

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Signature of Supervisor

Date

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Chapter 1: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

In 1995, the decentralisation of all public schools in the Northern Territory of Australia had been mandated and schools were rapidly changing. Under decentralisation, schools were expected to take on the mantle of self-management and as a result the role of school leaders was evolving (Walker & Quong, 1996). Then, as now, school leaders were entrusted with overseeing the education of the next generation of young Australians. Today their task is recognised as pivotal and there are growing public and government demands in Australia and internationally for school leaders to be held to the highest professional standards (Caldwell, 2000). As a result there is a growing demand for programs that are effective in preparing staff for school leadership. In the United States, for example, the *School Leaders Licensure Assessment of the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium* (ISLLC) delivers leadership training and evaluates leadership potential, and in England a national program for school leaders called the *Headteachers' Leadership and Management Program* (HEADLAMP) has been developed for the same purpose.

In Australia, school leadership training programs have been developed in every state and territory. Three examples of such programs are the *Becoming a Principal* program, of the Department of Education, Employment and Training (DEET) Victoria (2001), the *School Leadership Preparation Program* of the NSW Department of Education and Training (2001), and in the Northern Territory (NT) the *Leadership Development Program* of DEET (2001). Other examples of specialised school leadership preparation programs include the various degree and diploma courses of tertiary bodies such as those of the Centre for Leadership, Management and Policy Studies in Education of Queensland University of Technology.

In 1996 I was employed by the Northern Territory Department of Education (NTDE) in Human Resource Development. My job description included responsibility for the professional development of teachers and school administrators, and for the preparation of school principals for self-managing schools. One of the ways that this was achieved was by developing and presenting two-day workshops called *Education Leadership a First Course for Teachers*.

My colleagues and I in the Human Resource Development Branch shared responsibility for providing short-term training to those wanting to become school leaders. At the time teachers had a reputation for being ‘difficult students’ and my clients, who were teachers seeking practical ways to become effective as school leaders, were very demanding. My early experience had taught me that they were not interested in theoretical lectures and could be unforgiving if put through leadership assessments taken from business management courses. What they generally claimed to want were answers to questions about what constituted effective leadership in schools.

One of the key questions that emerged from teachers during these early leadership-training workshops pertained to the differences that they had observed between school leaders in day-to-day decision-making. Teachers frequently pointed out that what some leaders saw as essential knowledge that was needed to make effective decisions, other leaders would ignore as irrelevant. One example was the perceived difference between those school principals who would only make decisions based on propositions from staff that were detailed and supported with facts and evidence, and other principals who instead favoured decision-making that emphasised collaborative effort, beliefs, and interpretation. Two important questions emerged from these discussions. In what ways do school leaders differ in what knowledge they want and will accept, and equally how do they come to understand what knowledge their staff value as important?

In an attempt to answer these questions I undertook a literature search. During this process Habermas’ theory of knowledge-constitutive interests (1971) came to my attention in a single paragraph reference in an article by Kemmis (1993) on action research. Further investigations of Habermas’ theory suggested to me that it could quite possibly provide a useful framework through which to explore the cognitive interests of school leaders. An extensive literature search over twelve months, however, failed to reveal any specific applications of his theory to the field of leadership in general or school leadership in particular. What I did discover was that Habermas’ work was very well known and that he was highly regarded in Australia and internationally as a philosopher and social theorist.

With further research, I became increasingly convinced that within Habermas’ theory of knowledge-constitutive interests lay a practical premise on which might be built a leadership preparation program. Habermas’ theory differentiates three generic cognitive perspectives, or frames, through which human interest generates

knowledge. These are the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests. These determine categories relevant to what we interpret as knowledge.

Over the next twelve months I experimented with the application of Habermas' theory, using it as the framework from which to develop a series of what I believed to be viable leadership training activities. These activities were designed to lead participants through a process of reflecting on leadership based on the three knowledge-constitutive interests. Colleagues in the Human Resource Development Branch examined these activities and were highly encouraging and positive in their responses. Before I could apply them in an actual leadership preparation program, however, two questions needed to be answered: Was Habermas' theory (1971) relevant to school leadership almost three decades after its generation? And secondly, was the way I had interpreted Habermas' theory in the development of these professional development activities reliable?

After reading and working with Habermas' theory for two years, I felt a need to study it in more depth and to seek ways of validating its usefulness, or otherwise, to school leadership preparation.

Purpose of the study

The overall purpose of this study was to explore if, and how, Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests could be used as a framework for illuminating school leadership practice and for enhancing the preparation of school leaders. More specifically, the purpose of this study was to examine whether the three cognitive interests exist within the discourse on leadership provided by practising school leaders and once this was determined, to develop insight into how the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework could be used in school leadership preparation.

Significance of the study

In proposing a conceptualisation of school based leadership in relation to Habermas' theoretical framework, the research potentially provides a new direction for school leader development. On the basis of the analysis of descriptions of

leadership practice, it is concluded in this study that school-based leadership can be enhanced when illuminated through a cognitive perspective that has three frames. These three perspectives, or frames, are leadership from within the:

- technical cognitive interest,
- practical cognitive interest,
- emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest.

When these three interests are integrated – and it is argued that a leader’s practice may be based on a combination of these interests – a framework for enhancing school leadership can be postulated.

The significance of this study, therefore, lies in its exploration of leadership from the perspective of how school leaders bring multiple interests to bear in their leadership practice. By analysing the discourse of practising school leaders, this study has enabled insight to be gained into school leaders’ reflections-on-actions in given leadership situations. Moreover, the significance of this study derives from its success in illuminating differences between the way different practising school leaders frame their actions.

Many authors (Begley, 1995; Gardner, 1995; Hallinger, Leithwood, & Murphy, 1993; Leithwood, Begley & Cousins, 1992; Leithwood & Hallinger, 1993; Prestine, 1995; Prestine & Legrand, 1991) have noted the importance of exploring cognition as a fundamental way of explaining the nature of expert school leadership. Yet the research in this field is far from extensive or complete, and it can be concluded that there is a clear need to develop a cognitive interests framework that can be used as the basis for understanding the work of educational leaders. By demonstrating how Habermas’ theory of knowledge-constitutive interests is manifest in school leadership, this study extends the existing body of knowledge relating to the cognitive dimension of school leadership.

As a study of the application of Habermas’ theory, this investigation also contributes to the literature pertaining to Habermas’ work. In particular, this investigation provides a unique illumination of how Habermas’ three cognitive interests are manifest within the leadership processes of a sample of practising school leaders in Australia.

Finally this study is potentially significant in its documentation of the research journey and how this contributes to an understanding of qualitative research in the field of discourse interpretation.

Limitations of the study

This study was limited by a number of factors. One of the limitations pertains to my beliefs as a researcher. As a researcher, I was committed to the belief that school principals and other school leaders are able to employ multiple leadership perspectives corresponding to the complexities of their work environment. In this view leadership is a complex, human phenomenon that is formed through social interaction. This is an interpretivist view of schools in which schools are conceptualised as socially constructed (Prestine, 1993). As such this investigation has been based on social interactions and their meaning as perceived by individual actors. This is opposed to investigations that are based on the observation of 'objective reality' in schools. This has created a limitation in the data collection process undertaken in this study. The data collection was focused mainly on the use of semi-structured interviews and the collection of written narratives of leadership. While these processes provided insightful and illuminating data for this study, they were based on the school leaders' perceptions of, and reflection on, their work and leadership practice. As such the data collection process did not attempt to obtain what would be called 'first hand' evidence, in the way that a researcher's direct observation of school leaders' behaviour might have done, under a different paradigm of research.

A second limitation of this study has been in the study sample. The focus of data collection in this study has been on school leaders selected because of their positional authority (such as principals), or as participants in leadership training programs. This focus can be said to have narrowed the application of the resulting leadership analysis, for it does not take into account educational leadership displayed by other school personnel, such as classroom teachers as leaders, or leadership as a shared phenomenon.

The context of the study

This research was conducted as part of the requirements of the degree of Doctorate of Philosophy of the University of Southern Queensland. It was conducted over a period of six years from 1996-2001. The research was carried out with the participation of school leaders located within public schools in the Northern Territory

Department of Education (NTDE). The Director of Research and Assessment of the NTDE approved the research.

The NTDE is a government system of education that provides K-12 school education for all citizens of the Northern Territory of Australia. The system is comparatively small with a total teaching staff of approximately 2600. In the collection of data, the interview sample of fifteen school principals and superintendents represents approximately fifty percent of the available cohort within the city of Darwin (there are twenty-seven schools in Darwin, comprising six secondary and twenty-one primary). The narrative study drew upon a further sixteen school leaders, and extended the sample to include a number of participants from remote community schools from across the Northern Territory.

The Northern Territory Government made the decision in the early 1990's that all public schools would become self-managing schools. The shift to self-management greatly enhanced the need for effective site-based leadership. Crowther (1997, p. 10), for instance, noted the emergence over the past decade of a widespread view of the principal as chief executive and entrepreneurial marketer in a self-managing school. Equally, as stated in the *Enterprising Nation: Renewing Australia's Managers to Meet the Challenges of the Asia-Pacific Century* (Karpin 1995), changes to management paradigms pertaining to public sector management (and leadership) enhanced the need for leaders to be able to lead, not because of their positional authority, but because they were able to influence the course of events in a positive and constructive way (Fong, 1996). Schools have always been highly normative organisations in which leaders have needed to develop and sustain an effective level of normative influence with teachers (Greenfield Jr., 1995, p. 75). In this context there was, and still is, a strong demand for leadership preparation programs.

Research problem and research questions

The central problem guiding the research was stated as the question:

What are the implications of Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests for an enhanced understanding of school leadership practice?

This problem was addressed through the following two research questions:

1. In what ways are the knowledge-constitutive interests evident in school leaders' descriptions of their professional practice?
2. What is the potential of Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests to enhance school leadership practice and the preparation of school leaders?

A third research question arose during the investigation that adds significantly to the understanding of Habermas' theory, this was:

3. How did the experience of researching school leaders' practice influence the researcher's personal growth as an educational leader?

Brief summary of key terms and concepts

Cognitive interest: The term 'interest' refers to the human goal or end in view of an act of reflection (Grunau et al. 1998). A person's cognitive interest influences the assimilation of the data obtained from the sense organs into fact (Maturana, 1996). Cognitive interest is described as what counts as knowledge (Habermas, 1979). In the context of this study, it is what school leaders value as knowledge and as acceptable ways of getting knowledge.

Habermas' three knowledge-constitutive interests: Habermas is widely accepted as a leading global modernist and critical social theorist. His theories have influenced both social philosophy and organisational thinking. Many researchers have adopted his 1971 theory of knowledge-constitutive interests as the theoretical framework for their work. A sample includes: van Manen (1977), Mezirow (1981; 1981), Grundy (1982), Kemmis (1985; 1993; 2000), Fischer (1985), Hoffman (1987),

Laughlin (1987), Mingers (1992), Lyytinen (1992), Dunne and Johnston (1994), Palmer and Dunford (1996), Connelly (1996), Alvesson and Willmott (1996), Hickey (1997), Broadbent and Laughlin (1997), Grunau et al. (1998), Underwood-Stephens and Cobb (1999), Lockett and Webbstock (2000), and Willmott (2002). According to Habermas:

There are three categories of process of inquiry for which specific connection between logical-methodological rules and knowledge-constitutive interests can be demonstrated. This demonstration is the task of a critical philosophy of science that escapes the snares of positivism. The approach of the empirical-analytic sciences incorporates a technical cognitive interest; that of the historical-hermeneutical sciences incorporates a practical one, and the approach of critically oriented sciences incorporates the emancipatory cognitive interest (Habermas (1971, p. 308).

The term ‘knowledge-constitutive interests’ and ‘cognitive interests’ are interchanged in Habermas’ work, just as the terms ‘emancipatory cognitive interest’ and ‘critical cognitive interest’ are sometimes interchanged by the scholars and researchers quoted in this dissertation (e.g. Alvesson, 1991; Burrell, 1994; Hickey, 1997).

Leadership: For the purposes of this study, a leader is defined as someone who is recognised by an observer to successfully exert influence in his or her environment. This means that a school leader does not have to be in a position of authority or hierarchical power. He or she may be a principal or a classroom teacher. It is, however, generally accepted that school principals and assistant principals comprise an identifiable cohort of recognised school leaders.

Framework or Frame: This study adopts a ‘framework’ perspective on school leadership (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Capra, 1983; Gabriel, 1998; Harman, 1998; Harmon & Mayer, 1986; Morgan, 1998; Overman, 1996). A frame provides an instrument or language that empowers the practitioner to discuss and reflect on his or her thinking. Bolman and Deal (1991; 1997) use the notion of frames and reframing to capture the idea that when people enter and exit from different situations, they define circumstances against frames so that they know what to do and how to understand what others are doing. The four frames that Bolman and Deal (1991; 1997) identify are the structural, the human resource, the political and the symbolic. The frame explored in this study is that of Habermas’ technical, practical and emancipatory (or critical) knowledge-constitutive interests.

Discourse Analysis: Discourse analysis refers to attempts to study the organisation of language ‘above the sentence’, and therefore to study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts (Slembrouck, 2001, p. 34). In this study it is the analysis of verbal discourse (collected as interviews) and of written discourse (collected as narratives) of school leaders. Membership Categorisation Analysis (MCA) (Sacks, 1972) is a highly regarded process of discourse analysis. MCA was the device ultimately adopted in this research for analysing the discourse collected through interviews and narratives of leadership.

Qualitative Research: Qualitative research in education is an umbrella concept covering multiple forms of inquiry. It emphasises the exploration of social phenomena with as little disruption to the natural settings as possible (Merriam, 1992). While research within the qualitative paradigm may utilise many different methods, the characteristics of qualitative research identified by Maykut and Morehouse (1994) describe this study. These include:

- an emergent design
- a descriptive focus
- purposive sampling
- a natural setting
- an emphasis on ‘human-as-instrument’
- qualitative methods of data collection
- early and ongoing inductive data analysis
- a case study approach to reporting research outcomes.

An evolving research design

This research was a qualitative study, with an evolving research design that incorporated a series of stages to gather and analyse data. Over the six years of this study the processes, methodologies and even epistemological beliefs shifted in accordance with the outcomes of the ongoing inductive data analysis. This resulted in the research design changing many times over the six years. A full account of the research journey is provided in Chapter 4. Evolutionary changes in the research process notwithstanding, the following three phases of investigation were achieved:

- 1. Development of a preliminary theoretical framework:** A comprehensive literature search was undertaken. From the literature, a theoretical framework for the study of cognitive interests in the work of school leaders emerged.
- 2. Exploration of the framework in practical contexts:** The framework was explored in data collected from practising school leaders through in-depth interviews and as written narratives of leadership. An investigation was also conducted into the application of the framework in a trial leadership preparation program.
- 3. Evaluation of the theoretical framework:** Conclusions were drawn as to the value of Habermas' theory in exploring the cognitive interests of school leaders. Limitations were established and characteristics were postulated to enable Habermas' theory to be applied as a conceptual model for understanding school leadership.

Overview of the thesis

This thesis is comprised of seven chapters.

Chapter 1. This chapter describes the purpose, significance and context of the study. Limitations are explored and the research problem and research questions are detailed.

Chapter 2. This chapter reviews the literature in the broad areas of leadership, school leadership preparation, and of Habermas and his theory of knowledge-constitutive interests. This chapter also examines how Habermas' theory has been applied in the work of other researchers and scholars.

Chapter 3. This chapter describes the methodological considerations taken into account in the design of this study. Discussion is undertaken of discourse analysis, narrative research, data collection, data analysis, and issues pertaining to the trustworthiness of the data and its interpretation.

Chapter 4. This chapter provides a detailed description of the methodology of this research. This has been presented as a narrative, a personal account of the research experience. This narrative describes the seven phases of the research journey and includes some brief descriptions of early results that were not ultimately

significant to the overall research findings, but provided valuable insight into how the research was shaped.

Chapter 5. This chapter provides the main results of the study. This includes the evaluation of the trial of a leadership preparation program, and the primary results that came from the detailed analysis of the interview data and narratives of leadership.

Chapter 6. This chapter discusses the results of the study in regard to the research problem and the three research questions. Details are provided of how the technical, practical and critical cognitive interests are manifest in school leadership (inferred from discourse analysis). Extrapolated from the data and literature, propositions are also made about the potential of the cognitive interests framework to enhance school leadership preparation programs. This chapter ends with a description of the personal growth and changes in cognitive interests that I have experienced as an educational leader, over the course of this research journey.

Chapter 7. This chapter concludes the thesis and provides a synopsis of the study and a synopsis of the findings. The implications of the research for school leadership and school leadership preparation are delineated along with some implications for further research. The chapter ends with a final concluding summary of what the study has achieved.

Chapter conclusion

In his study of leadership Fairholm (2000) describes the scientific theory of fractals, which proposes the non-linear notion that from small and simple things can come great and complex things. Researchers who study leadership within social organisations must have confidence that understanding of complex behaviour can emerge from few and simple guidelines. This premise has been accepted within this study, where the investigation has been to discover if Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests might provide a simple set of guidelines, or framework, that can contribute to an understanding of the complex leadership phenomenon.

This thesis describes the process and the outcomes of the research that was undertaken to investigate if Habermas' (1971) theory is manifest in school leadership, it's potential to illuminate school leadership practice and it's application in school

leadership preparation. This has been an evolving qualitative study based in part on insight into the framework drawn from a trial of a preparation program, but primarily on the analysis of data collected through in-depth interviews and narratives of leadership.

The next chapter provides a detailed review of the literature that has informed the theoretical framework of this study.

Chapter 2: THEORETICAL CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Introduction: A discussion of frames, contexts and structures

The research purpose was to explore if, and how, Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests could be used as a frame for understanding and informing leaders' practice and enhancing the preparation of leaders who work within the context (and structures) of Northern Territory public schools. In this section, a brief definition is provided of frames, context and structures.

An underpinning belief of this study is that school leadership is an informed social act that can be analysed and ultimately enhanced through the application of new theories and frameworks of understanding. Willower (1998, p. 123) talks of leadership praxis, where the ancient Greeks used the word praxis to refer to thoughtful practice or practice that was informed, purposeful and deliberate. As Schön (1983) described in his notion of expert practitioners, leaders may draw from their extensive repertoire of past experiences in order to understand situations and develop possibilities for effective action. Argyris and Schön (1974) described leadership behaviour in terms of 'theories-of-action', the set of 'rules' that individuals use to design and implement their behaviour. These 'theories-of-action' can, in part, be interpreted in terms of their cognitive interests, where cognitive interest determines what individuals accept as knowledge and ways of collecting knowledge.

Bolman and Deal (1991) used the construct of frames and reframing to explain these 'theories-of-action'. They say that as people enter and exit from hundreds of different situations, they use frames to define circumstances so that they know what to do and how to understand what others are doing. Leaders 'frame' the situations they enter. They further explain that the frame people choose determine the reality that is experienced and provides a script for their actions. The process of reframing is the means by which leaders are encouraged to try to broaden their thinking by viewing their organisation through different frames.

Morgan (1993) argued for frames and reframing. In his work he says that the concept of frames:

Encourages us to look at ourselves and our situations with fresh eyes and to mobilise and use our capacities for imaginative, innovative thought and action. It encourages us to recognise that we can become skilled 'readers' or 'interpreters' of the situations in which we find ourselves and produce novel understandings that will allow fresh action to emerge (p. 265).

Palmer and Dunford (1996) noted that the literature on frames and reframing is diverse and draws on a range of epistemological and ontological positions. In their work they suggest that common to the reframing approach is the view that people become trapped into single frame thinking and that this limits their ability to respond to organisational problems in novel and creative ways. To Palmer and Dunford (1996): "Reframing involves the assumption that, by getting people to use multiple frames or perspectives, their repertoire of interpretations and possible actions will be expanded in any situation" (p. 13).

The concept of frames and reframing has its critics. Fay (1987), for example, warns that the concept of frames and reframing is underpinned by a belief in idealism with regards the connection between thought and action. This idealism, he says, consists of three specific claims that have an impact on the usefulness of a theory of frames and reframing (Fay, 1987, p. 24). First, there is the ideal that social behaviour is caused by the ideas held by social actors; second, that people are able to change conditions with which they are not satisfied by changing their ideas as to who they are and what they are doing; and third, that people are willing to listen to rational analyses of their actions and the context in which they act, and to act on these analyses. Fay suggests that these claims are not necessarily founded in reality.

Maxcy (1995), who is also a critic of the notion of frames and reframing, warns that:

...at the heart of framework thinking on leadership, lies an almost schizophrenic condition within which it is believed that, one, it is possible to stand outside leadership and describe it objectively. Secondly, that it is assumed that there is a single 'real' phenomenon called leadership of which there are many differing and competing views, and thirdly, that no one yet has got it right, the subjectivist face would have it that those who have postulated frameworks before have not really understood what leadership is about (p. 475).

While noting these warnings, the position taken in this study was that the concept of frames and reframing is potentially a way of enhancing leadership praxis. Authors such as Bolman and Deal (1991; 1997), Hart (1993), Morgan (1993), and Tannen and Wallat (1993), Carlson (1996), Fairhurst and Sarr (1996), describe ways in which organisational leaders have been helped to develop cognitive approaches to

leadership and organisational management through the development of frameworks and the processes of reframing. In this study the focus has been on Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests, which is a framework that provides an understanding of what human actors accept as knowledge and the means for forming knowledge.

It is argued in this study that the work of schools is knowledge work: knowledge of what; knowledge of what for; knowledge of how to; knowledge of when to; knowledge of others; and, knowledge of self. It is held in this study that beliefs about the 'nature of knowledge' influence the roles, rules, and responsibilities of schools. Beliefs about knowledge, for example, affect the way curriculum is organised, instruction is conducted, and assessment occurs. It is also held in this study that the role of school leaders is paramount in framing beliefs about knowledge within school structures.

In building an understanding of leadership praxis, and of what school leaders see as knowledge and appropriate ways of collecting knowledge, it is important to give consideration to the context and structure of schools. A number of scholars argue for the importance of context in the study of leadership (Begley, 1996; Greenwood & Hinings, 1993; Gronn & Ribbins, 1996). Fink (2001) says that successful leaders make connections by developing firm knowledge and understanding of their context. Context relates to the situation, background, or environment in which leadership is happening. In particular the people that are involved in the leadership act define leadership context.

It is also important to give consideration to what Giddens (1976) calls the 'structures' that bound human agency. Cognitive interest is linked to structures and structuration. Useful knowledge about how leaders' think, their internal mental processes, does not stand alone, but must be linked to an understanding of the structures that they both find themselves in and that they play a hand in creating.

Through our cognitive interests we create meaning in our world, but our cognitive interests are also shaped by the structures that govern our social world. Giddens (1984) argued that we need to try to understand and explain the properties of the 'structures' within which action takes place, and that this "involves an interplay of meanings, norms and power" (p. 161). He sees structures as the rules and resources people use in interaction. They are both the medium and the outcome of interaction (duality of structure). They are the medium because structures provide the rules and resources individuals must draw on to interact meaningfully. They are the outcome because rules and resources exist only through being applied independently of the

social practices they constitute. People are most important in all of this for they create and reproduce the rules and resources - the structures. Examples of what Giddens (1984) calls structures in schools include the stores of knowledge that an individual has about interaction in general (e.g. grammar rules, social norms, etc). Structures also include the individual's knowledge of a specific organisation (e.g. organisation structure, standard procedures, common acronyms, people's likes and dislikes, the names of their children, etc).

In building their cognitive interests, school leaders perceive (and help to create) such structures in terms of the theories and models of leadership that are accepted and enacted or criticised and rejected. They use their theories and models to examine their own actions and how others perceive them. The cognitive interest of school leaders is, therefore, a function of how they frame their theories-in-action, their interaction with their context and those who surround them, and the structures they find themselves immersed in. But who are school leaders?

Defining leadership

Leadership is a multi-faceted phenomenon. Hughes et al. (1996) have stated that leadership has many definitions, a view shared by Bass (1990), Rost (1991) and Yukl and Van Fleet (1992). Regardless of this lack of consensus, there is undoubtedly a substantial body of knowledge that can be usefully applied to understanding leadership and leadership preparation (Clark & Clark, 1996; Hogan et al. 1994).

Leadership has been studied from many different perspectives and using many different approaches. According to Bass (1990) leadership has been studied as the focus of group processes, as a matter of personality, as an exercise of influence, as a set of particular behaviours, as a form of persuasion, as a power relation, as an instrument to achieve goals, as an effect of interaction, as a differentiated role, and as the initiation of structure. Leadership has been examined for the purpose of understanding and predicting the behaviour of leaders (Mintzberg, 1973), and to determine its power dimension (Burns, 1978). Some have sought to expose leadership as a source of repression or liberation (Freire, 1973), while others have studied leadership as a transformative force (Bennis, 1984; Leithwood, 1992). Still others have examined leadership in order to describe its values dimension, such as its

ethical underpinnings (Sergiovanni, 1992a), while others have reviewed leadership in the context of its educative purpose (Duignan & Macpherson, 1993). Leadership has been studied as a process, for example, from the dimension of leader-follower interaction in leader-follower exchange theory (Dansereau et al. 1975), and as a process of social-influence that is shared among all members of a group (Hughes et al. 1996).

Greenfield Jr. (1995) suggested that leadership research and thought could be conceptualised in two different dimensions. In one dimension leadership may be seen as personal. It may refer to the cognitive frame, actions or behaviours, orientation, beliefs and personal attributes, characteristics or traits of individuals. In the other dimension leadership may be studied as an organisational phenomenon. In this sense it is associated with improving organisational effectiveness and with formal role expectations for the position, office, or status of administrator. In the organisational dimension, leadership may be exercised or stimulated both formally and informally, with the locus or focus of leadership being an individual, the group, or the organisation itself (Greenfield Jr., 1995, p. 75).

As a process, leadership has been studied from a constructivist view (Drath & Palus, 1994; Lambert, 1995; Writ & Krug, 1998). Writ and Krug 1998 suggested that the constructivist view “departs from the tradition of behaviour, to understanding the cognitive aspects of leadership by giving attention to how the leader construes the world of goals and action...because it assumes that the leader’s construction of reality shapes the behaviour of others in the school system” (p. 332).

Neumann (1995) argued for a definition of leadership that focused on the importance of the impact of the leader on followers. He suggested:

that in contrast to traditional instrumentalist views leadership should be concerned with how organisational members’ conceptions of reality come into being in the first place - that is, how and why people come to know and believe what they know and believe. In this view leaders’ talk, signs, and gestures - and people’s interpretation of them - are far more important in considering leadership effect than is leadership action construed instrumentally. Leaders’ attention to what people see, believe and feel and how these people then read the messages in leaders’ attentiveness are also of import (p. 253).

This statement goes some way towards illustrating a constructivist approach, where leadership is focused on ‘constructed meaning’. Smircich and Morgan (1982) believed that leadership is a concept that people use in their relations with one another to make sense, to create meaning. For them, the objective of the leader is to define reality in a way that is meaningful to the led-individuals. If successful the

leader has affected the cognitive structures of the other actors and thereby the culture that they are mutually involved in creating. Shared meaning is likely to emerge and then be used as a guide for action and behaviour (Smircich & Morgan, 1982, p. 258). Lambert (1995) provided a definition of constructivist leadership in *The Constructivist Leader*. In this book she says that:

Constructivist leadership involves the reciprocal processes that enable participants in an educational community to construct meanings that lead toward a common purpose of schooling (Lambert, 1995, p. 33).

Greenfield (1986a) suggested that these “reciprocal processes” may in fact be directed by leaders and that leadership is not always freely negotiated. He defined leadership as:

...a wilful act where one person attempts to construct the social world for others...leaders will try to commit others to values that they themselves believe are good. Organisations are built on the unification of people around values (p.142).

Starratt (1993) used the notion of leader and follower, while supporting the argument for leadership that is involved in the shared construction of meaning. Accordingly to Starratt, leadership is frequently:

... described as though the leader and follower inhabit the same, uniform meaning-world, but in reality the world is a place in which meaning is something always to be negotiated, and in a multicultural and multi-class society we cannot assume that leaders and subordinates agree on what things mean (p. 15).

Duke (1996) suggested that in conceptualising leadership there is a need to balance what leaders believe, think and do, with greater attention to the beliefs and values of those subjected to their leadership. For Duke (1986), the concept of leadership must include an understanding of the influence that leaders exert. In his view:

For the perception of leadership to occur, an observer must find something about a leader meaningful. Meaning may derive from what a leader does or does not do, who a leader is or is not, or what a leader does or does not symbolise (p.14).

Leaders are not necessarily those in positions of authority or those who have positional power, rather “leadership is that which bring meaning to the collective actions of human beings” (Duke, 1986, p. 17). For leadership to occur there should be the perception of leadership by observers who are not necessarily subordinates.

Barnett et al. (2000), in their study of school leadership in New South Wales (Australia), cited Leithwood and Jantzi (1997) to support a definition of leadership that focuses on the influence of the leader on the follower. In their work they say that:

First, most of the variance in leadership behaviour occurs at the teacher level. This suggests that school leadership is characterised by a one to one relationship between the leader and the teacher (follower). Leaders do not have a relationship with teachers (followers) as a total group. They have a set of relationships, which vary from one teacher (follower) to another (Hollander 1978). Further, it raises the idea that leadership and followership are interdependent and that in a fundamental way a leader's legitimacy depends on her/his standing with followers (Yukl 1989). Thus, the influence of 'leadership' depends on a person's behaviour being recognised and tacitly acknowledged to be 'leadership' by others who thereby cast themselves into the role of followers (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1997) (Barnett et al. 2000, p. 6).

Duke (1986) and Barnett et al. (2000) shifted the focus on leadership to recognise that leadership is not necessarily confined to a person in a position of organisational authority or promotion in schools. This widens the scope of the definition of leadership to take into account leadership density or shared leadership.

Jackson (2000) in his research into the IQEA (*Improving the Quality of Education for All*) program and its impact on schools leadership noted that:

Leadership for school improvement is not perceived as being inextricably linked to status or experience. It is available to all. In this way, coaching and mentoring are central leadership qualities, designed to support individuals and in so doing to expand leadership capacity. Such a process leads to the evolution of shared understandings about leadership through school development work – as schools research their own practices and generate their own knowledge (p. 71).

Crowther (1996) in his work on teachers as leaders began by establishing a set of criteria by which he could identify participant-leaders for his research. Once they are identified, he asks:

Are these educators leaders? None operates from a base of ascribed power or authority, none claims a followership and none aspires to positional authority. None indicated awareness of why he or she was identified as a leader and none claimed to exercise influence beyond the small, local community in which he or she lives and works. None is associated by teacher colleagues or administrators with an identifiable leadership style or philosophy. And yet each is regarded by peers and community members as an exceptional person and as having brought about changes which have enhanced the lives of others in profound ways (p. 316).

Crowther (1996) concluded by proposing that:

Teacher leadership is essentially an ethical stance that is based upon views of both a better world and the power of teaching to shape meaning systems. It is manifest in actions that involve the wider community and leads to the creation of new forms of understanding that will enhance the quality of life of the community in the long term (p. 317).

Here Crowther (1996) moved away from the importance of positional power and seeks to understand leadership from a broader view of the intentions, purposes and achievements of leaders. Within this perspective, for example, a classroom teacher can be a school leader. Andrews et al. (2002) described teacher leadership as:

... behaviour that facilitates principled pedagogical action toward whole-school success. It derives from the distinctive power of teaching to shape meaning for children, youth and adults. It contributes to an enhanced quality of community life in the long term (p. 25).

Smyth (1998) provided compelling Australian research evidence that teachers are much more than “interlopers in the arena of leadership”, concluding that teacher leadership is “about teachers understanding the broader forces shaping their work, resisting domestication and not being dominated by outside authorities” (p. 99).

Lambert (1995) also made it clear that leadership is not necessarily related to position:

Students as leaders; teachers as leaders; parents as leaders; administrators as leaders. Crusty old paradigms might warn us that “too many cooks spoil the stew”; new paradigms are making a different stew. The patterns of relationships in this new ‘stew’ connect in synergistic ways that are rich in possibilities and exist outside traditional lines of authority, roles, established norms, rules, and policies (p. 50).

Crowther et al. (2001) described the concept of parallel leadership as “a process of teacher-leaders and their principals engaging in collective action to build [organisational] capacity. It embodies mutual respect, shared purpose and respect for individual expression and contribution” (p. 14). In their view, school leadership responsibility should be shared between teacher-leaders and administrator-leaders.

The construct of shared leadership in schools also encompasses the concept of ‘collaborative individualism’ (Limerick, Cunnington & Crowther, 1998), of teacher-leaders and administrator-leaders who engage mutualistically in leadership processes to ensure sustained school success. Barth (1990) similarly advocated collaborative cultures and process within his conception of a ‘community of leaders’ to improve the school from within. Louis and Kruse (1995) identified collaborative and supportive leadership of principals as a necessary human resource for restructuring staff into school-based professional communities and schools into professional learning

communities. They referred to these types of principals as “post-heroic leaders who do not view themselves as the architects of school effectiveness” (Louis & Kruse, 1995, p. 234). As Crowther et al. (2001) noted:

...serious critique of positional or authority-based leadership has generated a range of inclusive concepts. Notions such as ‘distributed leadership’, ‘leadership as an organisation-wide quality’, ‘leadership of the many’, ‘community of leaders’, ‘role-based leadership’, and ‘co-leadership’ now occupy a prominent place in the educational administration literature (p. 12).

Senge (1996) supported the view that leadership is not about position in an organisation. Senge (1996), like Crowther, held that leadership is about what the person is able to create. Senge (1996) said that:

Leadership exists when people are no longer victims of circumstances but participate in creating new circumstances. ...It's not about positional power; it's not about accomplishments; it's ultimately not even about what we do. Leadership is about creating a domain in which human beings continually deepen their understanding of reality and become more capable of participating in the unfolding of the world. Leadership is about creating new realities (p.3).

Leadership in this view, involves an understanding that every person in an organisation is able to, and does, construct a personal reality that contributes to the success of the organisation to which he or she belongs (Whiteley, 1995). Within this paradigm good leadership is necessary to bring together such sets of reality, so that a holistic identity, a shared vision and set of values, can be formed.

For the purposes of this study a constructivist view of leadership has been adopted. The constructivist view aligns with Habermas’ theory of knowledge-constitutive interests, in that it emphasises how people generate and come to accept knowledge about their world. It defines how they see the ‘reality’ of their world and therefore how they operate in it as social actors. In this study Duke’s (1986) description that “for the perception of leadership to occur, an observer must find something about a leader meaningful” (p. 14) has been emphasised. This means that a school leader does not have to be someone in a position of authority or hierarchical power. It is accepted, however, that school principals, assistant principals and senior teachers (Department Heads) comprise an identifiable cohort of generally recognised school leaders. While it is accepted that leadership in schools is often a shared responsibility, for the purpose of this study data collection has been limited to data collected from individual school leaders and not from groups of collaborative leaders or leadership teams.

School leadership preparation

School principal preparation programs

Compared with countries such as England, Singapore or Hong Kong, where there is a coherent national approach to the preparation of school principals, the training of school principals in Australia is fragmented. Individual education systems across Australia aim at developing quality school leaders for their communities and this has been sought through a variety of centralised State and Territory system-driven initiatives and development programs, with varying levels of success. The Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA) (1997) argued that:

Principals have become reliant upon central [State and Territory] services providing for the Principalship. In essence a dependence culture has evolved, which is common practice in bureaucratic structures that have served their purpose for many decades (p. 1).

School leadership preparation programs are provided by all public systems across Australia. Examples include the *Becoming a Principal* program of the Department of Education Victoria (2001), the *School Leadership Preparation Program* of the New South Wales Department of Education and Training (2001), various programs of the Leadership Centre of the Western Australia Ministry of Education, the *Strategic Leaders Program* of the Leadership and Culture Strategy of Education Queensland (2001), and the *Leadership Development Program* of the Northern Territory Department of Education (2001). In addition to programs offered by public systems, school leadership programs are also conducted by organisations such as the Australian Principals Centre (APC) and various universities and institutes attached to universities across Australia. The *PD 2000 Australia: A National Mapping of School Teacher Professional Development* (McRae et al. 2001) found that:

The Australian Principals Associations Professional Development Council (APAPDC) based in Adelaide, but providing services on a national basis, has been active for eight years now, signalling an ongoing interest in support of the professional development of school leaders. Education Queensland's Centre for Leadership Excellence, now absorbed into the new Learning and Development Foundation, and the Victorian Principals' Centre are other examples of bodies that have existed for some time for the same purposes. South Australia's

Department of Education, Training and Employment (DETE) Centre for Leaders in Education has also been in existence since 1996, and, at the instigation of state's principals association, the Tasmanian Department of Education has recently established the Tasmanian Principals' Institute. Western Australia's Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Australian Capital Territory's Department of Education and Community Services also provide courses in school leadership (p. 88).

The Australian arrangements contrast strongly with headteacher training in England and Wales where the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), established in 1994, gives a high national priority to headteacher development. In 1995, Headlamp (the *Headteachers' Leadership and Management Programme*) was established to provide training for newly appointed headteachers. Headlamp introduced the notion of 'abilities', a competence-based approach to defining the qualities required for effective school leadership. Headteachers across the nation could choose from an extensive list of providers (over 300) who were accredited to deliver and assess their preparation. Following the Headlamp program, the next step of the TTA, was the *National Professional Qualification for Headship* (NPQH) announced in 1996. The NPQH process began with a needs assessment at a regional assessment centre. This determined if the aspirant was deemed to be 'ready' to take up the mantle of headship, or needed further training in aspects of the role. The purpose of the NPQH was stated at the time by the TTA as the establishment of a high quality national qualification which:

provides an assurance to governors and others that newly appointed headteachers have the necessary foundation of school leadership and management knowledge, understanding and skills to perform successfully against a national standard (Teacher Training Agency, 1995, p. 1).

While principalship preparation is less nationally coherent in Australia than it is in England, it could be argued, that it is more comprehensive than it is in the USA. The School Leadership for the 21st Century Initiative report *Leadership for Student Learning: Reinventing the Principalship* (IEL 2000) argued that a scarcity of capable, well prepared school leaders ranks amongst the most severe of the problems faced by schools across America. The report says that all the members of the Taskforce agreed on two things:

First, the top priority of the principalship must be leadership for learning. Secondly, the principalship as it currently is constructed – a middle management position overloaded with responsibilities for basic building operations – fails to meet this fundamental priority, instead allowing schools to drift without any clear vision of leadership for learning or providing principals with skills needed to meet the challenge (IEL, 2000, p. 1).

This report (IEL, 2000) stated that in 1998, 50% of 403 school districts across the USA reported a shortfall in qualified candidates for the principalship, and that the number is growing (p. 5). It recommended that urgent action is needed, and should include provision to:

Revamp principal preparation programs to focus on instructional, community and visionary leadership roles in improving student learning in real schools. Colleges, universities and principal academies should revise standards for those applying to and graduating from principal training programs, making clear that the purpose of these programs is to generate strong leaders for student learning. Principals must have preparation that helps them gain greater knowledge of a variety of leadership skills and styles, as well as knowledge about the role of the school in a community, how communities work and how principals can work effectively with community partners. Closer partnerships between principal training programs and local school systems also are needed to link training with hands-on experience in leadership for student learning and collaborations with effective school leaders (IEL, 2000, p. 10).

The School Leadership for the 21st Century Initiative also strongly recommended that training programs must “reconfigure their work” (p.10) and focus on training principals in line with national standards. The report recommended that principals be trained against the national *Standards for School Leaders* developed by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure (1996). Such a focus on training principals to achieve a set of standards is in line with early theories on the preparation of leadership in accordance with a set of leadership traits or characteristics, as is described in the next section.

Leadership preparation based on traits theories, characteristics models and standards

According to Greenfield Jr. (1995) leadership can be conceptualised as both personal and multidimensional. Within the personal dimension, leaders are seen to differ from non-leaders and followers and some researchers have studied their individual differences as traits. Northouse (1997), for example, offered a traits list that includes intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability. Other taxonomies attempt to be more detailed in describing leadership traits, Yukl et al. (1990), for example, proposed fourteen traits of successful leaders. The notion of developing leadership as a personal ‘trait’ is also evident in research on

transformational leaders (as visionary leaders) and charismatic leadership (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; House, 1971).

Trait theory has been criticised by some writers. Keogh and Tobin (2001), for example, saw it as an artefact of “a compulsion to adapt generic leadership solutions” that signifies “a failure of critical self-reflection and inadequate attention to specific organisational circumstances” (p. 2). English (1998) believed that much of the legacy of school leadership preparation:

has and continues to be flirtation with faddish management trends and writers in the business arena. Previously intellectually dead concepts such as ‘traits theory’ are reborn as ‘habits’ as in Covey’s (1991) best selling book *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People* or Senge’s (1990) *The Fifth Discipline: The art and practice of the learning organisation* in which organisations assume human characteristics and cause and effect relationships are established (p. 14).

While the strong impact of theories imported to educational leadership from the business and management arena cannot be denied, Covey’s ‘seven habits’ are arguably more complex and contingent upon context than would be found in earlier trait theories. They are better understood as part of a characteristics model of leadership. Calabrese and Zepeda (1999) stated that:

The characteristics model identifies a number of variables through research on leadership (Kirby 1992). The use of these characteristics brings structure to the leadership paradigm and moves it towards a quantitative perspective. Organisations concerned with the preparation of principals have worked to identify measurable characteristics. The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) identified twelve characteristics of school leadership and more recently, the National Policy Board on Educational Administration identified 21 domains of leadership characteristics (National Policy Board for Educational Administration 1989) (Calabrese & Zepeda, 1999, p. 7).

The characteristics of a school leader can also be expressed as standards or as lists of competencies. In Australia, the impact that a characteristics construct has on leadership preparation is evident in programs such as those of Education Queensland, where a set of *Professional Standards for Leaders* has been developed. These standards have been incorporated into leadership preparation programs such as the *Strategic Leaders’ Program* and the *Leaders’ Toolkit*. A similar set of standards exists in the NSW Department of Education and Training’s *School Leadership Preparation Program* (2001). The stated objective of this program is for principals to achieve the clearly identified ‘attributes’ that are shared by all effective leaders. As stated in the rationale for each of the modules in this program:

The module links directly to *Working in NSW Public Schools: A Statement of Values, Skills and Understanding* which specifies the desired attributes for leaders in NSW government schools (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2001, p. 3).

Another example of an Australian school principal's skills list, or standard, can be found in the National Project on Leadership and Management Training for Principals (1993). Table 2.1 below provides an example of a school principal's skills list taken from a publication of this project.

Table 2.1 Essential Knowledge and Skills for School Principals (Evans, 1993, p.10)

Knowledge of ...	Skills
Educational change	<i>the skills to develop and articulate an educational vision, engage staff in developing educational mission and goals and involve parents</i>
Courses for action	<i>the skills to reflect critically and constructively with staff on alternative courses of action which may be taken</i>
Teaching processes	<i>the skills to arrange appropriate staff development and monitor staff expertise</i>
Organisational change	<i>the skills to work cooperatively through change and lead the change process</i>
Team building	<i>the skills to develop cooperative strategies for decision making</i>
Empowerment	<i>the skills to ensure the sharing of power throughout the school</i>
Structures of organisation	<i>the skills to put into place structures suited to the needs of the school and to liaise with other organisations</i>
Pastoral care	<i>the skills to counsel students and staff</i>
Managing staff	<i>the skills to appraise staff, implement mutually acceptable staff appraisal and staff development programs and to allocate workloads</i>
Interpersonal relations	<i>the skills to work effectively with staff, students, parents and the community as perceiving the needs and concerns of others</i>
Communication strategies	<i>the skills to communicate effectively, orally and in writing with staff, students, parents and the community, including the news media</i>
Motivation	<i>the skills to build commitment to a course of action and to challenge themselves and others</i>
Staff management	<i>the skills to bring about satisfaction of staff, students, parents and community; to recognise and reward staff appropriately and delegate</i>
Strategic planning	<i>the skills to collaboratively develop plans to meet the needs of the school and to set priorities</i>
Decision making	<i>the skills to facilitate participatory decision making, reach logical conclusions and make high quality, timely decisions in consultation</i>
Conflict mgt	<i>the skills to address and resolve conflicts</i>
Negotiation processes	<i>the skills to engage and mobilise the support of policy makers, administrators, students, parents and other community, business and union members in improving the workplace and conditions of teachers and students.</i>
Theories of leadership	<i>the skills to choose relevant concepts to assist in improving leadership and management practices and to integrate newly learned concepts into one's actions</i>

The Australian Principal Centre (APC) delivers training courses for principals according to characteristics, which are stated as a set of leadership competencies. The Centre states that:

Competencies refer to those behaviours and characteristics of thinking which lead to effective or superior leadership performance in all the dimensions of leadership. The specific knowledge, skills and attitudes considered necessary for effective leadership practice have been described in twenty general competencies (APC, 2001, p. 2).

In England and Wales, as noted previously, Headteachers undertake training in the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH). This is described as “a nationalised, compulsory, competency-led training” by Thody (1998, p. 235). Within this program Headteachers are assessed against national standards. These standards are an attempt to set out the main knowledge and attributes of successful Headteachers. As stated by the TTA:

These national standards set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes that relate to the key areas of headship. They define expertise in headship and are designed to serve as the basis for planning the professional development of both aspiring and serving Headteachers (TTA 1997, p. 1).

In Maryland in the USA, the *School Improvement in Maryland* project identifies five “critical leadership skills a principal must demonstrate to effectively lead a school in improving student achievement”. These are:

- Promoting collaborative problem solving and open communication
- Collecting, analysing, and using data to identify school needs
- Using data to identify and plan for needed changes in the instructional program
- Implementing and monitoring the school improvement plan
- Using systems thinking to establish a clear focus on attaining student achievement goals (Seikaly, 2000, p. 2).

Also in the USA, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP 2001) has produced *Leading Learning Communities: Standards for What Principals Should Know and Be Able To Do*. This is said to be “a comprehensive handbook designed to guide elementary and middle level principals in crafting their responsibilities in key instructional areas” (NAESP, 2001 p. 3). The guide identifies six standards for the preparation of school principals. It is claimed by the NAESP

that these standards “redefine instructional leadership for principals.” (NAESP, 2001, p. 3). The six standards focus on building the principal’s ability in:

- Leading schools in a way that puts student and adult learning at the centre;
- Promoting the academic success of all students by setting high expectations and high standards and organising the school environment around school achievement;
- Creating and demanding rigorous content and instruction that ensures student progress toward agreed-upon academic standards;
- Creating a climate of continuous learning for adults that is tied to student learning;
- Using multiple sources of data as a diagnostic tool to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement; and
- Actively engaging the community to create shared responsibility for student and school success.

In their study of principals’ preparation programs, Louden and Wildy (1999) compared principals’ standards from Australia, the UK and the USA. Their work highlights the highly technical nature of the standards approach to principal training and in it they argue, “the consequence of long hierarchical lists is to fragment professional performance” (Louden & Wildy, 1999, p. 111). Their report states that:

All three standards frameworks [Queensland Department of Education 1996; The National Professional Qualification for Headship 1996; Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards framework (Council of Chief State School Officers) 1996] attempt to divide complex professional performances into hierarchical lists of dispositions, knowledge, or duties. Each of the lists is organised around a set of major headings. In the Australian material there are seven key responsibility areas. In the English material there are four parts: core purpose, key areas for development and assessment, skills and abilities, and knowledge and understanding. In the American material there are six standards. Under each major heading there appears another set of sub-headings: five key areas for development and assessment in the English standards, three to eight competencies in the Australian standards, and three kinds of indicators in the American standards. Beneath these subheadings, there is a further subdivision in each case: three to eight tasks in the English example, and four or more indicators in the Australian and American examples. At the lowest level of the hierarchy, there are some 41 separate items in the English lists, 134 items on the Australian lists and 173 on the American lists (Louden & Wildy, 1999, p. 112)

Louden and Wildy (1999) also argued that principal development programs that adopt an approach based on principals’ standards are often decontextualised. They say: “A second objection that may be made to professional standards, which follow the form of these examples, is that they separate the performance from the

context within which it occurs” (p. 113). The dimension of context is added to leadership within contingency leadership theories.

Leadership preparation based on contingency leadership theories

In addition to leaders’ traits, characteristics, or standards some researchers have added the dimension of situation, or context of leadership, as an organisational phenomenon that needs to be considered in the preparation of school principals. At the simplest level this is typically conceptualised as leadership that is contingent on task or relationship, or some combination of these two dimensions (Bass, 1981; Yukl, 1989). At the core of contingency studies is the leadership ‘style’ construct, which argues that leaders should change their style (how they lead) in line with what is required to achieve effective outcomes in a given context (Blake & Mouton, 1964; Kahn, 1956; Stodgill, 1974).

In this thinking a style of leadership that works in one situation is unlikely to work in another. For example, according to Hersey and Blanchard (1969), leaders need to match their leadership style to the situation in terms of the developmental level of subordinates. Evans (1970) and House (1971) match leadership to characteristics of subordinates and work settings and Hooijberg and DiTomaso (1996) match it to the demographic diversity of the organisation.

Hogan et al. (1988) argued that leadership is relative to a group’s typical task. For example, realistic and conventional groups (e.g., athletic teams, police departments) respond to task-oriented and authoritative leadership, and resent participatory leadership that they see as weak. Enterprising and social groups (e.g., management teams, and school faculties) respond to process, interaction, and participation, and resent task-oriented leadership, which they see as authoritarian (Driskell et al. 1987; Hogan et al. 1988).

Two examples of commercial leadership preparation programs - delivered as short term accredited training courses - that adopt this contingency approach to leadership are *Situational Leadership* (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977), and *Be Prepared to Lead* (Toastmasters, 1993).

Another example of a technical training program that encompasses a contingency approach is, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* program (Covey, 1990; 1999) that is delivered at Auckland College of Education in New Zealand, for

senior staff in schools. This is an accredited and franchised training program, of the Franklin Covey Leadership Centre Pty Ltd of Canada. As previously noted, this program is based on a characteristics model of leadership; the purpose of the program is to train people in the characteristics or “habits” of effective leaders. Covey’s work is based on distinguishing the habits that underlie what he calls principle-centred leadership (Covey, 1990; Covey, Merrill & Merrill, 1994; Covey, 1999). Covey believes that leaders operate on four levels: the personal (relationship with self); interpersonal (relationships and interactions with others); managerial (responsibility to get a job done with others); and, organisational (aligning actions and strategies with the values embraced by the organisation).

Espiner et al. (1997) reported success in their efforts to incorporate the teaching of the ‘seven habits’ into a preparation program for human services workers. They described how they have incorporated the relationship between Covey’s levels of management, and what he has described as the seven habits of highly effective people, into their program to assist leaders in dealing with their day-to-day situations in the context of schools.

Covey’s leadership training programs, it is claimed in their literature (Covey, 1991; 1999), are designed to enable leaders to maximise their potential as transformational leaders. The preparation of school leaders based on the construct of transformational leadership was widespread in the 1980s and 1990s.

Leadership preparation based on transformational leadership

Viewing leadership from the focus of the individual and his or her effect on the organisation has led to the development of transformational leadership (Bass 1985; Bass 1997). Transformational leadership is described by Bennis (1986, p. 70) as, “The ability of the leader to reach the souls of others in a fashion which raises the human consciousness, builds meaning, and inspires human intent that is the source of power”. To Bennis (1986) transformational leadership is about vision, purpose, beliefs and other such aspects of an organisation's culture. Crowther (1997, p. 10) suggested that the important elements of this approach include a concern for charisma, individual consideration (paying attention to followers needs) and intellectual stimulation (enabling followers to look at problems in different ways).

Covey (1991) wrote of transformational leadership that:

The goal of transformational leadership is to “transform” people and organisations in a literal sense - to change them in mind and heart; enlarge vision, insight, and understanding; clarify purposes; make behaviour congruent with beliefs, principles, or values; and bring about changes that are permanent, self-perpetuating, and momentum building (p. 287).

Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) stated that the transformational approach to leadership fundamentally aims “to foster capacity development and higher levels of personal commitment to organisational goals on the part of leaders’ colleagues” (p.112). The increased capacities and commitment are believed to result in extra effort and greater productivity in schools. Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) also suggested that the “authority and influence associated with this form of leadership are not necessarily allocated to those occupying formal administrative positions, although much of the literature adopts their perspectives. Rather, organisation members attribute power to whoever is able to inspire their commitments to collective aspirations...” (p.113). And they went on to say:

The model of transformational leadership developed from our own research in schools, including factor analytic studies, describes transformational leadership along six dimensions: building school vision and goals; providing intellectual stimulation; offering individualised support; symbolising professional practices and values; demonstrating high performance expectations; and developing structures to foster participation in school decisions (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000, p. 114).

Jackson (2000) argued that the school effectiveness literature has focused on transformational leadership. In his work he says the “school effectiveness literature propagates a view of leadership centred around strong headteachers with a clear instrumental vision for the school. They tend to have dynamic or forceful personal qualities and high instructional focus” (p. 70). Jackson (2000) goes on to say that unfortunately “transformational characteristics are, from our experience in *Improving the Quality of Education for All* (IQEA) unsustainable over the long haul” (p. 70).

Transformational leadership is sometimes seen as almost at the opposite end of the leadership continuum to transactional leadership (Bass, 1985). Sergiovanni (1990) believed that transactional leadership “is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilise resources so as to arouse and satisfy followers” (p. 31). Bass and Avolio (1997) have developed a frame, known as the ‘full range leadership model’, comprising four constructs of leadership that conceptualise the differences between transformational and transactional leadership. They proposed that transformational leadership could be identified by distinct behavioural constructs,

which they defined as Idealised Influence (attributes and behaviour), Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individualised Consideration. They argued that three very different behavioural constructs identify transactional leadership. These are Contingent Reward, Management by Exception (active), and Management by Exception (passive). Barnett et al. (1999) held that their study of schools in NSW provided evidence that the Bass and Avolio (1997) framework is applicable in Australian schools. They stated that:

First, this study suggests that the four constructs of leadership found in the Australian school setting are consistent with Bass and Avolio's (1997) conceptualisation of transformational and transactional leadership. However, Bass and Avolio (1997) argue that there are conceptual differences between the transformational leadership behaviours. This study suggests that in practice teachers do not distinguish between charisma, intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation.

Furthermore, the teachers in this study did not distinguish between the transformational leadership behaviour individual concern and the transactional leadership behaviour contingent reward. This may represent the augmentation effect of transformational and transactional leadership suggested by Bass and Avolio (1997). However, it is possible that in reality transformational and transactional leadership practices are interwoven (Barnett et al. 1999, p. 5).

Smith and Dawson (1998) drew on Leithwood (1992) to describe principal preparation programs, which are designed to develop transformational leadership, in the following terms:

From the transformational perspective, professors seek to prepare leaders who are capable of cultivating a professional school culture with their staffs, who foster teacher development, and who work together with their teachers to solve the problems facing their schools so that the problems are solved more effectively (Leithwood, 1992) (Smith & Dawson, 1998, p. 7).

Starratt (1993, p. 59) believed that under the guise of transformational leadership, leader preparation programs might focus on such issues as training principals to become visionary leaders, on developing strategies for building goals, and on establishing a purpose and mission for their organisations. Such preparation programs focus on achieving the characteristics (skills and competencies) of transformational leaders as identified, more often than not, in generic business or management literature. Transformational leadership programs for school principals are often taken direction from generic programs designed for transformational leaders of any business or company. It has, however, been argued by many scholars (Keogh & Tobin, 2001; Macmillian et al. 2001; Maxcy, 2001), that the application of theories imported from business to school leadership preparation is problematic.

The application of theories imported from business to school leadership preparation

Many scholars have argued that the uncritical adoption of theories imported from business to education is problematic. In *Leadership for the Schoolhouse* Sergiovanni (1996) cautions school principals against importing management tactics from business and industry and applying them to schools. He says that to get to the core of school reform, school leaders need to create theories that “fit the context of schools”. Sergiovanni (1992b) believed that it is important to find substitutes for the traditional leadership roles that have been imported from business. He stated that in this imported model, in order to maintain control, leaders are required to use evaluation and monitoring systems in which principals and supervisors are presumed to know more than teachers (Sergiovanni, 1992b), and he argued that this is problematic. Sergiovanni (1992b; 1996) encouraged leaders to consider the school as a community, not as an organisation, where the responsibility of maintaining control is with those who are most affected. In this work he says that school communities are defined by their centres, where centres are:

repositories of values, sentiments, and beliefs that provide the needed cement for uniting people in a common cause. Centres govern the school values and provide norms that guide behaviour and give meaning to school community life (Sergiovanni, 1992b, p. 41).

These community norms serve as substitutes for the type of leadership required in the organisation metaphor. This allows principals to concentrate on the quality of the learning experience and on professional development of teachers, rather than on trying to control people (Sergiovanni, 1992b). Sergiovanni et al. (1999) have argued against the long-range negative consequences of legislated learning on the quality of teaching and learning and on the profession of teaching. They held that it would ultimately lead to the bureaucratisation of the classroom. Sergiovanni et al. (1999) have argued instead for the need to balance democratic and professional authority, where professional authority means decisions are made by communities of highly trained teachers and educational leaders, where norms and standards are defined and enforced by their peers, and not by external bodies outside the school.

Maxcy (2001) noted that the application of contingency theories, and other such business oriented theories, to school leadership preparation reached its high

point in the USA in the 1980s. At this time the Educational Leadership Reform Movement (Maxcy, 2001) was at its peak. Driven by deteriorating conditions in public schools, and a series of criticisms from powerful professional groups like the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE), the reform movement was responsible for the implementation of many school leadership programs that were taken directly from business management programs. Maxcy (2001) noted that:

Historically, educational leadership concepts were derived from the disciplines of Psychology and Sociology. The best example of applications of leadership theory to an arena of practice occurred within Business School curricula and popular books by gurus of the business mind like Tom Peters and Peter Senge (p. 5).

Maxcy (2001) believed that this reform movement failed, and one of the main reasons that it did was because educational leadership preparation programs were created which drew upon business management theories rather than leadership practices in schools. Reformers continued to define 'leader' as someone who is business-minded, achieving production goals through increasingly efficient means (p. 4). Keogh and Tobin (2001) argued that these business management theories were based on a strong technical cognitive interest. Maxcy (2001) stated that modernist management theory:

evolved in the confines of industrial capitalism and was built on the premise of organisational hierarchies. The same preponderance of reason; rationality; and authority that gave rise to the scientific method of modernism were focal in the evolution of management theory and practice. Management education was developed in an effort to create a force or concern for technical rationality in organisations (p. 4).

Maxcy (2001) goes on to suggest that school leadership preparation programs such as these, driven by business management theories, and a technical rationality, should be replaced. He then stated that these discipline-driven theories of leadership were:

less likely to control the concepts and orientations in programs for leaders-to-be schools of the future. Students are coming to educational administration preparation programs filled with coursework from Curriculum and Instruction, and Educational Foundations dealing with oral history, narrative, and design. These students will challenge the centralised knowledge of the Social Science research community which pivots upon 'replication of study', 'effectiveness', 'efficiency', and other tropes of business school thinking (p. 5).

Macmillan et al. (2001) supported this view. They described the change needed in school leadership preparation programs as:

Today we are attempting to move away from accepting a behaviourist view of managerial and administrative work focusing on clearly defined positivist sets of generic strategies. We are redefining the principalship by exploring intellectual and emotional leadership as a means to flatten hierarchies, to empower teachers and to build collaborative cultures (Hargreaves et al. 2001), and thus creating effective learning organisations through school communities based on principles and values (Speck, 1999). With this as a focus, emphasis in the research has been on the creation of a professional knowledge base for principals, on helping principals to become change agents and on encouraging principals to act as leaders in all aspects of the school, including in areas of instruction (p. 3).

The “creation of a professional knowledge base for principals” as noted by Macmillan et al. (2001), and the training of principals to act as leaders in all aspects of the school including instruction, has in part, being responsible for the development of school principal profiles or rubrics.

Leadership preparation based on school principal profiles/rubrics

Traits theories, characteristics models, and transformational approaches to preparing school leaders, are generally based on descriptions of what is thought to be an effective leader. They are also based on prescribing patterns of practice that leaders should follow, or on defining effective styles of leadership (Hall et al. 1986; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986). It can be argued, however, that nearly all of these approaches share one persistent limitation, which is that best practices are espoused even when they may not have a good fit in a specific community or leadership context. This is particularly evident, as previously discussed, when school principals are required to be involved in leadership training workshops that are developed around models of generic leadership taken from industry or business. As Maxcy (2001) noted:

It was perhaps only natural for a relatively new field of study such as Educational Administration, to use its core set of beliefs to re-invent itself. These beliefs are deeply riddled with business efficiency and behaviourist psychology theories and concepts. Hence, rather than respond to cultural conditions and the vast changes in leadership practice already going on in institutions like schools, the reforms re-instantiated the core business values by pushing ‘standards of performance’ over pragmatic problem-solving, licensure over certification, and formal testing of leaders over practical impact (Maxcy, 2001, p. 6).

An approach to school leadership preparation that arguably overcomes this weakness is based on the development of school principal profiles or rubrics.

Principal profiles or rubrics have gained popularity in countries such as Hong Kong, Scotland, England and in the USA (Begley, 1995). They are also evident in some Australian states, for example those that are being used by the Western Australian Ministry of Education (Begley, 1991).

The creation of a profile (or rubric) begins with the establishment of a goal statement, followed by a series of decisions about which categories of professional action are most relevant to the achievement of the desired state described in the profile goal statement. In effect, a profile is like a caricature of professional school practice that puts emphasis on particular aspects of school leadership (Begley, 1995, p. 177). The profiling process produces a matrix that describes the developmental stages of professional school leadership practice.

Leadership profiles are used as the organising structure for the content of short inservice courses or preparation programs around one or more of the dimensions of leadership. One example of this is the five-day course conducted in Ontario on effective school administrative problem solving (Begley, 1993). This course is based on the Canadian school leader profile. In this workshop participants analyse or unpack case study problems by considering how expert local principals would approach the task. They are guided by problem interpretations provided as alternate descriptions of action, given in a leadership profile. In these workshops, it is claimed (Begley, 1993, p. 23) that the profile user gains access to the metacognitive processes of the relatively expert school leaders who collaborated on the development of the profile, in order to develop effective leadership skills.

An example of one section of a Leadership Rubric is provided in Table 2.2 on the next page. This was taken from the school leadership rubric developed by the Kentucky Department of Education (USA) (1996).

The use of school principal profiles or rubrics in school leadership programs focuses on preparing principals to take on roles and responsibilities that have been identified and described in detail. This is a highly prescriptive form of leadership preparation. Another approach to the development of school leaders rejects the use of such prescriptions for effective leadership and focuses instead on working with principals (and other school leaders) to construct their own understanding of what it means to be a school leader.

Table 2.2. An example of a Leadership Rubric Area.

Leadership Rubric Area: Instruction

Dimensions	A. Regular Program (Administration Standard 1)	B. Support Program (Administration Standard 1)
4	Works with teachers in developing and implementing appropriate and innovative instructional practices that support the 57 academic expectations. Establishes and utilizes a staff evaluation process that reflects implementation of those instructional practices. Provides resources/personnel and works with teachers to identify students' individual needs and match instructional practices to the needs. Utilizes information from formal and informal observations, student needs assessment, and individual growth plans to drive professional development activities.	Understands and implements guidelines of all support programs, and articulates these accurately to stakeholders. Monitors, evaluates, and encourages revision of support programs to ensure they address the needs of the whole child.
3	Works with teachers in developing and implementing appropriate instructional practices that support the 57 academic expectations. Establishes staff evaluation process that reflects implementation of those instructional practices. Works with teachers to identify students' individual needs and matches instructional practices to these needs. Utilizes information from observations, and student needs assessment, or individual growth plans to drive professional development activities.	Understands the guidelines of all support programs, articulates these to stakeholders. Monitors the implementation of the programs.
2	Monitors and evaluates the instructional practices of teachers. Poorly defined staff evaluation process used. Minimal attention to individual student needs and modified instructional practices. Utilizes information from observations or student needs assessment or individual growth plans to drive professional development activities.	Provides stakeholders with the guidelines of all support programs and monitors the programs without a clear focus. No articulation of the scoring/analyzing of portfolios. Encourages the implementation of portfolios.
1	Pays no attention to the instructional practices of the staff. No process for staff evaluation used. Recognizes that there are individual student needs but has no plan for meeting their needs. Does not utilize information from observations or student needs assessment or growth plans to drive professional development activities.	No evidence of support program monitoring.

Leadership Rubric Area: Instruction

<p>Leadership Indicators</p> <p>A</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates and maintains current research library. • Identifies professional development opportunities and encourages staff to continue professional growth. • Models "best" instructional practices. • Provides maintenance opportunities. • Reviews current research and shares information with staff and parents. • Facilitates planning for and discussion of student needs (learning styles, multiple intelligences, special abilities) <p>B</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures integration of support programs (ESS, Chapter 1, FRYSC, Title II, Title IX, IDEA). • Meets regularly with building coordinators to plan, evaluate, and revise programs. • Ensures that support programs are reflected in STP. • Involved in portfolio scoring. • Provides resources for teachers during portfolio process (i. e., release time for scoring and conferencing). <p>C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attends portfolio training. • Facilitates portfolio process with all stakeholders. • Involved in portfolio scoring. • Provides resources for teachers during portfolio process (i.e., release time for scoring and conferencing).
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Leadership preparation from a constructivist viewpoint

As a theory about knowledge and learning, constructivism defines knowledge as temporal, developmental, socially and culturally mediated, and thus, non-objective (Brooks & Brooks, 1993, p. vii). Learning from this perspective is understood as a self-regulated process of resolving inner cognitive conflicts, which often become apparent through concrete experience, collaborative conversation, reflection, and imagination. Constructivism has important implications for teaching. Teaching from a constructivist perspective cannot be viewed as the transmission of knowledge from the enlightened teacher to the unenlightened student. Constructivist teachers do not take the role of the ‘all-knowing’, rather, they act as facilitators of exploration that provides students with opportunities to test the adequacy of their current understandings and explore new knowledge and cognitive skills. In the words of Talbert, McLaughlin and Rowan (1993):

The constructivist view of effective classroom instruction is often called ‘teaching for understanding’, and research on this topic has become a priority for educational policy makers. The importance of this form of teaching lies in its potential to enhance the kinds of cognitive outcomes for students that the American educational system has heretofore been notoriously ineffective at producing (p. 47).

To ensure leadership that is consistent with constructivist views of learning and motivation, principals will be obligated to understand this view of learning themselves and to be able to help others develop such understanding. In applying constructivism to the preparation of school leaders, the same principles apply. As in teaching, leader development cannot be viewed as the transmission of knowledge from enlightened to unenlightened. Constructivist leaders do not take the role of the ‘all-knowing’. Leadership preparation programs, based on constructivist principles, provide leaders-in-training with opportunities to test the adequacy of their current understandings about leadership and to explore new ways of leading. Such programs may be led by other school leaders who act as facilitators of exploration.

Sparks (1995) and Sparks and Hirsh (1997) described professional development from a constructivist approach, as programs in which participants individually and collectively build knowledge structures, rather than simply receive information from experts. Lieberman and Grolnick (1997) said that constructivist approaches to the development of leaders are necessary for successful school reform. They held that such approaches are characterised by “a wide array of learning

opportunities, engagement and commitment to inquiry, access to real problems to solve, learning that connects to... prior experiences, [and] opportunities to work with others..." (Lieberman & Grolnick, 1997, p. 193).

The adoption of a constructivist view of leaders, as previously noted (Drath & Palus, 1994; Duke, 1996; Lambert, 1995; Smircich & Morgan, 1982; Starratt, 1993), requires the belief that leadership is a social meaning-making process that occurs in groups of people who are engaged in some activity together. Leadership is seen as something that people use in their relations with one another to make sense, to make meaning. Constructivist leadership is seen to be more concerned with making meaning than about making decisions and influencing people, and shared meaning is considered as a guide for action and behaviour. Constructivist leadership involves "the reciprocal processes that enable participants in an educational community to construct meanings that lead toward a common purpose of schooling" (Lambert, 1995, p. 33).

Leithwood and Duke (1997) believed that when school principals behave in constructivist ways, they are engaging in a broad form of instructional leadership. In the 1980s instructional leadership would not have been considered as constructivist leadership. At the time Greenfield (1986a) noted; "Instructional leadership refers to actions undertaken with the intention of developing a productive and satisfying working environment for teachers and desirable learning conditions and outcomes for children" (p. 60). Times and understandings have changed, and now, as Meyer et al. (2001) suggest:

principals are not engaged in the hands-on, curriculum-expert style of instructional leadership as envisioned in the 1980s. ... First, instructional leadership must be reconceptualised to describe the act or process of creating and sustaining an environment in which teachers can carry on their highly complex socially textured task of instruction. Second, the definition must also recognise and encompass the continuously expanding role that principals are assuming. More than ever, tasks other than curriculum supervision and for which principals were also previously responsible are now assuming greater prominence (Meyer et al. 2001, p. 12).

Leithwood and Duke (1997) stated that principals needed to develop the following qualities if they are to be instructional leaders within a constructivist paradigm of schooling:

- The principal possesses an extensive understanding of, and assists staff in developing an understanding of:
 - learning as a process of constructing meaning; and,
 - the needs based and goal oriented nature of human motivation;

- The principal communicates the school's assumptions about the learning process and the nature of human motivation to parents and the wider community, assists them in understanding and developing support for these assumptions, and encourages parents to act on such assumptions in the home;
- The principal assists parents and the wider community in understanding and developing support for the school's assumptions about the learning process and the nature of human motivation;
- The principal encourages parents to interact with their children in ways that reflect the school's assumptions about the learning process and the nature of human motivation.

(Leithwood & Duke, 1997, p. 15)

Smith and Dawson (1998) suggested that an example of a constructivist approach to principal development is evidenced in the Radford University's *Principal Preparation Program* (USA). The philosophical framework of this program is defined as "transformational leadership with a particular kind of instructional leadership that embraces constructivist tenets" (Smith & Dawson, 1998, p. 2). They state that in this program, "professors seek to prepare leaders who are capable of cultivating a professional school culture with their staff". This program comprises the use of trade and scholarly books, instructional conversations, weekly reflective writings, mini-lectures, group work, synthesis of concepts and choosing a personal platform.

Smith and Dawson (1998) also maintain that the principal preparation program of Virginia State Department of Education (USA) is another example of a constructivist leadership development program. This program is based on Brooks and Brooks' (1993) five principles of a constructivist approach to teaching and learning. These are: (1) posing problems of emerging relevance to learners; (2) structuring learning around primary concepts; (3) seeking and valuing students' points of view; (4) adapting the curriculum to address students' suppositions, and (5) assessing student learning in the context of teaching.

In regards to the Virginia State program, Smith and Dawson (1998) have stated that:

[In] the preparation of principals we use problem-based learning and internships as the primary strategies to address principles one and two; classroom conversations, journals, and feedback sessions address principles three and four. Portfolios, presentations, and internships address principle five (p. 9).

Other than semester-length tertiary courses in educational administration, examples of short-term leader preparation workshops that are built on a constructivist view of leadership are more difficult to pinpoint. One example is possibly the

Principal Profile Workshop program described by Begley (1995). He contends that the use of principal profiles in workshops enables principals to build their own sense of contextual meaning (thus engaging in constructivist activities).

Problem-based learning is an approach to leadership development that arguably has a constructivist underpinning. Rhem (1998), in describing the reasons for the popularity of problem-based learning, stated that:

The list of reasons includes the fact that problem-based learning (PBL) ends up orienting students toward meaning-making over fact-collecting. They learn via contextualised problem sets and situations. Because of that, and all that goes with that, namely the dynamics of group work and independent investigation, they achieve higher levels of comprehension, develop more learning and knowledge-forming skills and more social skills as well. This approach to teaching brings prior knowledge into play more rapidly and ends up fostering learning that adapts to new situations and related domains as quickly and with the same joyous magic as a stone skipped over a body of water. (Rhem, 1998, p. 2)

Bridges (1992) and Hallinger (2000) claimed that their problem-based learning (PBL) approach to principal preparation programs incorporates a constructivist approach to learning. They say that PBL engages participants in reflective practices and critical discourse on problems related to the purposes of leadership, and through this reflection that principals construct their own meanings and understandings. Hallinger (2000) also claimed that his *Making Change Happen*, a computer based leadership simulation program based on school leadership problem solving, is an instrumental application of this type of leadership preparation.

One school leadership development model, the *Boundary-Breaking Leadership Development Model* (Webber & Robertson, 1998), has been designed within a constructivist paradigm. This model focuses on the construction of meaning, and sets the desired outcomes of leadership development as emotional engagement with learning, development of a critical perspective, movement beyond self, and development of agency (Robertson & Webber, 1999). Table 2.3 on the next page, illustrates the Boundary-Breaking Model with its eight attributes, beginning with “construction of meaning”.

Table 2.3 Boundary Breaking: A Model for Leadership Development

(Webber & Robertson, 1998, p. 15)

Attribute	Student Role	Instructor Role	Implications
Construction of meaning	<input type="checkbox"/> Rigorous reflection <input type="checkbox"/> Active 'listening' <input type="checkbox"/> Juxtaposition of self & others	<input type="checkbox"/> Examination of instructional practice <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced role as information provider	<input type="checkbox"/> Co-learning <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced hierarchy
Provision of a forum for discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Challenging debate <input type="checkbox"/> Public expression <input type="checkbox"/> Self-evaluation <input type="checkbox"/> Risk taking <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-role dialogue	<input type="checkbox"/> 'Public teaching' <input type="checkbox"/> Asynchronous communication <input type="checkbox"/> Redefinition of 'courses' <input type="checkbox"/> Shared evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Potential discomfort <input type="checkbox"/> Technological infrastructure <input type="checkbox"/> Computer skill development <input type="checkbox"/> Seamless integration of technology
Validation of personal knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> Exploration of practical experience <input type="checkbox"/> Analysis of personal beliefs <input type="checkbox"/> Articulation of assumptions	<input type="checkbox"/> Acceptance of practice-based knowledge <input type="checkbox"/> Contextualised theory <input type="checkbox"/> Critical analysis of relevant theory & research	<input type="checkbox"/> Confluence of theory & practice <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced status differential
Generative approach to learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Active involvement <input type="checkbox"/> Examination of personal practice <input type="checkbox"/> New metaphors for practice	<input type="checkbox"/> Trust in process <input type="checkbox"/> Reduced intervention <input type="checkbox"/> Less control <input type="checkbox"/> Diverse student needs for information	<input type="checkbox"/> Flexible course structure <input type="checkbox"/> Varied evaluations <input type="checkbox"/> Issue relevancy <input type="checkbox"/> Contextualised participation
Formal & informal leadership	<input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced locus of control <input type="checkbox"/> Embraced stress	<input type="checkbox"/> Shared leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Modeled leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Clarification of leadership practices	<input type="checkbox"/> Expanded participant profile <input type="checkbox"/> Shared responsibility for learning
Sense of community	<input type="checkbox"/> Links to colleagues outside classes <input type="checkbox"/> Consideration of 'others' <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-role dialogue	<input type="checkbox"/> Attended to affective behaviors <input type="checkbox"/> Encouragement <input type="checkbox"/> Attention to safety <input type="checkbox"/> Pastoral care	<input type="checkbox"/> Reduced teacher isolation <input type="checkbox"/> Global community <input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced local community
Growth of a counterculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Seeking cognitive dissonance <input type="checkbox"/> Scrutiny of the heretofore accepted	<input type="checkbox"/> Imaging of alternatives <input type="checkbox"/> Creating opportunities to question and imagine	<input type="checkbox"/> Pushing the edges of beliefs & practices <input type="checkbox"/> Possibilising
International perspectives	<input type="checkbox"/> Cross-cultural analysis <input type="checkbox"/> Reconsideration of personal contexts	<input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration with compatible instructors <input type="checkbox"/> Provision of materials <input type="checkbox"/> Integration with local & national communities	<input type="checkbox"/> 'Big picture' focus <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative perspectives

While the preparation of school leaders can be based on a constructivist theory, another approach to leadership preparation can come from adoption of a critical theory in which the focus is more on educative leadership than the construction of meaning.

Leadership preparation based on critical theory

Critical theory is usually identified with the work of representatives of the Frankfurt School, and especially with the work of Habermas. Critical theory has identified itself with the Marxist legacy of attempting to forge a dialectical synthesis of philosophy and a scientific understanding of society. Some features of this synthesis are an appeal to a widened notion of rationality, a resistance to all forms of domination, an orientation to praxis, and the centrality of the concept of emancipation. In education, research which has a critical theory thrust aims at promoting critical consciousness, and struggles to break down the institutional structures and arrangements which reproduce oppressive ideologies and the social inequalities that are sustained and produced by these social structures and ideologies. (Mezirow, 1981).

Watkins (1989, p. 25) suggested that leadership based on critical theory focuses on questions of power and the use of power to manipulate staff and to dominate situations. In a critical perspective, power is not perceived to be a resource of an organisation, but comes from within human agency. Power and structures of domination are dependent as much on the actions of subordinates as on the use of power by superordinates. Bates (1982) stated that power and structures of domination could be revealed through frameworks of language, in particular how some leaders use language as a mechanism of control. Bates (1982) referred to Habermas in describing what a critical approach to school administration and leadership would involve:

a critical practice of educational [leadership] revolves around the use of language as a mechanism of control in negotiations over action. The comparison of the use of language in the discourse of negotiations in the administrative context of the school with conditions of ideal discourse outlined by Habermas may well prove very revealing of the ways in which certain forms of domination are imposed via the language of administering. A critical

educational [leadership] would be in part directed towards the clarification, examination and redirection of such discourse (p. 11).

Starratt (1993) believed that effective school leaders are those that are likely to be critically reflective about the quality of education in their schools and who also demonstrate the belief that they are able to make a difference to the quality of education offered in their settings. He argued that adopting a critical theory would enable leaders to:

1. Recognise that the institution you serve may be flawed by structures of domination and by exclusive promotion of functional, technical rationality. Through consultation, assessment and reflection, identify the most glaring aspects of these flaws and name the human suffering, humiliation and alienation they cause. Look at the institutional barriers to ideal speech conditions.
2. Reflect on and articulate the human and social purposes of the organisation you serve. Ask whether these purposes are served well by current institutional practices.
3. Introduce ethical questions in policy and planning discussions, as well as into labour-management relations, personnel policies, and work-safety, product-safety considerations.
4. Institutionalise the practice of critical self-reflection at several levels of the organisation and create communication and decision-making processes for dealing with the conclusions of these self-reflection groups.
5. Recognise that knowledge is always bounded by culture and historical circumstances. Hence, critique can never transcend the limits of our own boundedness and human limitations. Therefore self-reflection, dialogue and argument are to be considered essential, ongoing elements of the institution.
6. Recognise that involvement with the cultural aspects of the organisation is the most important task of the leader (Starratt, 1993, p. 84-85).

Crowther (1997) stated that a critical theory of leadership is linked to ‘educative leadership’:

Educative leadership is often viewed as linked to social reconstructionist philosophy. For Bates [1992], the essential point about leadership in education is that it “involves the making and articulating of choices, the location of oneself within the cultural struggles of the times as much in the cultural battles of the school as in the wider society” (p. 19). For Foster [1989], “leadership is at its heart a critical practice”, involving educational leaders in the necessary practice of reflective and critical thinking about the culture of their organisations (p.52). Both Bates and Foster could be said to emphasize educative approaches to leadership (Crowther, 1997, p. 11).

Educative leadership proposes that the wisest approach to leadership in educational institutions is that it be educative in intent and outcome. Smyth (1989)

explored the theoretical basis of educative leadership, mainly using the work of Fay (1987). Smyth (1989, p. 179) urged a greater consideration of the social, cultural and political nature of schools and discusses some of the problems associated with the historical neglect of the power and knowledge of teachers as leaders. He strongly promoted the idea of real and purposeful empowerment of teachers as leaders. He argued that the notion of leaders and followers, dominator and dominated is anti-educational.

The importance of shared leadership, and of the role of teachers as leaders, is reiterated in the School Leadership for the 21st Century Initiative report *Leadership for Student Learning: Redefining the Teacher as Leader* (IEL, 2001). This report argued forcibly for the active promotion of teachers as leaders, and made recommendations for the preparation of teacher-leaders. The report emphasised the importance that this could have in bringing about democracy in classroom practices. In the rationale to the report is the following statement:

In his Phi Delta Kappan article, Roland Barth [Barth, 2001] states, “Few schools operate democratically.” But when teachers take on leadership roles beyond the classroom their schools can become more democratic than dictatorial, and everyone benefits. The more democratic a school culture, “the more students come to believe in, practice, and sustain our democratic form of governance.” In similar ways, teachers, principals, and the school itself will be strengthened in their roles. A more participatory ambience is unlikely to materialise in settings where teacher’s daily lives are overloaded with a staggering list of obligations, time is a precious commodity, and a climate of circumspection rather than creativity prevails in the school (p. 4).

While the School Leadership for the 21st Century Initiative is not grounded in critical theory, the intention of bringing about social and cultural change with the emphasis on democratic processes – while emphasising the need to emancipate teachers lives from a “staggering list of obligations” and a “climate of circumspection” – may be taken as an indicator of an emancipatory interest.

In addition to espousing the adoption of shared and collaborative forms of leadership, the preparation of leaders with a critical interest would also have a concern for social change. Foster (1989) noted that:

Leadership is and must be orientated towards social change, resulting in a transformation of social conditions...but this requires a community of believers not just a leader. ... The leader’s role is to reveal the ‘taken-for-granted’ features of institutional life, and to allow for commentary on the ways and means that the institution either restrains or promotes human agency (p. 52-55).

Foster (1989) also stated that “through the critique of social conditions and the followers’ role in maintaining such conditions, the critical leader offers new possibilities for social arrangements, and the followers’ role in making such arrangements, and in so doing helps to raise the level of followers’ moral consciousness regarding their situation” (Foster, 1989, p. 55).

Watkins (1985) argued that a critical approach to preparing school leaders would involve them in developing participatory and collaborative leadership practices, that are founded on “a more equal power basis”:

A critical rationality suggests that by recognising that all human agents have some degree of knowledge, and by unmasking manipulative, deceptive tactics, school administration would be founded on a more equal power basis. As a consequence many administrative practices would become demystified as the school community gained a critical understanding of those processes central to the reshaping of school administration on a more participatory, collaborative basis (p. 2).

Finding examples of school leadership programs that could be categorised as being grounded in critical theory is difficult. The Master in Educational Administration program of Deakin University in the 1980s and early 1990s arguably had a decidedly critical theory focus, as it was strongly influenced by the critical theorists who were working there. These included Richard Bates, John Smyth, and Peter Watkins amongst others. Sun (1999) described Bates as one of Australia’s leading critical theorists of that time.

Siegrist and Schmertzing (2000) described how the school leadership program of Valdosta State University in the USA, was purposefully redesigned to take on a more critical paradigm. The goal of their restructured program was to produce collaborative school leaders whose primary focus was on the outcomes for “diverse student groups”. Contained within this goal:

are the beliefs that (1) student achievement must drive the preparation program and (2) program outcomes must include:

- a. Using achievement data to effect change
- b. Reducing the effect of environmental and institutional barriers to student success
- c. Closing the achievement gap between high and low income and majority/minority groups
- d. Working effectively with all stakeholders in the educational community
- e. Preparing students to succeed in a variety of post-secondary options (Siegrist & Schmertzing, 2000, p. 11)

It may be argued that this program is not based in a critical theory for its intentions are primarily focused on assisting students to attain high levels of achievement in system derived outcomes (when perhaps it is this form of positivist

achievement that reinforces hegemonic barriers). The goals, however, of reducing the effects of institutional barriers on student success, and of closing the gap between high and low income groups, may be perceived to be emancipatory.

Short-term school leader preparation programs based on a critical theory are also hard to find. Some affirmative action/equity programs can be based in critical theory. For example, some elements of the *Women in Management* program (Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment, NT 2001) and the *Eleanor Davis School Leadership Program* for women leaders (Australian Principals Centre 2001) demonstrate an emancipatory intention.

Another example of a leadership preparation program with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest is Duignan and Macpherson's (1991; 1987) *Educative Leadership Program* (ELP). Described previously when discussing a constructivist paradigm, this program is a source of leadership training activities that promotes an educative leadership approach. Duignan and Macpherson's (1991) educative leadership emphasises the importance of the culture of the organisation and the concern for values and morals in the administration of education. They claim:

A key point made by the ELP research is that educative leaders have a moral responsibility, to play a proactive role in helping communities make sense of changes in ways that help reform social, and political relationships (Duignan & Macpherson, 1991, p. 4).

A form of school leadership development that can be grounded in a critical theory is action research (Kemmis, 1993, 2000). Action research – and action learning – can expose limitations and barriers within schools, and enable leaders to bring about change. But as Kemmis (2000) warned:

we had discovered that action research understood merely as a research method had no particular power to emancipate people from irrationality, injustice or dissatisfaction - indeed, when interpreted just as a series of steps in a spiral of self-reflection, it could be or become part of the structures of irrationality, injustice and dissatisfaction in a setting. To be emancipatory, it had to be undertaken with shared critical intent, and it had to be alert to the dangers of self-deception: the possibility that participants would replace one set of structures of domination with another (p. 5).

An example of a school leadership development program that arguably incorporates critical thinking - but is not based in critical theory - through action learning is the PRISM program of the Australian Principals Centre (APC). This program is built on the practical premise that “there is no right way to be a successful principal” (APC, 2001, p.6). It is described by the APC as a non-judgmental, inquiry based approach to leadership. Principals and their partners work together over a

period of 4-6 months shadowing and interviewing each other to collect data and analyse their leadership activities. Peer partners attempt to develop mutual trust, providing fertile ground for candid exchanges of ideas about practice, critical reflection on key issues, and critical self-analysis. This program, while promoting critical thinking, is not grounded in emancipation.

Action research programs such as the PRISM program are based on critical reflection upon action, they focus on either a leader's behaviour, or the impact of the leader's behaviour on his or her organisation (including followers). Writ and Krug (1998, p. 231) argued that there is a need to depart from the tradition of studying leadership behaviour to understanding the cognitive aspects of leadership. That is, a study that focuses on how leaders' think about what they do rather than only on what their actions are. They argued that the study of school leadership, and the preparation of school leaders, should adopt a cognitive approach.

The need for a cognitive approach to school leadership preparation

Foster (1986) noted that most studies in education and other fields have viewed organisations and the variety of dynamics within them in structural, behavioural or process-centred terms, altogether omitting consideration of organisations in terms of cognition and experience. He argued that there has been relatively little work done in terms of the thinking, learning and feeling of the people who comprise the leadership of organisations.

Begley (1995) stated that often schools and principals are described as effective without saying much about how they become effective. He suggested that the focus has been on the empirical and technical aspects of leadership and the greater part of the literature has been blind to what Barnard (1938) proposed as the moral dimension of leadership, which in today's language, has to do with values and cognitive problem solving.

Leithwood and Steinbach's (1993) also argued that an approach to understanding educational leadership that needs further development is the cognitive perspective. In their work they state that studying the cognitive perspective has the potential to make a significant contribution to the understanding and development of effective school leadership, not least because:

[it] may redefine the meaning of effective leadership by focusing attention on those expert, internal, cognitive processes which give rise to situationally sensitive and necessarily contingent sets of overt leadership practices, rather than on those practices themselves. This would free both researchers and practising school leaders from what may well turn out to be a fruitless search for a stable set of effective overt leadership practices in organisational variability (p. 131).

Gardner (1995) supported the call for greater attention to cognitive processes. Gardner is interested in the minds of leaders and followers and how their ideas and stories interact. He distanced himself from mainstream cognitive research that involves information-processing studies that see cognition as a series of steps from input to output. Gardner is more concerned with reflective practices and the role of interpretation of the narratives or stories that leaders create and that, over time, create them.

Prestine (1995) argued strongly that the inclusion of cognitive perspectives on learning and teaching must be a critical part of any educational leadership preparation program. In his work he says that this must not be presented as another “monolithic knowledge domain, not as another skill area to be checked off in a burgeoning compendium of competencies for prospective [leaders]. This is entirely antithetical to the cognitive perspective” (Prestine, 1995, p. 181). Rather the emphasis must be on establishing direct linkages and interconnections between cognitive perspectives on learning and leadership practice. These linkages and interconnections should focus on how cognitive understandings of learning and teaching inform and shape administrative practice and how administrative leadership can further and support cognitive-based curricula and instructional practices.

Collins et al. (1989) proposed “cognitive apprenticeship” as a model that advocates the acquisition of “situated knowledge” through “collaborative social interaction and the social construction of knowledge” rather than through “the passive, isolated, and decontextualised processes emphasized in most educational settings” (Collins et al. 1989, p. 62). The key dimensions of a cognitive-apprenticeship model include externalising the metacognitive processes that experts usually carry out internally, situating otherwise abstract knowledge in locally relevant professional contexts of practice, and developing self-correction and self-monitoring skills.

Prestine and Legrand (1991) have called for a cognitive interest approach to school leadership preparation. They advocated the notions of situated cognition and cognitive apprenticeship as a way of improving the quality of educational administrators’ preparation by placing greater emphasis on the social and cultural

context in which learning takes place. Prestine and Legrand's (1991) work emphasised the creation of a cognitive-apprenticeship environment within formal preparation courses. Predominantly these courses engage school leaders in group problem-solving exercises, and other reflective activities, where experts and aspirants work together to externalise processes of thought and reasoning.

Begley (1995), as noted previously (p. 35), argued for the importance of school leadership profiles in leadership development. He built on the notion of cognitive apprenticeships by proposing an approach that involves the development and use of school leadership profiles. These profiles provide a framework within which principals and other school leaders can explore and share their cognitive processes, particularly in relation to decision-making.

These and other researchers, including Leithwood, Begley and Cousins (1992) and Leithwood and Hallinger (1993), have all noted the importance of exploring cognition as a better way of explaining the nature of school leadership, yet the research in this field is far from extensive or complete. In particular, there is a clear need to develop a cognitive interest framework that can be used as the basis for understanding the work of educational leaders, and to inform leadership preparation. The purpose of this study, as described in Chapter 1, is to examine if Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests can be used for this purpose.

Habermas and the theory of knowledge-constitutive interests

Introduction to Habermas

Habermas is arguably one of the best known of the critical social theorists and his theory of knowledge-constitutive interests has served to ground a wide range of studies in many fields. In basing this study on the work of Habermas, it is recognised from the onset that Habermas did not posit his theory of knowledge interests as a means for examining leadership. Rather his work is that of a philosopher and social theorist and his theory is located within his total argument for an 'ideal speech' situation from which emancipation may emerge. White (1988, p. 25) noted that the central issue driving Habermas' work has been to demonstrate that an exclusively

instrumental or positivist understanding of rationality is inadequate, that emancipation from the domination of scientific rationality will contribute to a better society founded in democratic and humanistic endeavour. Within this work is his description of the technical, practical and emancipatory knowledge-constitutive interests.

Habermas has been described as the last modern social theorist (Cook, 1991). Born in 1929 he has been a highly influential social thinker and writer. If a single category can be said to describe Habermas' work, it would be that he is a critical modernist who wishes to responsibly reconstruct an informed, comprehensive perspective on modernity in the face of those authors who question the very legitimacy of modernism itself (Burrell, 1994, p. 4).

Habermas is the leading scholar of the second generation of the Frankfurt School, a group of philosophers, cultural critics and social scientists associated with the Institute for Social Research, founded in Frankfurt in 1929. The Frankfurt School is best known for its development of a critical theory of society. The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy (2000) describes critical theory in the following terms:

Critical theory is primarily a way of doing philosophy, integrating the normative aspects of philosophical reflection with the explanatory achievements of the social sciences. The ultimate goal of its program is to link theory and practice, to provide insight, and to empower subjects to change their oppressive circumstances and achieve human emancipation and a rational society that satisfies human needs and powers (p. 278-79).

Habermas first taught philosophy at Heidelberg before becoming a professor of philosophy and sociology at the University of Frankfurt. It is neither feasible nor necessary to try to redevelop all of Habermas' work in this thesis, for his ideas are far ranging and diverse. The basic elements of his work, as Thompson and Held (1982, p. 9) note, are derived from Marx (1906). Habermas, however, argued that Marx's emphasis on the concept of social labour prevented him from giving an adequate account of the transformation of science and technology into a leading productive force; a force that dominates not only the notion of labour power (labour can be and is replaced by technical forces), but also the way we understand our world.

Habermas then turned to the work of Freud, not for his interest in psychoanalysis, but because of Freud's work in explaining how insight can coincide with emancipation from unrecognised dependencies. In Freud's work psychoanalysis presupposes a framework in which action and communication are systematically distorted by the exercise of power and repression; and this discipline is paradigmatic for those sciences which are governed by an 'interest in emancipation' (Thompson &

Held, 1982, p. 8). For Habermas, emancipation from the domination of modern science and the positivist philosophy was of prime importance; in this regard Habermas can be seen to be concerned with a critical theory.

Habermas (1987) maintained that the process of coming to an understanding of a specific situation must take place against the horizon of a 'lifeworld'. According to Habermas, it is from the viewpoint of understanding-oriented action that the lifeworld "stores the interpretive work of preceding generations" and, thus functions as a "conservative counterweight to the risk of disagreement that arises with every actual process of reaching an understanding" (p. 341). Borrowing from phenomenological studies, Habermas' work draws attention to a culturalistic concept of lifeworld. He argued that it is the cultural patterns of interpretation, evaluation, and expression that serve as resources for the achievement of mutual understanding by participants who want to negotiate a common definition of a situation to arrive at a consensus regarding something in the world. Such an interpreted action situation, Habermas (1987, p. 134) argued, provides a thematically 'opened up' range of action alternatives, that is, of conditions and means for carrying out plans. How staff interpret, evaluate and express their understanding of their leader's knowledge-constitutive needs (as well as their own), seems to be the key to providing effective ways of improving staff interaction and achieving the school's purposes.

As Habermas' (1972) work suggests, such a view of the cultural patterns of interpretation, evaluation and expression of an action situation does not fall under formal world-concepts. People lack the means by which they can interpret fully their situation. He said that it is the work of social scientists and other researchers to develop these means. This study, at the risk of oversimplifying Habermas' position, has concentrated on developing a framework and language for understanding the work of school leaders. To do so, this study has focused on Habermas' theory of three knowledge-constitutive interests.

Knowledge-constitutive interests

In later years Habermas turned his attention away from his theory of knowledge-constitutive interests and focused more on a theory of communication. Roderick (1986) noted that:

Habermas has abandoned the main idea of *Knowledge and Human Interest* and rearranged the trichotomy of knowledge into a registrar that proposes a dichotomy between the technical interest on the one hand and the practical and emancipatory interest on the other. The rearrangement used a categorical distinction of purposive-rational attention from the early attempt to ground critical theory in a theory of knowledge to an attempt to ground critical theory in a theory of communication (p. 71)

Despite this shift it is the insights that Habermas developed into the forms of human knowledge, based on his early concern for a theory of knowledge, that has been widely recognised by researchers and scholars and has been used as the basis of this study. Habermas first introduced the concept that there is more than one form of knowledge-constitutive interest, in the context of his analyses of Marcuse and Weber. In *Towards a Rational Society* (Habermas 1970), he built on the work of Marcuse (1964, 1968) to propose that to understand the *life-world* it is necessary to accept that there is another form of rationality in addition to that postulated by Weber:

The difficulty, which Marcuse has only obscured with the notion of the political content of technical reason, is to determine in a categorically precise manner the meaning of the expansion of the rational form of science and technology, i.e. the rationality embodied in systems of purposive-rational action [*zweckrational*, also translated to mean 'work' or 'labour'], to the proportions of a life form, of the "historical totality" of a life-world. This is the same process that Weber meant to designate and explain as the rationalisation of society. I believe that neither Weber nor Marcuse has satisfactorily accounted for it. Therefore I should like to attempt to reformulate Weber's concept of rationalisation in another frame of reference in order to discuss on this new basis Marcuse's critique of Weber, as well as his thesis of the double function of scientific-technical progress (as productive force and as ideology). I am proposing an interpretative scheme that, in the format of an essay, can be introduced but not seriously validated with regard to its utility. The historical generalisations thus serve only to clarify this scheme and are no substitute for its scientific substantiation (Habermas 1970, p. 90).

Marcuse (1964) believed that emancipation from the domination of positivist science must come from a restructuring of science and technology. Habermas, however, did not accept this, but rather saw technical rationality as having an important place (in the dimension of 'purposive-rational action' or 'work'). Habermas argued in *Towards a Rational Society* (1970) for the existence of an alternative type of action, not an alternative type of science and technology, but another form of understanding that exists along side it. For Habermas, this other form of action is 'communicative action' which entails intersubjectivity and mutual understanding that is based on hermeneutics and that has an emancipatory purpose

(Habermas 1970, p. 92). In this alternative type of action lies the basis of his theory that three forms of knowledge-constitutive interest exist side by side.

In seeking to understand the organisation of capitalism and in fighting against the overwhelming impact of positivist thinking, *Knowledge and Human Interests* (Habermas 1971) argued that there are three irreducible cognitive interests that guide human endeavour. This is Habermas’ interest constitution theory and it proposes that people are motivated to create new knowledge for reasons that reflect either a technical, practical or an emancipatory cognitive interest. Habermas (1987) said:

There are three categories of processes of inquiry for which a specific connection between logical-methodological rules and knowledge-constitutive interests can be demonstrated. This demonstration is the task of a critical philosophy of science that escapes the snares of positivism. The approach of the empirical-analytic sciences incorporates a technical cognitive interest; that of the historical-hermeneutic sciences incorporates a practical one; and the approach of critically oriented sciences incorporates the emancipatory cognitive interest that, as we saw, was at the root of traditional theories (p. 308).

Habermas does not elaborate on his theory in any of his published works, and as a result different scholars and researchers have interpreted it in different ways. Kemmis (1985), however, provided a succinct statement of Habermas’ theory, in the following table (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 Summary of knowledge and interests (Kemmis, 1985, p. 145)

Interest	Knowledge	Medium of Social Organisation	Science
Technical	Instrumental (causal explanation)	Work	Empirical analytic (physical sciences)
Practical	Practical (understanding)	Language	Hermeneutic or interpretative science (history)
Emancipatory	Critical (critique)	Power	Critical social science

The first interest that people have in creating knowledge or ways of understanding their environment comes from positivism and is rooted in human endeavour. It is far broader than the term ‘technical’ might imply, for it takes into account the interest we have in all knowledge for technical control and causality. It is knowledge that is created by our underpinning of western scientific thought, with all its structures such as experimentation, hypothesis, deduction, evidence, empirical data, and value-free objectivism.

The second interest that Habermas (1971, p. 309) says drives us, is the concern we have for knowledge based on interpretation and hermeneutics. Again this is not clearly implied by the term 'practical', which in common English use implies 'hands-on' or 'down-to-earth', but derives from the German root (*praktisch*) that refers to symbolic interaction within a normative order, to ethics and politics and signifies interpretation and clear communication. The interest we share here is for knowledge that enables us to understand as opposed to rationalise or objectively theorise.

The third interest is seen to be emancipatory, and can be based in either the technical or practical interests. It is about understanding that some knowledge created by our sciences can actually bind us into ways of thinking and behaving that can place limits on the way we interact with our environment and how we understand our social systems. Those who hold this interest seek knowledge that attempts to understand how social relationships are distorted and manipulated by power and privilege. For the leader this involves a strong focus on self-reflection, and promoting mutual understanding of actions, experiences and perceptions, through deliberate collective and communicative action.

According to Sunstein (1996) Habermas has not himself clearly elucidated his knowledge-constitutive interests framework, and his work has typically been viewed by many as obtuse and practically difficult to apply. As Burrell (1994) described:

while Habermas' work does seem to hold clear promises of a methodology of critical social science, unfortunately when questioned by his critics about valid approaches he did not respond. When he did with his book, *The Theory of Communicative Action (Volume I)*, which is widely accepted as a work of theoretical importance, his attempts to provide an approach to social science research again failed to impress the community of scholars (p. 8).

Yet as Burrell (1994) also noted, regardless of the fact that Habermas has not elucidated his theory in practical ways, it still provides a strong and acceptable framework for research. Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests:

provides operational research with a strong framework through which it might come to know political choices through which differing clienteles might be served. It is possible, as Mingers (1992) has done, to show operational research in three lights - technical, practical and critical, with a view to developing a critical management science. Similarly, in organisational theory, Alvesson and Willmott (1992) and Alvesson (1991) have utilised this scheme in 'understanding the discipline of management' and have been 'inspired by the conceptual scheme' to 'discuss the field of organisational symbolism in relation to the ideological nature of cognitive interests governing various studies within' (Alvesson, 1991, p. 216) (Burrell, 1994, p. 7).

Habermas' theory of three knowledge-constitutive interests has attracted its share of criticism. As White (1988, p. 27) noted, however, most of these criticisms have centred on his philosophical argument (Keat, 1981, Chapters 3-4; McCarthy 1978, Chapter 2), and these criticisms can be perceived to be part of the scholarly process of critical dialogue and debate.

Despite these criticisms, and the later shift in Habermas' own thinking (Roderick 1986), there has been a wide acceptance of Habermas' theory of three knowledge-constitutive interests by scholars and researchers. The theory is used to ground many studies in various fields of endeavour. The nature of the appeal that Habermas' theory has for scholars and researchers alike might be explained by the way it aligns with fundamental human needs. As Lakomski and Evers (1995) stated:

The need to appropriate and transform nature, expressed by Habermas' 'technical interest', and the need to understand one another encapsulated in the 'practical interest', are, according to Habermas, integral to the history of the species. In addition, humans have always sought to rid themselves of any form of domination and oppressive social structure. This third most fundamental but also derivative interest, is called the 'emancipatory' (Lakomski & Evers, 1995, p. 15).

To illustrate the wide acceptance of this theory, brief descriptions are provided in the next section of many of the different scholars and researchers who use the three knowledge-constitutive interests in their published work. Reference is provided to the studies of van Manen (1977), Mezirow (1981; 1981), Grundy (1982), Kemmis (1985; 1993; 2000), Fischer (1985), Hoffman (1987), Laughlin (1987), Mingers (1992), Lyytinen (1992), Dunne and Johnston (1994), Palmer and Dunford (1996), Connelly (1996), Alvesson and Willmott (1996), Hickey (1997), Broadbent and Laughlin (1997), Grunau et al. (1998), Underwood-Stephens and Cobb (1999), Lockett and Webstock (2000), and Willmott (2002).

The use of Habermas' theory in the work of scholars and researchers

van Manen (1977) applied Habermas' three knowledge-constitutive interests to an examination of curriculum development. In this work he addresses the issue of how schools and school systems should answer the question of 'what to teach'. He says that, "It is assumed that every educational choice is based on a value

commitment to some interpretative framework by those involved in the curriculum process” (van Manen 1977, p.227). In this paper he argues that Habermas’ theory can provide such a framework.

Grundy (1982) and Kemmis (1985) similarly accepted the validity of Habermas’ theory and used his three cognitive interests as heuristic devices for interpreting teachers’ work and commitments.

Fischer (1985) grounded his development of an alternative research methodology for the social sciences in Habermas’ theory of cognitive interests. He applied Habermas’ theory to the development of a methodology of policy evaluation for Project Head Start in the United States. Fischer's paper argues that critical theory can be used for practical purposes and not just as a philosophical project of little relevance. Although as Fischer (1985) stated:

The use of Habermas’ cognitive interests to develop a multimethodological research process is bound to generate controversy, especially among critical theorists. Some have argued that an effort to pin down the logic of a critical social science is a violation of its basic objective, an emancipatory discourse for political self-determination. In this view the very attempt to say what the rules of such a method are is to introduce intellectual constraints. For this reason it is important to be clear about what I have attempted here. While such criticisms are indeed relevant to the processes of critical reflection, the task has not been to offer specific methodological procedures for this level of evaluation. Instead, the purpose has been to clarify the logic of the relationship between critical reflection and the phenomenological and empirical modes of inquiry in evaluative discourse (p. 243).

Hoffman's (1987) work is an exploration of international relations. In this study he used Habermas’ theory to categorise different theories of international relations. Hoffman argued that predominantly all former theories of international relations can be categorised under either the practical or technical interest based knowledge, and not the emancipatory. In his paper he says that, “Critical theory adds an element of reflexivity to international relations theory, through its recognition of the emancipatory interest in knowledge production, but the other interests and the knowledge produced accordingly should not be disregarded” (Hoffman 1987, p.244).

Laughlin (1987) attempted to develop a “useful methodology” based on Habermas’ work in his research into accounting. His works suggests that the technical neutrality of accounting practice is illusionary and that Habermas provides a method for questioning the “colonising effects” of economic reason. His position argues for the use of Habermas’ theory to promote understanding and change in the context of the public sector in the UK.

Mingers (1992) in his paper on operational research developed a view of critical management science that was based upon Habermas' theory. Mingers (1992, p.4) claimed that his work in comparing "soft systems methodology with critical theory" in 1980 was the first explicit application of Habermas' theory to management science.

Lyytinen (1992) applied Habermas' theory in his study of Information Systems. He noted that Habermas' knowledge-constitutive interests have been applied by several authors to discuss and evaluate the dominant positivist research paradigm, but that most of this work has focused solely on the practical interest of mutual understanding.

Kemmis (1993; 2000) placed a great reliance on the acceptance of Habermas' theory to underscore his work in action research. As he wrote in regard to social research and policy analysis:

To return to my point: the connection between social research and social action is not resolved simply by changing to a different set of research sponsors (big unions instead of big bureaucracies, for example). Nor will it be achieved solely by improving research methods. It is achieved by doing different research, frequently with different purposes and substance and methodologies, with different people, in the service of different interests. A whole variety of kinds of research, and methodologies, are potentially relevant for such changed purpose. ...Some epistemological positions (e.g., Habermas' 1971 theory of knowledge-constitutive interests, and his 1987 theory of communicative action) comprehend these connections while some (like old-style positivism with its ideas about neutrality) do not. ... Our task as educational researchers involves us in taking concrete and explicit steps towards changing the theory, policy and practice of educational research, as well as participating in the work of changing educational theory, educational policy and educational practice more broadly (Kemmis 1993, p.5).

Dunne and Johnston (1994) study of gender-related differences in mathematical attainment is grounded in Habermas' Theory. They argued that the 'critical' position espoused by Habermas provides a more powerful platform for the development of research in this field than those of the technical and practical positions. In their paper they contend, "Through a critical analysis, the social and political contexts which circumscribe the production of knowledge are made explicit and are recognized for the constitutive role they play in the production and validation of knowledge. This is the case for both the arena which is being researched and for what counts as research" (Dunne & Johnston, 1994, p. 224).

Connelly (1996) noted the strong influence of Habermas' work on adult education theory. He acknowledged the earlier work of Mezirow (1981; 1991) in which Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests provided a theoretical basis for developing a theory of adult education. Interestingly, in his work Mezirow

(1981) says that he applied Habermas' theory in his work despite the fact that he recognised that the theory is open to debate.

As educators, we need not concern ourselves with the philosophical question of whether Habermas has succeeded in establishing the epistemological status of the primary knowledge-constitutive interests with categorically-distinct object domains, types of expertise and corresponding forms of inquiry. There is sufficient force in his analysis to warrant serious examination of this contention as a hypothesis for investigation of and design of appropriate approaches for facilitating learning relevant to these three domains of learning. Despite their obvious interrelatedness in everyday life, a compelling argument has been made for recognising that each involves its own different way of knowing and each is different enough to require its own appropriate mode of inquiry and educational strategy and tactics (Mezirow 1981, p.17).

Palmer and Dunford's (1996) work focused on the use of reframing as an approach used in the management of change. They ground their arguments, about the constraints of reframing, in Habermas' theory. They say that they use Habermas' "view of knowledge, as a framework from which to assess the production of reframing knowledge" (Palmer & Dunford, 1996, p.7).

Alvesson and Willmott (1996) have provided a discussion of the advantages of using Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests for understanding the discipline of management. In their book, Alvesson and Willmott (1996) say that they are concerned to show how the practices and institutions of management develop and are legitimised within relations of power and domination (eg. capitalism and patriarchy). They recognised, however, that traditional approaches to the study of management seek to produce more accurate knowledge of the reality of management (where accurate means an efficient and effective allocation of resources). They:

commend Habermas' theory of cognitive interests on the grounds that the production of different kinds of knowledge is formulated in relation to 'human interest' rather than their allegiance to particular sets of ideas about science and society, and support his related pleas for their mutual advancement (Alvesson & Willmott, 1996, p.44).

Alvesson and Willmott (1996) recognised that Habermas is a critical theorist, and that his theory of knowledge-constitutive interests is embedded in a critical paradigm, but they contend that using Habermas' theory to ground their work in management does not mean that their work has to be essentially critical. In their terms:

At the outset, it is worth stressing that this focus upon critical theory does not signal our unequivocal allegiance to this tradition of critical analysis...we do not consider that critical theory possesses a monopoly on truth...but equally, we believe that critical theory also

provides a valuable resource for making sense of management theory and practice (Alvesson & Willmott, 1996, p.67).

Hickey (1997) in his study of physical education students' teaching used Habermas' three knowledge-constitutive interests as a heuristic device for the diagnosis of student perceptions. As he described:

The preliminary study mobilises Habermas' (1972) spheres of human knowledge, namely, technical, practical and critical through which to represent the students' pedagogical knowledge and practice in physical education. As organising themes these spheres of knowledge also provide useful heuristic lenses through which to diagnose the students' theories and actions (Hickey 1997, p.51).

Broadbent and Laughlin (1997) adopted a Habermasian approach to develop a research model for exploring understanding about change in schools. While they mostly drew upon Habermas' theory of communicative action to inform their discourse process, they based the three elements of their research model on Habermas' three knowledge-constitutive interests. They argued that an approach to studying organisation change; "informed throughout by a methodological and theoretical framework developed from the work of Jurgen Habermas, is a fruitful way of approaching both research and organisational development" (Broadbent & Laughlin, 1997, p.16).

Grunau et al. (1998) explored professional development in science educators, and grounded their analysis in Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests. According to Graunau et al. (1998) each of three traditions of inquiry is associated with a different interest. In their work they focused mainly on Habermas' interest of what they term 'practical control', and divide it into 'personal understanding' and 'problem-solving' categories.

Underwood-Stephens and Cobb (1999) referred to Habermas' theory in their essay on organisational development. Their work focused on the question of whether it is possible to achieve justice in organisational change.

Luckett and Webbstock's (2000) work is an analysis of Outcomes Based Education in the *National Qualifications Framework on the Humanities* (South Africa). They used Habermas' theory to argue that there are three different educational paradigms that apply in understanding curriculum. They hold that Habermas' theory can be used to explain why tensions and conflicts arise in curriculum development. To Luckett and Webbstock (2000) such tensions arise because of differences in cognitive interests. Those in training institutions, unions, business and the natural and applied sciences, for example, may operate from within

the technical paradigm. Others, such as academics in the human and social sciences, may practice predominantly from within the practical paradigm. Some, such as the policy-makers involved in the establishment of the National Qualifications Framework, may operate from within the critical paradigm, whilst others still may operate from hybrid paradigms.

Willmott (2002) applied Habermas' theory to understanding 'New Organisational Forms'. He uses it to "offer a heuristic framework for appreciating and accommodating the existence of competing conceptions of scientific knowledge without abandoning a critical, reflexive understanding of knowledge production" (p. 3). In his paper he commends the use of Habermas' theory for the development of self-understanding (our knowledge of) management and of organisations. Like Fischer (1985), Willmott (2002) also argues that it is acceptable to use Habermas' theory in a study that is not founded in a critical paradigm.

Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests can be taken seriously without necessarily accepting Critical Theory in general, or Habermas' thinking in particular, for it offers the most plausible or coherent account of the 'interested' production of knowledge. The more modest requirement is a willingness to contemplate the possibility that Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests may be helpful in advancing the self-understanding of management knowledge as a product of scientific investigation. (p.4)

The studies briefly described in this section demonstrate that Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests has wide scholarly acceptance. It is used in various social investigations, from adult learning, to professional development, to management science, to accounting practices, to information systems, to social evaluation research, to understanding gender differences in mathematical ability, to curriculum design. These studies are indicative of the impact that Habermas' theory of cognitive interests has across a range of fields of research.

Synthesising a definition of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests

The work of each of the scholars and researchers described in the previous section adds to an understanding how Habermas' theory might be applied in practical contexts. The following is a more detailed description of how five of these scholars have interpreted Habermas' knowledge-constitutive interests in their work. From

these interpretations, and in regard to Habermas' original theory, working definitions of each of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests have been hypothesised for use in this research.

These five scholars have been chosen (over the others described in the previous section) because they are writers in very different fields, and yet at the same time their views of Habermas are representative of the work of the others.

Hickey's (1997) study was of good teaching in physical education. Palmer and Dunford's (1996) work was on Organisational Development. Kemmis (1985) used Habermas in his work on action research and reflective practice. Mezirow (1981) applied Habermas to adult learning principles, and van Manen (1977) applied Habermas' to curriculum development.

Hickey

In his study of student teachers' perceptions of good teaching in physical education, Hickey (1997) applied Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests as a heuristic device for interpreting commitment to quality practices. In his thesis he described the cognitive interests in the following way:

Within the Habermasian (1971) sphere of human knowledge, technical interests are oriented towards reaching pre-determined goals, or given end-points. Truth and reality are thought to be achievable through the control and/or manipulation of nature. A practical interest, on the other hand, affords greater commitment to the moral and ethical determinants of actions as a basis for setting achievable goals. With a strong practical foci on action in the real world, as proffered by Dewey (1938), this orientation constructs truth through that which is experienced in the 'real' world. The critical construction of social action is forged within a range of social, political, moral and ecological precepts. Within a critical orientation actors are required to recognise the consequences and contradictions of their values and practices. From a critical stand point the truth is often masked by ideological forces that reify injustice, inequity and inequality (Hickey, 1997, p. 51).

Kemmis

Kemmis (1985) used Habermas' three knowledge-constitutive interests in his work on action research and reflective practice. For Kemmis, Habermas (1971) provided a means for understanding the "search for knowledge" (Kemmis 1985, p.144) based on Aristotelian forms of reason. He interpreted Habermas' technical cognitive interest as being directed towards control. As generating instrumental

knowledge, which is knowledge that “codifies our means of control and that is based on causal explanations” (p.144). Kemmis (1985) says that a technical cognitive interest is aimed at finding solutions to problems, but having at the outset some criteria by which a solution can be judged to be an acceptable one (p. 146).

Kemmis (1985) described Habermas’ practical cognitive interest as being directed “towards mutual understanding and wise action within a coherent framework of values” (p.145) while the technical interest follows the scientific tenet of being ‘value-free’. To Kemmis (1985) the practical cognitive interest is about knowledge based on interpretation and in which language and communication play a very important part. To Kemmis (1985) it is about people who try to judge the “rightness of action in a social context” (p. 146) and who communicate and co-ordinate good ideas.

Finally Kemmis (1985) interpreted Habermas’ emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest as focusing on knowledge that is “aimed at emancipating people from the dictates of taken-for-granted self-deception”; and “the emancipatory interest is positively shaped by classical aspirations towards rationality, justice and fulfilment” (Kemmis 1985, p.145). It is about finding out how criteria have come to be accepted, analysing their historical and social formation, and organising social action towards emancipation. It is about overcoming distortions brought about by ideologies. To Kemmis (1985), people with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest question irrational decisions and rules, question unjust actions, and seek out why barriers and distortions exist in organisations (p.147).

Palmer and Dunford

Palmer and Dunford’s (1996) work on Organisational Development (OD) provides an interpretation of Habermas’ three knowledge-constitutive interests. In this work they interpreted Habermas’ theory as comprising three ‘levels’ of knowledge.

The first level of knowledge - technical knowledge - is “information that expands our power of technical control” (Habermas, 1971, p. 313). Palmer and Dunford (1996, p. 6) say that managers of organisations that have been trained in reframing in accordance with Bolman and Deal’s (1991; 1997) theory of frames are an example of this Level 1 interest. Such managers might use ‘feedback-monitored

action', based on reframing, to allow them to intervene in the technical areas of work to secure outcomes that are in accord with their own interests.

Level 2, or practical knowledge is knowledge gained from "interpretations that make possible the orientation of action within common traditions" (Habermas, 1971, p. 313). This is derived from a historical-hermeneutic view that emphasises meaning, interpretation and the importance of shared language (Habermas, 1971 p.308-310). It entails "expansion of the intersubjectivity of possible action-orienting mutual understanding ... and is directed in its very structure toward the attainment of possible consensus among actors in the framework of a self-understanding" (Habermas, 1971, p. 310). Palmer and Dunford (1996) suggested that this type of knowledge interest is seen in organisations where collective meaning is built through group work, where, "techniques are used to produce group solutions to organisational problems. This usually involves, in an action learning mode, using reframing with groups of people who together arrive at collective understandings of a situation and new solutions for dealing with it" (Palmer & Dunford, 1996, p. 7-8).

They also interpreted Habermas' practical interest to infer that it includes organisations where the managers develop strong 'strategic plans', which enable organisational action that is based on mutual understanding, creating common meaning for individuals and collective identity. They argued this is typified in the notion of an organisation's 'shared vision', which must be a collective phenomenon if it is to fundamentally affect practice. Organisational members that look at themselves through an emphasis on meaning, interpretation and the importance of a collective language place the knowledge that the organisation's managers need (their cognitive interest) on a historical-hermeneutic level (Palmer & Dunford, 1996, p. 8).

Level 3, or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest, derives from the critical social sciences and is one, which frees "consciousness from its dependence on hypostatised powers" (Habermas, 1971, p. 313). This entails reaching a standard of self-reflection, which is "emancipatory" (Habermas, 1971, p. 311). Palmer and Dunford (1996, p. 8) argued that this third level interest is hard to detect in organisations, for it is about transcending entrenched power relations and current constraints. They argued that it is difficult in organisations for people to rise above the existing organisational and other embedded power relations and attain 'liberating' sets of actions through reflective action.

van Manen

van Manen's (1977) work adopts the view that applying Habermas' notion of cognitive interests is to understand that "owning knowledge, like owning wealth inadvertently invests the proprietor with the practical interests inherent in the functions of that knowledge" (p. 225). In his work he interpreted the three cognitive interests as: (a) production and technical control; (b) communication and interpretive understanding; and (c) emancipation and liberation. Thus for van Manen, those who have a technical cognitive interest have knowledge that commits them to generating practically useful applications to technical-instrumental problems. Those who have practical knowledge are committed to provide communication and interpretive (understand) orientation to action. Finally those with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest "typically treat normative problems" (van Manen, 1977, p. 226).

van Manen (1977, p. 266) perceived the technical cognitive interest as the rationality of the "best choice", which he defined in accordance with the principles of technological progress, economy, efficiency, and effectiveness. This is the notion that those who have a technical interest will act in accordance with their knowledge, to find the 'best solutions' and to seek control.

He held that Habermas' practical cognitive interest is about focusing on communication and reaching common understandings. A practical cognitive interest means that people will prefer the process of "analysing and clarifying individual and cultural experiences, meanings, perceptions, assumptions, prejudgments, and presuppositions, for the purpose of orienting practical actions" (van Manen, 1977 p. 266).

van Manen (1977) interpreted the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest as been held by people who address themselves, reflectively, to "the question of the worth of knowledge and to the nature of the social conditions necessary for raising the question of worthwhileness in the first place" (p. 227). He held that people with this interest are constantly involved in a "critique of domination, of institutions, and of repressive forms of authority" (p.227). He perceived people with this interest as seeking an education system in which there "exists no repressive dominance, no asymmetry or inequality among the participants of the education process" (van Manen, 1977, p. 227).

Mezirow

Mezirow (1981) applied Habermas' theory to building an understanding of adult learning principles. In this work, Mezirow (1981) interpreted the technical cognitive interest by arguing that those with a technical cognitive interest are concerned with "the criteria of effective control of reality [that] directs what is or is not appropriate action." (p. 4). He claimed that those with this interest follow the rational decision making processes that involve controlled observation and experimentation, because there is a need for knowledge that can be "proven to be either correct or incorrect" (Mezirow, 1981, p. 4).

In his paper Mezirow (1981) noted that a practical cognitive interest is built on hermeneutics and hermeneutics is about interpretation and explanation, rather than control and manipulation. He interpreted the critical cognitive interest by adding that those with this interest engage in self-reflection to question why libidinal, institutional or environmental forces limit options and rational control, but are taken for granted (p. 5). For Mezirow, a critical knowledge comes from questioning domination of "sexual, racial, religious, educational, occupational, political, economic and technological ideologies" (p. 6). Mezirow makes this practical by suggesting that for adult learners, it is important to question 'taken-for-granted' assumptions about relationships in order to call them into critical consciousness. As an example, he states that learners who are used to traditional teacher-student relationships can question implicit assumptions about the traditional authority role of information giver or activities director (Mezirow, 1981, p. 19).

Drawing from the interpretations proposed by these five writers, and from Habermas' theory, the following definitions of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests were proposed for use in this research.

Defining the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests

Leaders with a technical cognitive interest

Using this frame in relation to school leadership is to suggest that a number of school leaders would base their practice on a technical cognitive interest. That is, their interest in knowledge is to gain prediction and control over the forces that impact on their work and environment. It is about looking for causes and solutions with a focus on facts and objective data. Technical knowledge is “information that expands our power of technical control” (Habermas, 1971, p. 309) and is based upon empirical investigation and governed by technical rules. A technical cognitive interest is far broader than the term ‘technical’ might imply, for it takes into account an interest in all knowledge that is created by an underpinning of western scientific thought, with all its structures such as experimentation, hypothesising, deduction, evidence, empirical data, and value-free objectivism.

School leaders, who have a technical cognitive interest, would tend to favour theories of leadership formed from scientific studies, where empirical data and hypothesis testing are the only acceptable criteria of truth. The criterion of effective control of reality directs what is or is not appropriate action. In this perspective the school as an organisation is considered to be an instrument, rationally designed, to serve the purposes of the system, an individual or group. It is assumed that decisions are based on rational analysis drawing on scientifically valid knowledge.

An example of technical cognitive interest can be seen in those leaders who seek to determine knowledge of the contingencies that would render organisations more productive, such as in the work of Fiedler (1967) and Hersey and Blanchard (1977). Another example would be those leaders who adopt a deterministic and hedonistic philosophy of human nature such as described by scientific models like ‘Theory X’ management assumptions about people as proposed by McGregor (Griffiths, 1985; Owens, 1991). Within this interest leaders need technical knowledge to coerce, control, and direct staff, to achieve organisational goals. Angus (1995) noted that papers such as the *Schools Renewal* report in NSW (Scott, 1989) and many recent management texts are replete with this underlying view of human nature. Effective site management, they argued, requires strategies and techniques

for motivating organisation members to cooperate and work together with management, to achieve the prior and generally uncontested goals of the organisation.

The technical interest also stresses the fact-values distinction of value-free social science. Foster (1980) noted the following traditional premise:

To understand educational administration [we can substitute leadership here], one must acquire some sense of the development of administration generally. Modern administrative theory represents a transition from the art of politics and administration, where value judgements dominate, to a science of politics and administration, where value - free statements dominate (p. 499).

School leaders with a technical cognitive interest can therefore be defined as having a structural-rational perspective that favours scientific management theories, and focuses on control and prediction.

Strategic leadership provides an example of how a technical cognitive interest is manifest in schools. Strategic leadership (Caldwell, 1992) focuses on such activities as: the development and implementation of a cyclical process of goal setting; needs identification; planning; budgeting; and program evaluation. Crowther (1997) stated that strategic leadership:

reflects the ideology of logical empiricism that shaped educational administration as a discipline until the 1980s [Evers and Lakomski (1991)] and bears considerable resemblance to the two-dimensional (i.e. task-relationships) conceptualisations of leadership that were developed in the 1950s and 1960s and that have dominated leadership research until the very recent past. With the emergence over the past decade of a widespread view of the principal or head as chief executive and entrepreneurial marketer in a self-managing school, this particular conception of leadership may be said to have gained new momentum and status (p. 10).

Further examples of a technical cognitive interest in schools (that are linked to strategic leadership) can be seen in some of the School Improvement initiatives. The *School Improvement in Maryland* project of the Maryland State Department of Education (USA) is an example of such an initiative. This project identified five performance areas where essential leadership skills must be demonstrated by a principal, in order to lead a school in improving student achievement (Seikaly, 2000). These include collecting, analysing, and using data to identify school needs; using data to identify and plan for needed changes in the instructional program; implementing and monitoring the school improvement plan and using systems thinking to establish a clear focus on attaining student achievement goals. These performance areas, like those of strategic leadership, illustrate a technical cognitive interest.

The following indicators can be used as a guide to determining evidence of a technical cognitive interest. Does the leader indicate:

- a need for (technical) control?
- a search for causality?
- the importance of finding solutions or the ‘right solution’?
- a reliance on evidence, facts, or other ‘scientific’ data?
- a concern for values-free decisions (putting personal values aside in leadership)?
- an emphasis on logical, rational and objective (not interpretive or subjective) decision making in leadership?

Leaders with a practical cognitive interest

The second interest is the concern school leaders might have for knowledge based on interpretation and hermeneutics; that is, knowledge that arises from the efforts of people to subjectively understand and communicate with each other. A practical cognitive interest is held by school leaders whose interest in knowledge is not for causality or control (as it is with a technical interest) but to provide a fuller understanding of what Habermas calls the ‘lifeworlds’ of people (the world they deal in, their reality). Their interest is in enhancing mutual understanding, and is based on humanist and libertarian views of human nature and on interpretive knowledge.

Practical knowledge is gained from “interpretations that make possible the orientation of action within common traditions” (Habermas, 1971, p. 313) and is derived from a historical-hermeneutic view that emphasises meaning, interpretation and the importance of shared language (Habermas, 1971, p. 308-310). Hermeneutics argues that there is no absolute ‘bottom line’ upon which to justify knowledge claims and, hence, there is no possibility of certitude. What we come to accept as reasonable in terms of knowledge about our social and educational lives is the product of a socially and historically conditioned agreement. The rationality of that perspective is not, as it is for empiricism, that of abstract rules, instrumentalism, technical expertise, and the criterion of prediction. To the contrary, hermeneutics poses a model of practical rationality that focuses on imagination, interpretation, the weighing of alternatives, and the application of criteria that are essentially open. Under a practical cognitive interest there is no way of unambiguously determining right from wrong.

Instead, both the interpretation, and the extent to which we generally accept an interpretation, are practical matters of dialogue and discussion (Smith & Blase, 1991, p. 11).

An example of school leadership from a practical cognitive interest can be seen in the work of Greenfield (1980, p. 38-39) who adopted a hermeneutic interpretive view of organisations in his work on educational administration. In this view organisations are not goal-oriented natural systems, but are social creations (see Greenfield, 1986b). To understand an organisation requires that we understand how intention becomes action and how one person's intention and action triggers intention and action in others. Organisations do not control people, but people control organisations. For leaders with a practical cognitive interest, practice would not be judged on what is shown to be technically efficient and effective, but upon what is held to be worthwhile by the people who comprise the organisation.

Another example of a practical cognitive interest in school leadership is instructional leadership (when it follows a constructivist paradigm as discussed in Chapter 2). Hill (1999) described the facets and practices of instructional leaders as: a need to reconnect teaching and administration and reclaim the role of instructional leader; shared belief in the importance of collaboration and community; connecting teachers, parents, and students to each other and their responsibilities as defined by shared purposes; establishment of professional learning teams; appointment and on going training of team coordinators to act as mentors, coaches and lead learners; and, shared beliefs and values. These facets and practices illustrate the practical cognitive interest.

The following indicators can be used as a guide to determining evidence of a practical cognitive interest. Does the leader indicate:

- a need for understanding and the importance of interpretation?
- a concern for values, and the recognition that personal values cannot be separated from leadership?
- a disregard for facts, evidence or qualitative data where they conflict with subjective understanding?
- a need to consult and an emphasis on authentic collaboration?
- little concern for losing control, or allowing others to lead and make decisions?
- a belief that there can always be more than one right answer, that there is no absolute 'bottom line' upon which to justify knowledge claims?

Leaders with an emancipatory (or critical) cognitive interest

The third cognitive interest is what Habermas (1971) calls emancipatory, also called critical by some writers. Those school leaders who hold this interest seek knowledge that attempts to understand how social relationships are distorted and manipulated by power and privilege. For the school leader this involves promoting mutual understanding of actions, experiences and perceptions through deliberate collective and communicative action. For the leader, practice becomes emancipatory, involving ‘liberating’ and ‘demystifying’ people from limiting psychological, ideological and social perspectives, and it often involves a historical critique.

Critical knowledge frees “consciousness from its dependence on hypostatised powers” (Habermas, 1971, p. 313), and this entails reaching a standard of self-reflection, which is emancipatory (Habermas, 1971, p. 314) and freedom from power relations that present constraints on actions as natural (Habermas, 1971, p. 311).

Emancipation is from libidinal, institutional or environmental forces that limit our options and rational control over our lives but have been taken for granted as beyond human control. Insights gained through critical self-awareness are emancipatory in the sense that at least one can recognise the correct reasons for his or her problems. Knowledge is gained by self-emancipation through reflection leading to a transformed consciousness or ‘perspective transformation’. Examples from critical sciences might include feminist critique, psychoanalysis and the critique of ideology.

School leaders with an emancipatory (or critical) cognitive interest adopt both the hermeneutic-interpretive and empirical-analytic knowledge, but through self-reflection and critique transcend any interest in control and mutual understanding respectively and incorporate them within an interest in emancipation. As Starratt (1993) summarised, a critical approach:

- is humanistic and open with the intent of guiding administrators into becoming an empathetic community that engages in administration practices that reflect a democratic society; one which embraces the notion that participation by all staff is legitimate,
- implies both the awareness of and the willingness to change the multiple realities that occur within the organisational context, in particular those administrative practices that alienate and subordinate staff,

- means recognising that the tensions inherent in an institution are really political and social conflicts of cultures, language and authority that are normally hidden (or even created) by the hierarchical, linear relationships developed in a scientific approach to management,
- is emancipatory, both for the staff and administrator. It is about empowering administrators to throw off the shackles of tradition, habit, custom, and economic rationalism. It is about empowering staff to enable them to understand that they have a role to play in joining knowledge and power, a role that they in turn can use to develop critical and active citizens (p. 83-84).

The following indicators can be used as a guide to determining evidence of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. Does the leader indicate:

- a concern to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people's attainment or cause inequity?
- a need to question purpose in order to demystify a direction or policy?
- an examination of how social relationships are distorted and manipulated by power and privilege?
- the intention to change directions or policy that are judged to be unjust or that disempower?
- a need to illuminate any forms of coercion hidden in actions or role?
- a truly emancipatory intention, motivated by a concern for the full development of human potential?

Chapter conclusion

To recap, this study:

- *Investigates school leadership and school leadership preparation.* There is a clear agreement in the literature that the study of school leadership is of importance. Equally there is clear evidence of a need for effective school leadership programs in all States and Territories of Australia, as well as internationally.
- *Examines cognitive interests.* There is a discernible need in the literature for further studies of leadership that focus on the cognitive perspective. A study of cognitive interest has the potential to make a

significant contribution to the understanding and development of effective school leaders.

- *Is based on a belief in frames and reframing.* It is accepted in this study that school leaders use frames to inform their leadership practice. In leadership preparation, the conceptual model of frames and reframing provides cues to stimulate self-questioning and metacognition. In adopting this theoretical position, this study has also acknowledged the limitations of frames, in dealing with the complexity of human actors, and in responding to the plurality of context that defines schools as organisations.
- *Explores Habermas' theory of knowledge constitutive interests.* Habermas' theory is widely accepted and interpreted in the work of many different scholars. Drawn from the published work of five such scholars, a preliminary operational definition of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests has been synthesised about leadership.

The next chapter describes the methodological considerations taken into account in the design of this study. A discussion is provided of discourse analysis, narrative research, data analysis, and issues pertaining to the trustworthiness of the study.

Chapter 3: METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological considerations taken into account in the design of this study. There is a discussion of research design issues including a brief exploration of qualitative research, discourse analysis and narrative research. There is also a discussion of research processes such as data collection and data analysis, and finally a discussion of issues pertaining to the trustworthiness of the research and the findings of the study.

The purpose of this study has been to examine the phenomenon of school leadership in order to gain insight into, help interpretation of, and build theory about the cognitive interests of school leaders. The research problem and questions are recalled:

What are the implications of Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests for an enhanced understanding of school leadership practice?

This problem was addressed through the following three research questions:

1. In what ways are the knowledge-constitutive interests evident in school leaders' descriptions of their professional practice?
2. What is the potential of Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests to enhance school leadership practice and the preparation of school leaders?
3. How did the experience of researching school leaders' practice, influence the researcher's personal growth as an educational leader?

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the difference between *a priori* and *grounded theory* research by noting that in *a priori* research the data are used to prove, modify, redevelop or disprove an existing theory, while in grounded theory research, the theory is generated or derived from the data (grounded in the data). Given the nature of the research problem and questions, this is, therefore, best

described as an *a priori* study, in which the research has been focused on an examination of Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests in the context of school leadership.

To achieve this purpose, a qualitative methodology has been adopted as the most appropriate means for illuminating the cognitive interests of school leaders. This methodology was based primarily on an analysis of the verbal descriptions of leaders' practice (collected through in-depth interviews) and the analysis of written narratives of leadership. The theoretical framework of this study is grounded in the functional viewpoint of language, that discourse can be functional in providing meaning or insight into the cognitive interests of the educational leader.

The research undertaken in this study has had five components. These are:

1. A literature review focusing on school leadership, school leadership preparation and Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests;
2. The conduct of in-depth interviews with fifteen school principals and superintendents;
3. The collection of narratives of leadership from sixteen school leaders;
4. A field trial of a school leader's preparation program based on Habermas' theory; and
5. The analysis of data and interpretation of results.

The actual research undertaken has not been as simple as this summary statement might imply. Rather, this study has been characterised by its emergent design, for over time the research has evolved with a number of changes in direction and methodology. These changes, and the evolving qualitative methodology, are described in terms of the seven 'Phases' of this research journey, in Chapter 4.

A qualitative study

Qualitative research is an umbrella concept covering several forms of inquiry that help to explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption to the natural settings as possible (Merriam, 1992). In this research a qualitative approach to studying cognitive interest in school leadership has been adopted and most of the

characteristics of qualitative research described by Maykut and Morehouse (1994) have been used to guide this study. This study has been characterised by:

- an emergent design
- a descriptive focus
- purposive sampling
- natural setting
- emphasis on ‘human-as-instrument’
- qualitative methods of data collection
- early and ongoing inductive data analysis.

Qualitative research emphasises the importance of the subjective meanings (not necessarily measurable or directly observable) that things and events have for people, and the ways in which people participate in creating the world around them. The qualitative research orientation tends to focus more on understanding and describing people’s accounts and experiences than predicting their behaviour. Merriam (1988) had earlier identified some key assumptions that underpin qualitative research. She described these as:

Qualitative research assumes that there are multiple realities – that the world is not an objective thing out there but a function of personal interaction and perception. It is a highly subjective phenomenon in need of interpreting rather than measuring. Beliefs rather than facts form the basis of perception. Research is exploratory, inductive, and emphasises processes rather than ends. In this paradigm, there are no predetermined hypothesis, no treatments, and no restrictions on the end product. One does not manipulate the variables or administer a treatment. What one does is observe, intuit, sense what is occurring in the natural setting – hence the term naturalistic inquiry. (p.17)

These assumptions put forward by Merriam (1988) were heeded in this study of the cognitive interests of school leaders. School leadership and cognitive interest is taken to be a socially constructed phenomenon. Indeed, as previously discussed, even the definition of leadership is problematic and requires interpretation and understanding as a social experience within a given social and cultural context.

In attempting to illuminate the cognitive interests of school leaders, this study initially focused on the development of a series of profiles of cognitive interest of various school leaders. These profiles were presented as ‘case-studies’ or descriptions of the cognitive interests of each of the participating school leaders. These profiles were developed using Giorgi’s method of phenomenological research (1985).

Later, the study shifted in focus and the development of leadership profiles as qualitative case studies, using a phenomenological process, was abandoned. At this point the research turned to discourse analysis and narrative inquiry. The research process changed from using Giorgi's phenomenological method, to the application of a discourse analysis method, called Membership Categorisation Analysis (MCA) (Sacks, 1972). It was decided that the MCA process – with its attention to interpreting the language used by participants – was a process better suited to interpreting the reflective discourse of school leaders in order to illuminate Habermas' cognitive interest frame. The reasons for this evolution in research design are described in detail in Chapter 4.

Cognitive interest refers to the human goal of an act of reflection; it is “what counts as knowledge” (Habermas, 1978). As such the belief is held in this study that cognitive interest is best uncovered in reflective discourse and communication of intent, as opposed to being inferred from observed behaviour. Cognitive interest is a human construct and as such it is not readily observable. The interpretation of cognitive interest frameworks is therefore reliant upon data taken from discourse analysis and not observed behaviours. This study agrees with Krug (1992) who argued that there might be a difference between an observer's description of an action and the interpretation of that action by the one who acted. He suggests that better understanding people's interpretations of their actions, rather than observing their actions, would reveal patterns and illuminate differences among school principals. Such patterns and differences generate insight into how principals understand and make meaning of their roles.

According to Romanyshyn (1991), in qualitative research “there is no hidden depth; meaning is given through the surface of what appears to be” (p. 12). What is being studied is not cognitive interest itself, but an inferred understanding of what it might be, based on a voluntary recounting of leadership practice and reflection on thinking. In this study, this voluntary recounting and reflection, has been collected as verbal discourse through interviews, and as written discourse through narratives. The means to interpreting meaning from this discourse has been through discourse analysis.

Discourse analysis

The term 'discourse analysis' is used to describe the process of identification of meaning from verbal and/or written discourse. It refers to attempts to study the organisation of language 'above the sentence', and therefore to study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts (Slembrouck, 2001, p. 34). The term discourse analysis covers a range of different methodologies. Schiffrin (1994) for example, described six different approaches to discourse analysis that are apparent in the literature. The term discourse analysis may be generally used to include research such as interactional sociolinguistics, frame analysis, critical discourse analysis, and conversational analysis.

A discourse analysis approach to understanding the role and function of the principalship has been adopted by a number of researchers. Examples include Hurty's study (1995) of seventeen women principals and how they approached the principalship; and Kempner's interpretation (1991) of the entry stories to the principalship, taken from interviews with 144 principals.

Freedle (1980) argued for the importance of frames or schema as a functional device in interpreting discourse. His study was based on a compilation of findings across ethnographic studies of language use. In his study he suggests that language forms are necessarily incomplete in specifying the full intentions of writers and speakers and so individuals choose schemas to help guide their selection for an answer. Freedle (1980) also argued that language per se is ambiguous and so to comprehend an oral and written text, individuals must necessarily initiate some interpretative frames to fill in needed information. Frames are needed as a metacommunication tool by researchers.

Tannen and Wallat (1993) examined professionals' and parents' discourse to explore schemas of education and health, and to define what an educational and medical service should or can do to deal with education or health matters. In their study, an analysis of the discourse of parents and professionals was combined with the concept of interpretative frames, to investigate the ways in which activities were undertaken in an effective comprehensive community service.

Identifying and using language and policy concepts in research essentially involves making explicit the resources we all use to make sense of discourse. It can be shown that many professions obscure their discourse in highly contextualised language, examples of which can be found in the language of lawyers, academics, and even teachers (sometimes referred to as 'edu-speak'). All such professionals can

use different language devices and rely upon their own frameworks to determine meaning. Wallat and Piazza (1991), for example, demonstrated that different consequences could be anticipated from an author's use of academic, bureaucratic, or legal features of language.

For many, these implicit understandings of the construction of meaning, and meaning in context, ground their choice of specific discourse devices in the need to persuade, inform, proclaim, or develop an argument. The conventions used to help make intent and meaning connections in the audience's mind essentially adds up to constructing an interpretative frame. Interpretative frames are not contingent upon finding an illusive set of 'perfectly clear words' to connect intent and meaning. Rather, the constraints and contingencies individuals take into account in constructing an interactive frame are the resources used to help make clear the authors' or speakers' intent (Grimshaw, 1987; Gumperz, 1982a; 1982b; Wallat & Piazza, 1991).

It is held that an interpretive framework for extracting meaning from discourse, may well be used in leader preparation programs, as Cazden (1986) argued:

there is a professional development benefit which is derived from awareness of the functions and formats of special languages or codes across participant structures; it is an appreciation of the multiple resources which results from the variations possible in both oral and written discourse forms, and the resources we can use to meet the myriad demands made on participants' communicative competence (p. 437).

In this study, as has been previously described, Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests has been adopted as the conceptual framework from which an interpretative frame can be proposed to illuminate cognitive interest in the discourse of school leaders.

Interviews

One of the ways in which the discourse of school leaders has been collected in this research is by the use of interviews. In his research, Silverman (1997) notes that interviewing is widely used as a means for collecting data in research. He also says that there are many ways of conducting research interviews. Two of the most common interview methods are in-depth qualitative interviews and structured or semi-structured interviews (where 'structured' refers to the extent to which the same questions in the same order are asked of each participant).

In-depth qualitative interviews tend to be flexible and exploratory, allowing the questions to be adjusted depending on how the interview respondent answers earlier questions. New questions are posed in order to clarify responses, to follow promising new lines of inquiry, or to probe for more detail. The interview style is unstructured and conversational, and the questions asked are generally open-ended and divergent.

In semi-structured interviews the same set of questions are usually asked of all research respondents, but the questions are flexibly applied and other questions may sometimes be added in order to pursue a response or promote a respondent's 'line of thought'. In semi-structured interviews, research respondents produce talk in order to answer questions and in so doing, they provide descriptions of their experiences and interests that can be compared to the responses of other respondents.

In this study the decision was made to use semi-structured interviews. In choosing to use semi-structured interviews, recognition was given to the constructivist view that the researcher is not a non-existent observer, but has a role to play in the construction of meaning. Dingwall (1997) pointed out that in such a process, the interview respondent is concerned to demonstrate "his or her competence as a member of whatever community is invoked by the interview topic" (p. 59). Interview respondents produce accounts that they perceive will fit within the bounds of 'identifiable research data' as implied by the researcher. Through the use of questions, and by their acknowledgment of responses, a researcher works with the interview respondent to generate data. Holstein and Gubrium (1994) held that:

Meaning...is actively and communicatively assembled in the interview encounter. ... Respondents are ... constructors of knowledge in collaboration with interviewers (p. 114).

In conducting these interviews, consideration was also given to Baker's (1997) three underlying principles:

[I]nterviewing is understood as an interactional event in which members draw on their cultural knowledge, including their knowledge about how members of categories routinely speak; (2) questions are a central part of the data and cannot be viewed as neutral invitations to speak rather, they shape how and as a member of which categories the respondents should speak; (3) interview responses are treated as accounts more than reports that is they are understood as the work of accounting by a member of a category for activities attached to that category (p. 142).

It is these accounts of school leadership and their choice of member categories (the terms and concepts they used to describe their leadership) that were the focus of the interview process in this study of cognitive interest.

Details of the interview process, including the schedule of interview questions and a list of participants is provided in the next chapter (Chapter 4).

Narrative and stories

In addition to the collection of verbal data through semi-structured interviews, written discourse was also collected as written narratives of leadership.

Narrative is a primary human-meaning making strategy (Polkinghorne, 1995). Through telling the stories that comprise a narrative, a person comes to understand what he or she thinks happened, what was important, and what was not. The sharing of narratives is an important mechanism by which leaders can develop their leadership (Quong, Walker & Bodycott, 1999). In workplaces and in professional development workshops the sharing of stories of leadership is sometimes encouraged, and this open sharing is a means of unearthing information about what constitutes effective leadership and enables school practitioners to 'reflect' on their work. Formal processes of leadership development that commonly involve the sharing of narratives include some performance management programs, and some action research (also known as action learning) programs. People working along side each other in schools share narratives – including 'war stories' (stories of their classroom successes or failures) – on a regular basis. School teachers may gain insight into their leader's cognitive interest from the sharing of narratives that often occurs routinely in day-to-day interaction.

The term 'narrative' refers to a system in which an experience is passed on or is recounted through verbal description using sentences constructed and presented in a specific order (Oring 1987). A narrative may contain one or a number of stories, descriptions of incidents, or just descriptive accounts of day-to-day practice. 'Narrative', in the literature, has come to refer to "an emphasis on lived experience or personal life stories" (Carter, 1995, p. 326). Interest in the study of narrative in education has been sparked by closer, more directed attention to the importance of teacher thinking (Elbaz, 1990; Floden & Klinzing, 1990) and the content and acquisition of teacher knowledge (Connelly & Clandinin, 1991; Carter & Doyle, 1997). Narratives, and the stories that they may comprise, are no longer viewed as simple recollections of past events or of colourful individuals. They have become both a means and ends to finding out about teachers' life histories (Knowles & Holt-

Reynolds, 1994), practical knowledge (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992; Valdez, Young & Hicks, 2000), ability to reflect (Russell & Munby, 1991), and what it takes to teach (Preskill, 1998).

Meyer (1996) claimed that all stories are framed and Anderson (1997) agreed. In his paper Anderson states “stories and conceptual frameworks enjoy a symbiotic relationship. Because of their unique qualities (e.g. tone, language, quality feelings) stories are very useful for building and testing conceptual frameworks. And by their very nature, conceptual frameworks are necessary for interpreting stories” (Anderson, 1997, p.136).

What people have come to accept as reasonable, in terms of valid knowledge concerning their social and educational lives, is in part at least, the product of cultural conditioning. Narratives can provide important clues into how a school leader perceives the world of education and his or her understanding of what constitutes important knowledge. Put another way, narratives can play an important role in understanding a school leader’s cognitive interest.

Following an extensive review of the literature on narratives and stories through the guises of social constructivism, interpretative organisational symbolism and critical theory, Boyce (1996) suggested seven reasons why the sharing of stories is important. The first is that the sharing of stories allows the organisational member to express experience. The second is that the story-telling process can confirm the shared experiences and meaning of individuals and groups within an organisation. The third and fourth are that narratives are devices for orienting and socialising individuals and for altering or amending organisational reality. The fifth is that sharing narratives allows organisational purpose to be developed, sharpened and reviewed. The sixth reason holds that storytelling can prepare groups for planning and decision-making in line with shared purpose and, finally, the seventh is that sharing of narratives can play a major role in co-creating vision and strategy.

A number of writers suggest that we store our life experiences, values and beliefs in the form of narratives including stories, not in detached lists of facts and figures. Indeed Sarbin (1986) proposed that “human beings think, perceive, imagine and make moral choices according to narrative structure” (p. 8), while Connelly and Clandinin (1991) maintained that life is “a story we live by”, and that “people make meaning of their lives through story” (p. 12). Witherall and Noddings (1991) held that stories embody people’s understandings about work on both an organisational and individual basis. In narratives we store our knowledge and experience, by recalling and retelling stories personal constructs are developed and refined.

Exploration of narratives and stories provide a window on the cognitive construction process and can give important insight into what people value as true knowledge (their cognitive interest).

Many researchers have used narrative inquiry or story research as the basis for their qualitative investigations.

Hurty's (1995) study of the narratives of seventeen female elementary principals is one example of narrative research into school leadership. Her research focused on the use of stories to discern how principals defined power and the importance of power relationships to their leadership.

Meltzer's (1997) study is another example of the use of narratives and discourse analysis in school leadership. Her study involved the collection of narratives of self-as-principal in order to reveal insights into the socio-cultural and contextual meanings and understandings of school leadership.

The Kentucky Department of Education (1996) used an in-depth study of narratives and stories to inform their report *Role of Leadership in Sustaining School Reform: Voices From the Field*. In this research the stories of many of their school leaders were analysed to allow generalisable patterns to emerge. The researchers contended that these patterns added to the understanding of how educational reform is sustained in schools.

Sawyer's (2001) study, *Teachers Who Grow As Collaborative Leaders: The Rocky Road of Support*, used a narrative approach to "attempt to capture some of the richness and nuances of meaning, as well as ambiguity and dilemma, in human affairs"(Sawyer, 2001, p. 2). Sawyer (2001) says that narrative places an emphasis on the connections between what humans think, know, and do as well as the reciprocal relationship between the ways that human thinking shapes behaviour and knowing shapes thinking.

Such studies as these are possible, because generating narratives is a way for school leaders to explore their own feelings and to reflect on their own understanding of what is happening in their organisational lives. The critical incident recounts, dilemma stories and war stories of school principals describe the incidents, events and happenings around which their leadership is constructed.

In adopting narratives research, there are potential problems that can adversely affect research outcomes. These are:

- *Trust in story telling:* Storying and interview techniques demand high levels of interpersonal competence, personal presence and credibility on

behalf of the researcher. Without this, the researcher would not achieve the high degree of acceptability that is needed and data collection from school leaders would be problematic. Telling a story can be a risky business for the teller. As Grument (1991, p. 70) stated, “Every telling is a partial prevarication”, and “...telling is an alienation which diminishes the teller”. Hence storying requires the development of a special kind of relationship in which the school leader as storyteller is able to perceive the researcher as a colleague. As described in the next chapter, the participating school leaders recognised me as a colleague and peer and this enabled me to achieve the level of trust and acceptance required in narrative research.

- *Misinterpretation.* Researchers who work with narratives need to be constantly aware of the danger of reading into scripts a greater meaning than is reasonable, given the data presented. Stories, like all language forms, can be ambiguous and therefore interpretation may simply be creating another script to add to the storyteller’s multiple meaning. In this study, as detailed in the Chapter 5, the issue of misinterpretation was minimised, by the adoption of the Membership Category Analysis (MCA) process.
- *Make believe.* Storying cannot be regarded “as a transparent medium through which ‘the person behind the text’ can be seen” (Gilbert 1989, p. 22). There may be fictionalisation of experience, involving elaboration and embellishment to obtain dramatic effect. The storytellers may seek to embellish their stories, as a form of protection against mediocrity, or what they might consider to be their inadequate leadership performance. It might also happen, that in reflecting on past events, a school leader might inadvertently add substance and events to a story, that simply did not exist. While ‘make believe’ is always a possibility, the impact of this limitation was minimised by the nature of the task (school leaders were asked to write down stories of leadership and not just tell verbal accounts) and by the interaction with myself as researcher (which involved follow up phone calls to discuss the stories).

Details on the processes of narrative collection, and a list of participants are provided in the next chapter.

Data analysis

Merriam (1988) notes that: “Data analysis is the process of making sense out of one’s data. In the process of analysis data are consolidated, reduced, and to some extent interpreted” (p. 127-130). At the heart of the process is the comparison of data to see what patterns emerge. The purpose of data analysis is to discover the theory implicit in the data, to discern what theory emerges, or is supported, from the analysis of data (Dick 1999).

Yin (1989) suggests that data analysis consists of examining, categorising, tabulation, and recombining the evidence to address the initial questions of a study. He notes that there are many ways in which data may be analysed but the process of data analysis that is chosen must be consistent with the research purpose.

The data collected in this qualitative study was in the form of verbal discourse on leadership (collected at interview) and as written discourse collected as narratives. A data analysis process was needed that was suited to interpreting verbal and written discourse on leadership, in order to illuminate Habermas’ cognitive interests frame.

From the many methods of data analysis to be found in the qualitative research literature, Giorgi’s steps for phenomenological psychological research (1985) were initially adopted as an appropriate model on which to ground data analysis in this study.

Giorgi’s steps for phenomenological research were adopted because they provided a means for coding the data. Coding is a process of simultaneously reducing the data by dividing it into units of analysis and coding each unit. After the categories are integrated and synthesised into a core set of categories, a narrative is developed that explains the properties and dimensions of the categories, and the circumstances under which they are connected. In this way I sought to develop profile statements for each of the school leaders involved in this study. Each profile statement was a ‘narrative’ or case-study description of the school leader’s cognitive interest.

Giorgi's steps for phenomenological research (1985)

The data collected in the interviews were interrogated using a variation of Giorgi's (1985, p. 11-19) steps, in an attempt to provide a succinct cognitive interest profile – a case study description – for each of the fifteen school leaders that were interviewed in the field research. These steps included:

1. Reading of the entire description to get a sense of the whole statement.

This step involved reading and re-reading the responses and narratives from the typed transcripts of the recorded interview (as described in Chapter 4). The purpose of this reading was to form a 'first' impression of the cognitive interest of the participant.

2. Discrimination of meaning units and focus on the phenomenon being researched.

This step involved breaking down the text of the interview into clusters of meaning – coding – this meant highlighting words or phrases that expressed either the technical, practical or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest, and noting these with the code T, P, or E.

3. Transformation of a subject's everyday expression into language with emphasis on the phenomenon being investigated.

This involved revisiting the codified sections of the interview transcripts in order to put them into the language of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests.

4. Synthesis of transformed meaning units into (a) a consistent statement of the structure of the phenomenon and (b) a synthesis of (a) into a general structural description.

This step resulted in the subsequent extraction of themes that allowed the writing of case studies, or profiles, that described the cognitive interests of the participants.

Using this process, profiles of the cognitive interest of the fifteen school leaders were developed. These profiles provided evidence that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests were manifest in the discourse of the

practising school leaders. This result was instrumental in taking the research forward, as it provided evidence that Habermas' theory was relevant to school leadership.

In reflecting on these results, it was later determined, however, that the Giorgi process drawn from phenomenological research, did not provide a sufficiently rigorous process of discourse analysis. Rather, what was needed was a data analysis process that focused not on coding but on the language used by the school leaders. The research process changed from using Giorgi's phenomenological method, to the application of the discourse analysis method of Membership Categorisation Analysis (MCA) (Sacks, 1972). It was decided that the MCA process – with its attention to interpreting the language used by participants – was a process better suited to interpreting the reflective discourse of school leaders in order to illuminate Habermas' cognitive interest frame.

Membership Categorisation Analysis

Membership Categorisation Analysis (MCA) (Sacks, 1972) may be noted in the fields of education, anthropology, medical practice, counselling, and sociology. MCA, using the analytic application of Membership Categorisation Devices (MCDs), has been used to interpret discourse in educational settings and to analyse data generated in research interviews (Gunn, Forrest & Freebody, 1995; Hester & Eglin, 1997; Jayyusi, 1984).

The sociologist Harvey Sacks developed Membership Categorisation Analysis (MCA) for use in conversation analysis. His original focus was on the analysis of emergency calls and the analysis of conversations with clients in crises. His purpose was to illuminate concerns hidden in their discourse. As an example, he was concerned with matters such as, the barriers evident in the conversations of callers seeking help for domestic violence.

The premise underlying MCA is that people, as an indispensable part of their social existence, are constantly using membership categories to orient themselves and others in their dealings with one another. A substantial part of the social knowledge that members of a society have is organised in terms of different categories of understanding (called Membership Categorisation Devices or MCDs). Using these categories makes conversation easier, because there is a taken-for-granted acceptance of what a person can expect when he or she hears these categories being used. The

important questions that are posed by MCA are: “Why did they choose that category to use?” And, “What does the choice say about the interests of the speaker?”

Sacks (1972) distinguished various types of categorisations. Some, like age and gender, could be used to categorise any member of a population. Others referred to a term (such as ‘good sport’), or a relationship (such as ‘mate’), or specific capacities (such as ‘teacher’).

The essential point in categorisation is not correctness, but situational relevance, so for any category used a person may ask why it has been selected from all the categories that could have been used. A crucial point here is that categories have properties attached to them. This is termed category-bound activity. An example is the category-bound activity that a mother is expected to care for her child (Sacks, 1972). For Sacks, the important point is not the existence of such pre-supposed normative role-expectations, but how they are used in discourse.

The term ‘membership categorisation device’ (MCD) is defined as follows:

Any collection of membership categories, containing at least a category, which may be applied to some population containing at least a member, so as to provide, by the use of some rules of application, for the pairing of at least a population member and a categorisation device member. A device is then a collection plus rules of application (Sacks, cited by Silverman, 1998, p. 79).

Baker and Freebody’s (1987) description of a membership categorisation device provides a simpler, more useful definition. They stated that an MCD is:

A method that speakers and hearers use to decide the occasioned meaning of ambiguous terms, to select referents in order to invoke particular contexts of meaning, and to account for actions and events. It is a method for assigning order and rationality to the social world. Uses of these devices include attaching particular activities or attributes to categories within a set or collection of categories (taken from Jayyusi, 1984, p. 56).

When using MCA, even just a few words can be used to provide insight into the purposes and underlying interests of the speaker. As an example, Silverman (1998, p. 85) used the MCA process to analyse the newspaper headline, “Father and daughter in snow ordeal”. In his analysis Silverman says the MCD used in this instance is ‘family’. Why did the newspaper choose this category over others? Because in the category of ‘family’, there is the implication that a father will care for his daughter, this is a category-bound activity. “Snow ordeal”, however, is not bound to the category of family and this is the reason that the news headline is so newsworthy. Father and daughter are usually assumed to be linked together through caring and support, not ordeal. So what happened to cause an ordeal? The author of

this news heading is trying to create interest through a contradiction in member categories.

The MCA process has been used widely in research to interrogate interview data. Two examples of how this process has been used in educational research in Australia, include Freebody, Ludwig and Gunn's (1995) study of literacy in low socio-economic communities (*Everyday Literacy practices in and out of schools in low socio-economic urban communities*), and White-Davison's (1999) study of the importance of education in rural and remote communities (*Rural Views: Schooling in Small Rural/Remote Communities*).

Gunn, Forrest and Freebody (1995, p. 93-95) proposed a four-stage process for the analysis of interview data based on the MCA process. Their four stages are:

1. What categories of people (member categories) are established in and by the interview? What categories are hearable, are implied in and through the interview? What are the standard relational pairs (that is 'not of this category', e.g. opposite or supplementary)?
2. What attributes are attached to these member categories in the interview? What are the category-bound activities or relationships?
3. What cause-effect accounts are disclosed through these category-bound attributes? That is, given that the speaker has set up the important ways of categorising the people implicated in the interview and attached certain attributes to these categories (explicitly or otherwise) what kinds of explanations are permitted or made inevitable? How is social activity explained through this process?
4. How does the speaker support their categorisations and attribute-attachments and cause-effect accounts? What procedures does the speaker use to substantiate or authenticate the category-account relationships? Substantiation can include:
 - Shared understandings – in which the speaker takes it as commonly understood that their accounting procedures are self-evident e.g. “everyone knows that...”.
 - Anecdotal evidence – in which stories from the past are presented as iconic narratives that support the account e.g. "we had a kid here who..."
 - Official discourses - in which research or policy documents or media accounts are presented as substantiation e.g. "last year we surveyed the

parents at our school and found that...”. It may also include the use of numerical data in accounts e.g. "about 80% of ...".

- Personal or professional experience - e.g. “I’ve taught at many different schools and the kids here are...”.
- Reporting of affect - such as the use of intensifiers i.e. incredibly difficult or taboo language including swearing.

In this investigation, the analysis of the one line statement referred to by Silverman previously, “Father and daughter in snow ordeal”, would be reported using the following structure (based on Gunn, Forrest and Freebody (1995)).

<p>“Father and daughter in snow ordeal”</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Family or Father</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Category of father and category of daughter. They are in a family.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Families are supportive, caring, protective.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Snow ordeal is not of this MCD (family). A father who would allow his daughter to get caught up in a snow ordeal is not of this category.</p> <p>Authentication A news headline - anecdotal evidence.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of father, people expect caring, they do not expect snow ordeal.</p>
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MCA warnings and limitations

Gunn, Forrest and Freebody (1995, p. 93-95) stressed that the MCA process has limitations. They point out that: (a) the sequence (directed by the questions posed in the interview) is not typically used by interviewees as they give their accounts; and, (b) that all steps detailed in the procedure are not always evident in an account, therefore much has to be assumed (the speaker does not say everything but there is some implied or contextual knowledge).

Silverman (1998, p. 86) warned that there may be the temptation to use MCA analysis “in order to understand things better than members’ themselves”, meaning

that the reader might be tempted to determine that he or she understands more of what the speaker is saying than the speaker does. In his work he warns against this, saying that the, “MCD apparatus is entirely a members’ (sic) apparatus. This means that it exists not as another social science concept but only in and through the way in which it is demonstrably used by lay members” (Silverman, 1998, p. 86).

The MCA is an open system of analysis. As previously noted, a clear purpose of Sacks’ MCA is that the reader is given as much information as possible so that the reader can redo the analysis for themselves. It is possible that in various points - because of reader's background and experiences - that the reader’s interpretation may vary from that of the researcher.

Overall the MCA process of analysis is considered to be a sufficiently rigorous and reliable procedure to enable the research of the type undertaken in this study to be completed. Gunn, Forrest and Freebody (1995, p. 93-95) argued that the clear benefits of the procedure are that:

1. these analytic moves can reveal what makes the talk intelligible conceptually;
2. it offers to the reader a principled basis on which to contest an interpretation;
and,
3. it is intended to provide clear answers to the questions guiding the investigation in a suitable and available discourse.

Trustworthiness

The outcomes of a study are only credible if the research is trustworthy. Erlandson et al. (1993) noted that:

...[i]f intellectual inquiry is to have an impact on human knowledge, either by adding to an overall body of knowledge or by solving a particular problem, it must guarantee some measure of credibility about what it has inquired, must communicate in a manner that will enable application by its intended audience, and must enable its audience to check on its findings and the inquiry process by which the findings were obtained (Erlandson et al. 1993, p. 28).

In quantitative research, the validity and reliability of the research data and analysis are confirmed by the rigorous application of scientific research methodology, including the strict adherence to the manipulation of all variables and the frequent use

of a control. Interpretation is based in the use of hypothesis and numerical probability arrived at through the application of statistical methods.

Guba (1981) argued that in a 'naturalistic' inquiry the traditional concerns for objectivity, validity and reliability have little relevance for the design of the research. This was later supported by LeCompte and Preissle (1993) who stated that, "qualitative analysis is interpretive, idiosyncratic and so context dependent as to be infinitely variable" (p.330). Wolcott (1995) also argued against the "relevance of validity as a criterion measure in qualitative research" and questions the appropriateness of accepting "the language of quantitative researchers as the language of all research" (p.168-170). Instead he proposed that the validity of the findings is related to the careful recording and continual verification of the data that the researcher undertakes during the investigative practice (Wolcott, 1995).

Qualitative methods for ensuring credibility have not emerged as strongly as has been the case in positivist studies, although many researchers have postulated highly regarded qualitative research approaches. These include, for example, Glaser and Strauss (1968) on grounded theory, Hempel's (1965) constitutive and regulative rules for qualitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985) on naturalistic inquiry and Miller and Frederick's (1994) qualitative confirmation, to list but a few of the contributors to the field.

Wolcott (1990) suggested nine criteria that should be built into research to satisfy the challenge of validity or "to keep the question from being raised at all" (p.127): (1) Talk little, listen a lot; (2) Record accurately; (3) Begin writing early; (4) Let readers see for themselves; (5) Report fully; (6) Be candid; (7) Seek feedback; (8) Try to achieve balance; (9) Write accurately, coherently and with consistency.

Guba (1981) raised the issue of the importance of trustworthiness as opposed to the issue of validity. Lincoln and Guba (1985) discussed four constructs against which the trustworthiness of a study can be developed. These are credibility, transferability, consistency and confirmability.

The trustworthiness of this study has been established around these four constructs (as adapted from Erlandson et al. 1993), while Wolcott's (1990) nine methodological criteria have been adhered to in the research and reporting. The next four sections discuss Lincoln and Guba's (1985) constructs.

Trustworthiness: the construct of credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the construct of credibility as the degree to which the researcher uses theoretical frames and research techniques that are accessible to or understood by other researchers in similar or related disciplines.

In regard to the research theoretical frame, two elements have emerged as important to the credibility of this study: First, the study was grounded in Habermas' theoretical frame, which has a high degree of acceptance and credibility as is evidenced by its adoption by many researchers and theorists (detailed in Chapter 2); second, it has been a study founded in discourse analysis, based on data gathered from current school practitioners through interviews and narratives. This also has a high degree of acceptance and credibility (as described previously).

With respect to the analysis of data, the Membership Categorisation Analysis (Sacks 1972) that was finally adopted is a highly rigorous process with a high degree of acceptance and credibility. Many recognised studies have attested to the rigour of the process and its ability to produce trustworthy results.

A key element of the trustworthiness of the findings of any study is the level of credibility and acceptance of the researcher. Miller and Fredericks (1994) suggested that the perception of the researcher's background and role in the investigation, are central to assessing the validity of the study's outcomes. In this study, considerable care was taken to ensure a high level of researcher credibility, and most importantly to create a strong 'sense of being colleagues' in the interview and narrative collection process. As Principal Education Officer with responsibilities for training and development programs, I was well known professionally to the participants of the study. As a researcher I engaged in this study as an 'insider', someone who, having worked with most of the participants for many years, was well placed to interrogate and interpret their understandings and experiences. All participants to the study knew that the researcher:

- had worked for the Department of Education for nearly 20 years;
- was a colleague at the principal level (Principal Education Officer);
- developed and delivered professional development programs for principals, including the highly regarded, Managers and Educational Leaders Training Series and the Leadership In Action Series;

- was a speaker at various conferences including the Australian Primary Principals Conference in Darwin in 1997.

It was within this context that the researcher was able to affirm his credibility with the participants. With each participant, it was painstakingly explained that the purpose of the research was for the researcher's personal study. Each participant was told that the purpose of the study was to attempt to develop a theoretical framework within which principal training programs could be developed. They were told that the study was not a microscopic examination of their personal leadership or their leadership action, but that they were being interviewed (or their narratives collected) in order to develop a data base of how different school leaders think about given situations.

The confidentiality of the data was guaranteed and it was made clear that their responses would be codified. In 100% of cases, the invited principals expressed their consent to be involved in the study and to provide the researcher with in-depth interview data and personal narratives of leadership.

Trustworthiness: the construct of transferability

The question of transferability, however, has proven to be more problematic. Goetz and LeCompte (1984) suggested that transferability is always difficult in qualitative studies. The construct of transferability includes the extent to which the findings may have application to other contexts or other participants. How could the outcomes of this qualitative study be transferred or translated to give meaning in other contexts? In this study, the research focused on determining how Habermas' theory is manifest in the context of school leadership. Data were only collected from practising school leaders in Australian schools (specifically the Northern Territory public school system). In an extended study, the application of the frame might be tested against leadership in other contexts.

It is reasonable to suggest, however, that because Habermas did not write with specific regards to educational contexts, but addressed his work to general theories of social understanding, that the technical, practical and critical cognitive interest framework has broad relevance in other educational contexts and possibly to other organisations.

Trustworthiness: the construct of consistency

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the construct of consistency as the extent to which the research produces consistent results and interpretations.

In order to enhance the consistency of the study, data were collected from practising school leaders using two different methods of collection. Yin (1989) noted that:

The most important advantage presented by using multiple sources of evidence is the development of converging lines of inquiry, a process of triangulation ... thus, any finding or conclusion in a case study is likely to be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several different sources of information, following a corroboratory mode (Yin 1989, p.97).

LeCompte and Preissle (1993) also suggested that “triangulation prevents the investigator from accepting too readily the validity of initial impressions; it enhances the scope, density and clarity of constructs developed during the course of the investigation” (p. 48). In this study data were collected through interviews and written narratives of leadership. The case studies of cognitive interest generated through the analysis of interview data were compared with the cases studies generated from the analysis of narrative data. It is recognised that triangulation generally involves the use of different data collection techniques applied to a research sample. In this study, the research sample was practising school leaders in Northern Territory schools. The data collection techniques were: (1) Semi-structured interviews (used to collect data from one set of fifteen school leaders); and (2) collection of narratives of leadership (to collect data from a different set of sixteen school leaders). All participants in the study were employed by the Department of Education in the city of Darwin or surrounding communities.

Trustworthiness: the construct of confirmability

The construct of confirmability includes:

- the extent to which the findings can be repeated if the study were to be replicated with similar participants in similar context,

- the degree of research rigour, and
- the degree to which the findings are determined by participant responses and conditions of inquiry and not by the motivations, biases or interests of the researcher.

Confirmability has been achieved in this study through ‘full reporting’ (Wolcott 1990). Full reporting in this case has involved a highly detailed and candid account of the evolving research journey. This reporting has included descriptions of the changes in research directions and details of the reasons for changing the research design (Chapter 4). These descriptions have tried to ensure that the findings of this study can be repeated. It is accepted, however, that as Lincoln and Guba (1985) point out, qualitative research repeatability is problematic in a changing social world.

In this study confirmability has also been built in through the care that has been taken to ensure transparency and the statement of researcher bias. It is held that in qualitative studies of this type, that the researcher cannot act as an impartial observer nor and distance him/herself or their instruments of data collection from the study. Rather, to enable confirmability, processes must be applied to ensure openness and transparency in research. In this study this has been assured through:

1. The use of the MCA process in the interrogation of data. A hallmark of the process of MCA is that readers are supplied with much of the data, so they can replicate the analysis for themselves. One of Sacks’ first points of departure from the ethnographic tradition was to provide analyses “where the reader has as much information as the author, and can reproduce the analysis” (Sacks, 1972, p. 27). It is accepted within this process that readers will not only find points of agreement but also some points of departure from the researcher’s analysis. The importance of this is that the reader is not just provided with the researcher’s commentary, but that the reader is able to make his or her own interpretations.

2. The use of a critical colleague. A critical colleague was involved to assist in the process of guided self-reflection. Guided self-reflection is a process taken from Grundy’s (1995; 1982) work on action research as professional development. Guided self-reflection is important in eliminating bias. The critical colleague was also important in providing professional feedback, an element of research trustworthiness identified by Wolcott (1990). The process

of guided self-reflection involved me, as researcher, in critiquing my interpretations of how a school leader would act in given situations within the framework of Habermas' theory. This involved my critical colleague in a process of asking questions and providing feedback that required me to move 'against the grain', in efforts to ensure that there were no 'taken-for-grantedness' in how my interpretations of Habermas' theory were formed. With each of the twenty situations I was 'forced' to enter into a dialogue with my critical colleague to justify my judgements and to reveal what may have been otherwise hidden as assumptions or undisclosed biases.

The critical colleague – an Associate Professor within the Faculty of Educational Management in a large university – was also involved in providing feedback on the applications of the MCA process in the analysis of sample case studies. By examining two full transcripts of interviews, and applying the MCA process independently, he was able to confirm (within limits) that my analysis had integrity and did represent an accurate commentary of the accounts (see details in Chapter 4).

3. *Research methods for 'open' recording of data.* Transparency was achieved through: (1) maintaining a research journal that ensured early recording of information and details of emergent processes (this included immediate and timely attempts to write up results (Wolcott, 1990); and, (2) transcribing the interview tapes into complete and detailed transcripts that were carefully checked for accuracy (as described in Chapter 4).

Chapter conclusion

This chapter has introduced and outlined the dominant methodological paradigms of this study. A discussion has been provided of qualitative research, discourse analysis, narrative research, data analysis, and issues pertaining to the trustworthiness of the study.

Cognitive interest refers to the human goal of an act of reflection. It is a human construct and is not readily observable. As such the belief is held in this study

that cognitive interest is best uncovered in reflective discourse and communication of intent, as opposed to being inferred from observed behaviour. A qualitative approach based on discourse research and analysis has therefore been adopted in this study. Through in-depth interviews and as narratives, data regarding school leadership were collected and analysed using Membership Categorisation Analysis.

In line with the principles of trustworthy qualitative research, a fully detailed and descriptive account is provided in the next chapter of the evolving research experience.

Chapter 4: THE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Introduction

In this study, a research methodology was developed over time and in the process of its determination, a number of research challenges had to be met and decisions made.

This chapter chronicles what can be labelled as my research journey. The purpose of this account is to provide the reader with a detailed and candid description of the research undertaken. In this account descriptions are provided of ‘false’ starts that seemed valid early in the research but proved problematic or ineffectual when the emerging data were analysed. Descriptions are also provided of the research investigations that were successful and that gave rise to outcomes that proved in turn to be the catalyst for further research.

By providing a full report, which means ensuring that all evidence is included and none discarded or obscured, this study seeks to “satisfy the implicit challenges of validity” (Wolcott, 1990, p. 127), and the principle that as a qualitative study it should have a descriptive focus and emergent design (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This detailed description of the research journey also serves to enhance the consistency of this study for the purposes of building trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Most importantly, this narrative-style account of the research experience provides a detailed description of the research journey in order to enable a full understanding of the findings that have been drawn from this study.

This chapter draws a chronological map of the research journey. While the study was continuous, for reporting purposes, the research experience was divided into seven phases where each phase comprised a research cycle or activity. The order of the phases is only approximate, as many of the research activities overlapped. The seven phases include the:

1. early research that focused on the development of an instrument for identifying the cognitive interest of school leaders;
2. first unsuccessful trial of the focus group process as a method for data collection;
3. collection of data using in-depth interviews;

4. collection of narratives of leadership;
5. first analysis of the interview data using Giorgi's method;
6. field trial of school leadership preparation activities – grounded in the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework – as a two-day workshop for school leaders; and,
7. second analysis of interview and narrative data using Membership Categorisation Analysis.

Before proceeding to describe each of these research phases in detail, there is a need to explain why I have chosen to report on the research methodology in this chapter as a personal narrative-style account of my research experience.

A struggle with voice in an evolving research project

In writing this thesis I was constantly aware of the difficulty of moving from the third to the first person voice. This difficulty arose because throughout the process of my investigations, in order to provide a full and detailed report, I have attempted to achieve two goals. First, I have endeavoured to report on the research goal of adding to the body of knowledge that informs educational leadership. Second, I have tried to report on my own personal journey as an educational practitioner and consultant developing his practice. In effect I have struggled with the voices of the researcher, and the educational practitioner and training consultant. Mellish (2000) described a similar duality in her research into the applications of Appreciative Inquiry in management, in which she struggled with being “a self-reflective practitioner in a professional doctorate” (p. 12). Mellish (2000) says:

I have tried throughout the thesis to use my voice as a practising management consultant with my overall purpose of improving management consulting knowledge and practice in the context of organisational change...One of my fears in reporting the case study applications was that the doctoral inquiry verged on a vanity ethnography which embroiled me in critiquing my own practice (p. 12).

Similarly Quinlan (1996) in her research into nurse education as both a nurse-as-practitioner and nurse researcher wrote that:

It seems to me now that my experience of beginning this journey was simple, however, as the journey expanded, so the complexity increased. If I pay attention to the needs of the reader and reduce the layers of meaning, then the essence of me disappears and what I have made accessible to the reader does not feel authentic. The struggle facing me in writing this text is to provide a sense of this complexity without slipping into chaos and confusion (Quinlan, 1996, p. 6).

In writing this thesis, like Quinlan (1996), I struggled with the need to allow readers to feel that they had authentic access to my journey on one hand, and to balance that against not saying too much about my own practice on the other. I was aware of the warnings of Mellish (2000) and also of Lather (2000) who, in her research into the stories of women with AIDS/HIV, warns of the need to avoid a ‘vanity ethnography’ (van Manen, 1988).

In an early draft of this thesis, written in 1999, I attempted to resolve this struggle by avoiding writing in the personal voice and by reporting on the research process and outcomes in an impersonal way (as if conducting a positivist inquiry). In avoiding the personal voice, I also avoided all matters pertaining to my personal development. In the process I also inadvertently avoided providing descriptions of the ‘cycles of research’ (Rowan, 1981). That is, I did not describe the occasions when the research had changed directions because of my own changing beliefs.

In a search of the literature I found a paper by Rowan (1981) on research methodology, which has enabled me to come to grips with this concern. In this paper Rowan (1981) described the alienating process that can occur in some research, when research treats people as subjects or objects, rather than as participants. He states that within this paradigm of research, that the researcher can also be alienated from the research, which was what I found was happening to me. While my investigations evolved and spiralled in different directions, I was trying to write the thesis as if I was a ‘scientific researcher’ reporting on the methodology and outcomes in cold third-party terms.

At this point I realised that my struggle over voice exposed the same sense of powerlessness that I had felt at the very start of this journey, where, as an education training consultant, I wanted to be free from business/management driven leadership training programs. Keogh and Tobin (2001, p. 92) have reiterated this concern. They have noted that the ongoing compulsion to adopt generic leadership solutions has led to the failure of critical self-reflection by school leaders. In my case the sense of powerlessness that I was now feeling as a researcher, was coming from a failure of

critical self-reflection as a practitioner–researcher, and the fact that I was not giving adequate attention to interpreting my own changing understandings and beliefs.

Reading Rowan (1981) had not only enabled me to identify these feelings of alienation and powerlessness, but it also enabled me to identify the difficulty I was having in reporting on the number of times I shifted and changed the research design. His work led me to see that these were in fact ‘cycles of research’ (Rowan 1981) that needed to be reported if I was to fulfil Wolcott’s (1990) proposition of building trustworthiness through ‘reporting fully’.

In brief, Rowan (1981) stated that research passes through a cycle that is comprised of the four stages of “being, project, encounter and communication” (p.98). The researcher first experiences ‘being’ in an abstract personal way when he or she is pre-occupied with some kind of internal disturbance. The desire to solve the issue, problem, or ‘itch’ causes the researcher to think purposefully and search outside the self for information. As described in Chapter 1, the purpose of this research had always been to ‘satisfy’ a professional ‘itch’ - could Habermas’ theory be validly applied to school leadership? And if so could it be used to inform the leadership preparation program I was developing?

Once sufficient information is acquired, according to Rowan (1981), a plan can be devised to further inform the topic and this becomes the ‘project’ stage. This leads directly into the ‘encounter’ stage where the researcher gathers information to inform the inquiry. The researcher then works with this material to make sense of it in terms of the initial questions and the experiences that inform the questions. This process involves ‘communication’ and makes communication possible. Communication is itself a sub-cycle as the researcher moves from internal dialogue, to dialogue with others of like mind, to searching for information, and back to internal dialogue and dialogue with like-minded people. Finally the research cycle moves from ‘communication’ back to ‘being’.

Rowan (1981) makes the point that research can be comprised of several small cycles within a larger one that allows for greater flexibility within the research. This flexibility allows the researcher to plan creatively and respond to the way the research path unfolds.

Reading Rowan (1981) on the cyclical nature of research provided for me the basis for understanding what was happening with my own evolving research and my own personal changes. While I previously perceived my changes in research direction as ‘false starts’ that were not to be described in this thesis, I now saw them as cycles of research that were very much a part of my authentic research journey.

Reading Rowan (1981) with regard to the research stage of ‘communication’ and the importance of dialogue also gave me the confidence to write this thesis as a duality of first and third voice. Strengthened by Rowan’s notion of the ‘cycles of research’ I became determined to overcome my growing sense of alienation and to provide a description of the many ‘small cycles’ that my research has involved.

The following seven phases are a personal account of my research experience. I have left the discussion of how the experience of researching school leaders’ practice influenced my personal growth as an educational consultant to Chapter 6 (p. 266).

Phase 1: The development of a cognitive interest inventory

At the beginning of this research an attempt was made to develop an instrument, based on Habermas’ theory of knowledge-constitutive interests, which could be used to interpret the cognitive interest of school leaders. I envisioned that this instrument would comprise a finite set of indicators that could be used as an inventory or checklist for identifying a school leader’s cognitive interest. My purpose in retrospect was overly simple. I believed that if I could develop such an inventory, that it could be used to identify the cognitive interests of school leaders and from this I could develop a whole series of training activities (based on predicting a leader’s actions because of their cognitive interest).

I had accepted, at the time, that the best way to demonstrate the application of Habermas’ theory to leadership would be to use it to develop an instrument (an inventory) that could be used to identify the cognitive interest of school leaders. The models I used for developing such an instrument were those of Fiedler’s *Least Preferred Co-worker Inventory* (Fiedler et al. 1977), Hersey and Blanchard’s (1977) *Situational Leadership Inventory*, and Magerison and McCann’s *Team Management Index* (1992).

In the first two years of this study, I developed several versions of an instrument containing a set of twenty profile indicators and tested these with school practitioners.

The first research problem and questions

The research problem was initially stated as:

What meaning emerges with regard to the cognitive interest of educational leaders, when Habermas' theory of three knowledge-constitutive interests is used to analyse descriptions of what educational practitioners believe is important, as they engage in the process of influencing or exerting influence on others, and can this meaning be used to inform leader preparation programs?

In order to explore this problem, the study initially focused on an investigation of the following two research questions:

- (1) Based on a sample of educational practitioners, who can be identified as leaders for their influence on others in their workplaces, can trustworthy data be collected through in-depth interviews and focus group interviews?
- (2) From the data collected, can profile indicators be used in a process of analysis such that profiles are written that describes the school leaders' cognitive interests?

The first two years of the research focused on three steps: (1) using the literature to define the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests; (2) determining a finite set of leadership situations; and, (3) describing how a school leader might respond in each of these situations in terms of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests.

Step 1: Defining the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests

An extensive literature search was undertaken of scholars who had grounded their work in Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests. From the results of this search, five scholars were selected and from their interpretations of Habermas' theory, working definition of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests were synthesised.

Step 2: Determining a finite set of day-to-day leadership situations

In order to produce a relevant inventory, twenty common school leadership situations were determined. This involved two processes of data collection. The first process was a paper and pen questionnaire that was developed and posted to the participants of an Assistant Principals' Conference. The second process was a focus group session conducted with fifteen educational practitioners.

The questionnaire was developed in consultation with the assistant principals who were working on the preparation of the conference. The questionnaire was designed to provide data on what the respondents perceived to be the 'day-to-day' situations that they were required to deal with as school leaders. The questionnaire comprised 50 items contained in six parts and spread over four pages.

The focus group session was organised with fifteen school leaders and conducted during the Assistant Principals' Conference. The focus group participants were asked to describe their 'day-to-day' problems of leadership. Each of the fifteen participants took turns to tell of the issues they were currently dealing with as school leaders. This discussion was tape recorded with the agreement of the participants.

The data collected in the survey and focus group session were examined in detail and coded according to key words. The results were grouped into clusters of meaning. This process of analysis was based on a variation of Giorgi's steps for phenomenological research (Giorgi, 1985, p. 11-19). The following is a list of the clusters of meanings (groupings of key words) distilled from the survey and focus group data:

- Change / innovation / resistance to change / staff slow to respond
- Inability / poor performance / problems / conflict
- Disputing decisions / rejection of leadership / non-responsive to leadership
- Imposed curriculum / imposed teaching packages
- Imposed directives / policy / procedure / Departmental control.
- Recognition / reward / thanks
- Assessment / appraisal
- Who leads? / Who is responsible? / Metaphors of leadership
- Delegation
- Making difficult decisions / giving difficult orders
- Starting out / being new to a situation / staff turnover
- Teams / teamwork / managing teams / motivating teams / committees
- Professional development / staff training
- Strategic planning / action planning / school plans
- Discrimination / harassment / gender issues

A series of situations was developed for each of these clusters of meaning, where a situation is a statement of a leadership action. An example of this is provided

below in terms of the first cluster of meaning on the list; “Change / innovation /resistance to change / staff slow to respond”.

Cluster 1. “Change/innovation/resistance to change/staff slow to respond”

Implementing change: When a leader's work group is slow to respond to a new idea and is resisting a change in work practices.

Dealing with policy directives: When a leader’s staff, usually very professional, are not responding well to the Department’s new policy directives that redefine the role of teachers.

Adopting an innovation: A regional Superintendent is very enthusiastic about a new pedagogical model and has strongly 'asked' all schools to adopt it.

These three alternative situations came from the analysis of the survey results. The ratings given to questions and the comments made by the Assistant Principals suggested that with regard to change, there were three main issues in schools. These were “implementing change”, “dealing with policy directives”, and “adopting an innovation.”

In this way a set of twenty leadership situations were developed and these were used as the basis for developing the questions in the cognitive interest inventory.

Step 3. Describing how a school leader might respond in each situation.

Once the set of twenty situations of school leadership had been developed, each situation was used as the basis for developing a profile indicator. A profile indicator was based on offering three alternative leadership actions (multiple choices) for each situation. The three alternatives were written in accordance with what a leader with a technical, practical or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest might do in each of the situations. An example is provided in Illustration 4.1 on the next page, of how three alternative leadership responses were interpreted for ‘managing change’. The alternative responses were my interpretations at the time of what a leader with a technical, practical or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest would probably do in this situation.

In order to enhance the trustworthiness of my interpretations of the cognitive interests (in proposing each of the alternative responses), a process of reflective practice was used that involved a critical colleague. This process was adapted from

Grundy's (1995; 1982) work on action research as professional development. The process of self-reflection involved the critical colleague in asking questions and providing feedback that required me to move "against the grain" in efforts to ensure that I had my reasons for why each of the alternatives were formed. With each of the twenty situations, I was 'forced' to enter into a dialogue with my critical colleague to justify my judgements and to reveal my thinking about the technical, practical or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests and leadership.

Illustration 4.1: Example of the Profile Indicator 'Managing Change'

Indicator 1 Managing Change.

When a leader's work group is slow to respond to a new idea and is resisting a change in work practices, they would:

- a. Tell them to put personal beliefs and values aside. Emphasise the research evidence that validates the proposed change. Ensure that they know that it is the best and the only acceptable solution for the current situation. Set realistic and measurable targets for the group. When all is said and done, enforce the fact that they really have no choice but to comply with the change.
- b. There is never just one right answer; staff should always be on the look out for ways of doing things better. The supervisor should talk to them to find out what they value and believe in. Help them to interpret the change in ways that make sense to them. Try to show them that it has been successful for others and can be for them as well. Finally, the leader would be prepared to change his or her own view of the idea, as it may be that the idea itself is inappropriate, especially in light of what the work group values.
- c. Question the purpose of the proposed change. See if there are any 'hidden' implications in the change for staff. Try to discover what barriers exist that seems to be stopping staff from openly discussing the change.

The use of focus groups to validate interpretations of the cognitive interests

In order to enhance the trustworthiness of my interpretation of Habermas' technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests (that had been formed with the assistance of my critical colleague), a process of validation was undertaken. This involved two focus groups of practising school leaders in a process that had three stages.

In the first stage, the school leaders were instructed on Habermas’ theory of three knowledge-constitutive interests. After discussion amongst the group members they self-identified which of the three cognitive interests they believed best reflected their preferred way of dealing with their world. Participants described themselves as having a dominant technical, practical, or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest, or combinations of these, for instance, technical/practical. The results are provided in the following Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Cognitive interests of focus group members.

Focus Group 1		Focus Group 2	
Name (Position)	Cognitive interest (self identified)	Name (Position)	Cognitive interest (self identified)
Stephen (Assist Principal)	Technical	Kym (Assist Principal)	Practical
Darren (Senior Teacher)	Technical	Jenny (Senior Teacher)	Emancipatory
Lee (Assist Principal)	Practical/emancipatory	Colleen (Senior Teacher)	Practical
Ruth (Senior Teacher)	Practical	Craig (Senior Teacher)	Practical
Carmel (Head Teacher)	Practical	Chris (Assist Principal)	Practical
Wendy (Senior Teacher)	Practical	Rob (Principal)	Practical/technical
Marianne (Assist Principal)	Technical		
Anne (Assist Principal)	Practical/ emancipatory		
Dale (Senior Teacher)	Emancipatory		
Stewart (Assist Principal)	Practical		
Jill (Senior Teacher)	Practical/ emancipatory		
Louise (Principal)	Practical		

After identifying their dominant cognitive interest, the school leaders were asked to complete an inventory based on the preliminary twenty profile indicators that I had developed. Participants were asked to score each alternative against a scale of 1-5, where 1 means ‘Possible’ and 5 means ‘Improbable’ (see Illustration 4.2 on the next page). The definition of ‘Possible’ was that the alternative was useful in describing leadership behaviour and thinking in their experience. The definition of ‘Improbable’ was that the alternative in its current form did not make sense in their experience, that it was not a likely response by a leader with that specific cognitive interest. The school leaders were also asked to indicate their personal choice for which of the three alternatives they would see as best reflecting the way they would deal with leadership situations.

After completing the inventory the participants were asked to provide feedback on ways of improving the alternative responses. This feedback was given in an open forum with participants adding and suggesting changes to each other’s ideas.

During this process I altered the alternatives in accordance with the feedback of the focus group members and these changes were incorporated into the re-drafted alternatives.

The following, Illustration 4.2, is an example taken from the inventory that the school practitioners were asked to complete.

Illustration 4.2. Sample taken from the profile inventory

Q.1. When an educational leader, such as a Senior Teacher is faced with a work group that is slow to respond to a new idea and is resisting a change in work practices, different leaders would:		
Leader behaviour	Is this behaviour possible?	My choice
a. Tell them to put their personal beliefs and values aside. Emphasise the research evidence that validates the proposed change. Ensure that they know that it is the best and the only acceptable solution for the current situation.		
b. Talk to them one by one to find out what they value and believe in. Help them to interpret the change in ways that make sense to them. Try to show them that it has been successful for others and can be for them as well.		
c. Question the purpose of the proposed change. See if there are any 'hidden' implications in the change for staff. Try to discover what barriers exist that seems to be stopping staff from openly discussing the change.		

Upon completion of the inventory, as a group activity, each profile indicator was discussed. Where the participants indicated that the alternatives used were not probable, they were asked to describe how the proffered alternatives could be written to better illustrate a probable leadership response. Resulting from these discussions the alternative responses were redrafted. An example of one of these twenty profile indicators is given as Illustration 4.3.

Illustration 4.3. Example of a Profile Indicator: “Taking over a team”

Indicator 4 Taking over a team.

A leader has stepped into a new position. The administrator he or she is replacing was a strong authoritarian and tightly controlled from the top. The work team seems to have a reputation for efficiency and for being productive. The leader should:

- a. Leave things as they are and continue to exert strong authoritative leadership. After all, ‘don’t fix things unless they are broken’. If all the evidence suggests the group is working well, there should be no need to change anything.
- b. Get to understand the situation. Seek the input of staff. How do they interpret what is going on? What do they truly value? What do they believe the work group exists to achieve? While strong hierarchical leadership was something they could accept in the past, times change, and they may respond differently to a new leader who has different values.
- c. Nurture staff until they can be involved in the self-reflection, dialogue and arguments that are the hallmark of free organisations. There needs to be full development of human potential, this cannot be achieved without removing the constraints and limitations created by authoritarian rule.

At this point I believed that I had developed a set of twenty profile indicators that could be used to enable school practitioners to reflect on their cognitive interest from the technical, practical or emancipatory (critical) dimensions. The trouble was that each time the inventory was revisited, new ways in which the alternatives should be improved could be perceived. This led to me to understand that what had been achieved, despite the Focus Group deliberations, was highly subjective. My alternative descriptions of the technical, practical and critical interest were not based on data drawn from practicing school leaders, but on my own interpretation of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests. And while these interpretations were supported by my critical colleague, and clarified by the work of the Focus Groups, at best what I had was a good example of how I, as a practising educator and consultant, would interpret Habermas’ theory.

I still needed to investigate if, and how, the three cognitive interests were manifest in the leadership of other educational practitioners.

A change in research direction

At this point my attention turned to collecting data about the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests from practising school leaders. The question became, “Are the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive

interests manifest in school leadership?” and if so “In what way can the three interests be used to illuminate differences between school leaders’ practice?”

The research had shifted from its early technical purpose of developing a leadership inventory, to become more interpretative. The development of a set of profile indicators was put aside and the purpose of the research became to learn about Habermas’ theory of cognitive interests from data collected from school practitioners.

The crucial decision was then made to reshape the central problem guiding the research. The research problem was reformulated as:

What are the characteristics of a conceptual model for school leadership development that is based on Habermas’ (1971) theory of three knowledge-constitutive interests, that reflects the experiences of practising school practitioners?

This problem was now addressed through the following three research questions:

1. In what ways is Habermas’ theory of knowledge-constitutive interests manifest in the work of practising school leaders?
2. How can Habermas’ theory of knowledge-constitutive interests be construed, and what other characteristics need apply, in order for it to be useful as a conceptual model for examining the cognitive interests of school leaders?
3. In what ways is the resultant conceptual model useful to school leadership preparation?

In the terminology of Rowans (1981), I was now beginning a new research cycle. In order to gather the data needed to answer these new research questions, three processes for field data collection were proposed. They included a focus group process, qualitative interviews with principals and later, the collection of narratives of leadership from school leaders.

In conclusion to Phase 1, it is now clear that through this period I had personally undergone a change in my own cognitive interests. In the beginning I had a clearly technical interest, which was to develop an instrument that could be used to identify the cognitive interest of school leaders. I was looking to develop a ‘scientific’ instrument, much like the other technical inventories that I was using as

an educational consultant at the time. In retrospect I must have been strongly influenced by the business management programs that were being used with school principals.

By the end of this 'cycle of research' I had come to adopt a more practical cognitive interest. I had come to reject the value of such an instrument and was now trying to understand the cognitive interest of other school leaders. I believed it to be important to interpret, from the reflections on leadership of practising school leaders, what the technical, practical and critical cognitive interests are like. In other words how they are manifest in school leadership.

The process of profile indicator development – the development of a set of twenty multiple-choice inventory items – had been an interesting and insightful activity. It had involved me in critical self-reflection and long discussions with my critical colleague about the role of school leaders and their cognitive interest. These discussions were instrumental in clarifying my understanding of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests.

Phase 2: Data collection using focus groups

Initially, I tried to gather data on the cognitive interests of schools leaders by using a focus group. The focus group process has been used extensively in scholarly research, as reported by Fontana and Frey (1994, p. 364). It is essentially a qualitative data gathering technique that involves the interviewer/moderator in directing the interaction between participants.

My intended purpose in using a focus group was to enable data to be collected that were drawn from collaborative reflection by educators on the nature of leadership. This collaborative process was believed to be important, for it could possibly open the way for educational practitioners to develop a rational dialogue and even to engage in rationally constructed disagreements about the nature of educational leadership. Such a dialogue, I believed, would illuminate aspects of the cognitive interests of leaders that could not emerge from interviews with individual educational leaders.

A trial focus group discussion process was conducted. This was called a 'mirror' group and consisted of nine teachers reflecting on and discussing their views

of leadership. The participants of the trial group process were all employees of either the Northern Territory Department of Education, or the Catholic Education Office. They were educators who were involved in a one-day workshop on action learning in schools, organised at the Northern Territory University. They were asked if they would give up 80 minutes to reflect on the issue of school leadership. They were told that the mirror activity would be used as a part of a doctoral study. They were also told that the process would possibly aid their own professional development, by demonstrating to them the 'mirroring' process and enabling them to reflect on school leadership, while hearing and discussing the views of others.

As the focus group facilitator, I initiated the discussion with some early guiding questions such as, "It is a commonly stated belief that since devolution [shift to self-managing schools] schools have experienced constant change. What, in your opinion, is the role of the school leader in the change process?" I then acted as chair to ensure that all participants had the opportunity to speak. Various themes, such as change leadership, dealing with conflict, delegation, and other issues taken from the list of twenty situations derived previously, were pursued during the discussion to promote disclosure and elucidation. The discussion was tape recorded with the clear agreement of the participants.

The results of the focus group were not as expected. I had believed that the focus group dialogue would be able to illuminate aspects of the cognitive interests of leaders that could not emerge from interviews with individual educational leaders. In fact, what occurred was that the information collected was widely divergent and, while generally informative, was not useful in terms of the stated research problem.

In essence the process of mirror or focus group interviews, while demonstrating the importance of group processes in illuminating aspects of leadership, was not useful in the analysis of individual cognitive interest. While the practitioners were very interested in their discussions, and were able to develop many insights into their shared leadership problems, in the 80 minute session it was difficult to discern any specific cognitive interest of the individual practitioners involved. The reasons for this, I believed at the time, were possibly related to the following three factors: (1) shared or collaborative interests; (2) time; and (3) negative interaction.

(1) Shared or collaborative interest: In the group process a practitioner might express an idea and another practitioner would take up on the reflection, as if to enjoin and promote the conversation. I felt that they did not always express their own personal cognitive interest, but collaborated with the interests of others of the group.

It was difficult to discern what constituted an individual's 'real' interest, as opposed to a general comment of support for a peer and colleague. This was possibly an indication of the collaborative nature of leadership, and the importance of shared leadership. This suggested that the investigation of shared leadership, and its implications for a shared or mutually agreed form of cognitive interest, would be an interesting problem for further consideration.

(2) *Time:* In the group process all the participants were highly interactive. This meant that in the 80 minutes of the interview the amount of time for any individual's input was limited. Brief comments were common throughout the interview. When the total comments of a single participant were extracted from the transcript, the amount of information was not significant.

(3) *Negative interaction:* It seemed that the process of group interaction acted in some ways to stifle, rather than promote, in-depth reflection on leadership. It was as if participants did not want to take up too much of the group's time with their own personal concerns or ideas. This may have been caused by the fact that the participants were unsure of each other, as they had not worked together in such an open forum before. I also believed that peer pressure played a part in making practitioners voice particular (popular) leadership concerns – as opposed to their real concerns – in such an open forum.

Given these concerns I decided not to continue with the use of focus groups but to seek answers to the research questions through other data collecting processes.

In conclusion, I had learnt from this experience about the limitations of the focus group process as a means for collecting qualitative data on individuals. I had thought that a focus group of school leaders, collaboratively discussing leadership would give rise to insights into the cognitive interest of individual school leaders, but had discovered that this was not the case. I then turned to data collection through the use of qualitative interviews.

Phase 3: Data collection using qualitative interviews

Interviews have been used extensively in collecting data for qualitative research. I decided to use qualitative interviews in this research, to understand the experiences of the school leaders who participated in this study, and the conclusions the school leaders themselves have drawn from their experiences. Qualitative interviews are most appropriately used when a rich picture is needed of people's experience and how they interpret it. In the interview process I decided to present a schedule of questions, but to keep the process flexible and exploratory. The questions asked were generally open-ended and designed to elicit detailed narratives (verbal discourse) about the participant's reflections on their leadership (Interview Questions in Appendix 1).

The interview process

The interview process was initially tested with two school principals. Following the success of these interviews, a further fourteen interviews were conducted with school principals and superintendents. Later, during the transcription process, one of the interview tapes was damaged in the playback machine. As a result only fifteen interviews were ultimately used to provide data for the research.

The participants were initially contacted by phone and invited to be involved in this doctoral study. It was explained that involvement in this study would engage them in a guided process of self-reflection on their everyday practices and thinking as a school leader.

The interviews were between 70 - 90 minutes in length and were tape-recorded. The interviews took place on site in the participant's office. All interviews were completed over a three-month period in 1998. Each participant was given an outline of the interview procedures, including a copy of the general guiding questions. Probing was employed to increase clarification and crosscheck questions were used to ensure honest descriptions. The following Table 4.2 provides a list of the participating school leaders.

Table 4.2. A list of school leaders who participated in the interviews

Name	Position
Bill	Ex-principal. Educational consultant and principal training provider
Chris	School Principal of a large urban primary school
Helen	School Principal of a large urban primary school
Henry	School Principal of a large urban primary school
Jo	School Principal of a large urban primary school
Kym	School Principal of a large urban secondary school.
Maureen	School Principal of a large urban primary school
Mick	School Principal of a large urban primary school
Neil	School Principal of a large secondary school.
Paul	School Principal of a large urban primary school
Ray	Superintendent with responsibilities for a region of many schools
Ruary	School Principal of a large urban primary school
Sharon	School Principal of a small urban primary school
Steve	School Principal of a large urban secondary school.
Wally	Superintendent with responsibilities for a region of many schools

Site visits

Site visits were conducted at the schools of the principals who were interviewed. The purpose of the visits was to briefly observe the context within which leadership is constrained and given meaning (Giddens, 1984). The visits involved informal discussions with staff and a brief examination of documents such as the school's Teacher Handbook, documents on staff notice boards and other written information. The opportunity to make these visits was facilitated by my role within the Department of Education. As a Principal Education Officer with responsibilities for training and development, I was a frequent visitor to most schools in the research region. It became clear, however, that brief visits to schools would not allow any in-depth understanding of the context within which the principal's work is framed. The development of a full understanding of the structures within which the principal locates his or her cognitive interest would involve a much longer and possibly longitudinal study of the principalship (for example, following a principal and investigating his or her cognitive interests in different school settings). This option was not pursued in this study.

Developing the interview schedule

In developing a semi-structured interview format, the advice of Berg (1995) was noted:

This type of interview involves the implementation of a number of predetermined questions and/or special topics. These questions are typically asked of each interviewee in a systematic and consistent order, but the interviewers are allowed sufficient freedom to digress; that is, the interviewers are permitted (in fact expected) to probe far beyond the answers to their prepared and standardised questions (p. 33).

Hence questions were devised so that a logical order was followed, but with sufficient flexibility such that significant factors could be probed, pursued and more closely analysed through the interview dialogue. It was held that directly asking participants questions taken from the definitions of the three cognitive interests would lead me to accepting too readily the validity of initial impressions. For example “As a leader do you prefer knowledge that is based on subjective understanding and interpretation, or on scientific hypo-deductive processes of research?”

The interview questions were developed with a concern to ensure that the questions would allow the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests to be revealed should they exist. For example, a number of questions in the Interview Schedule were designed to allow for the possibility of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest to emerge, these were questions 5, 6, 7, 9c, 9e, 10. (See Appendix 1). Question 5 is provided below as an example.

Q.5 Consider the following situation:

One of the people who works with you who you would see as under your leadership, comes to you to ask you what they should do about the unfair way your established workplace rules have blocked their chance of achieving their goals. For example, you have a rule that says that all staff must submit their programs / monthly report to you for your examination, but the staff member says that this reporting process is interfering with their ability to implement collaborative planning.

Do you believe that leaders have a role to play in promoting staff to examine their work and free themselves from unjust barriers? Do you believe that organisations have rules (written and unwritten) that cannot be broken?
How would you handle this situation?

Similarly a number of questions were designed to allow for the possibility of a technical response to emerge, these were questions 2b, 2g, 2h, 2k, 4, 9a, 9b. Question 4 is provided below as an example.

- Q.4 As a leader, how important is it to you for your people to get the ‘right answer every time’. That is, to find the right solution for the problem? For example, to get the timetable right, to establish the right discipline policy, to implement the right teaching programs for your school, etc.
Do you believe that there can be more than one right answer to each problem? How important is research and scientific method?

A number of questions were based on common leadership expressions and school leadership parlance, for example, asking the participants to discuss statements such as “The buck stops here” and “As a leader, how important is it to you for your people to get the ‘right answer every time’”. The purpose of these questions was to get the participants talking – entering into discourse – with a focus on use of language. Member categories (use of terms that have meaning to the participant) were considered to be important to an analysis of cognitive interest.

Many of the questions were based on ‘real’ issues facing school leaders in the Northern Territory. These issues were identified by myself as an educator sited within the context of the study, and also with consideration for the list of situations that were identified in the earlier survey study of Assistant Principals. An example of this was Q.10, which asked the participants to discuss the imposition of centralised curriculum initiatives (imposed change) on their school.

Overall the questions were designed to ensure that the participants felt at ease in discussing current and relevant leadership issues, that they did not feel that their leadership was being orally ‘tested’ or examined, and that they did not feel that their views or beliefs were being judged or questioned.

Transcription of interviews

Initially it was thought that listening to the tapes and taking notes would fulfil the needs of analysis, but I discovered that this was insufficient to meet the needs of discourse analysis. The services of a professional transcriber were then used. Unfortunately this also proved ineffectual, for when the transcriptions of first two transcripts were checked against the tapes, it was discovered that she had made many errors. This was most likely caused by her lack of familiarity with the educational context of the interviews and the ‘edu-speak’ words that were often used. I subsequently hired a Lanier Dictaphone Machine and transcribed all interviews myself.

The talk was transcribed into written text because my interest lay in what categories of understanding were generated by the talk rather than tracking specific linguistic and/or conversational components in the spoken utterances. In transcribing the interviews, care was taken to include punctuation to make the written version of talk legible and understandable while retaining the situatedness of the original accounts. The transcription convention adopted was similar to that described by Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998, p. vi-vii).

... triple punctuation marks indicate a pause (not timed in speech)
/ indicates an interruption of speech by interviewer
(-) indicates one unclear word of an utterance
(--) indicates unclear words of an utterance
(word) indicates transcribers guess at an unclear utterance

While acknowledging that no transcript can claim to be a verbatim record of an interview, the constant checks on detail and accuracy led me to believe that my transcripts provided an honest record of the meaning and intentions of the interviews. Just to confirm this, a copy of the transcript of each of the participant's interviews was sent to them for checking. None of the participants disputed their record or asked for any changes to be made to their scripts.

In conclusion the process of interviews was successful. By the end of interview phase, I had collected fifteen transcripts of interviews with practicing school leaders. These transcripts held the promise of providing insight into the cognitive interest of the participants.

What had I learnt from this phase as an educational consultant? In addition to the data collected, the process of interviewing had been very informative. Throughout the interviews I was able to listen to the language being used by those I was interviewing and I found myself forming opinions about the interviewee's dominant cognitive interest. I began to listen for expressions that I felt indicated a technical, practical or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. After the interviews I would jot down some post-interview notes to myself about my 'first' subjective opinion of the school leader's cognitive interest. This process of talking to school leaders at interview was instrumental in convincing me that Habermas' theory was manifest in school leadership. That is, that the three cognitive interests frame could be used to distinguish between how different school leaders responded in different leadership situations.

Phase 4: Data collection through narratives of leadership

During post-interview discussions, two of the principals I had interviewed suggested that they would have preferred to write down their thinking on leadership; that the writing process would have enabled them to clarify their views. They said that while they didn't find it difficult to immediately respond to my questions, that their answers would have perhaps been better if they had had time to reflect on their responses for longer, and perhaps to write down some of their ideas. One of the principals used the example of a recent promotional interview, in which he sent all the applicants the interview questions before hand so that they could write down their answers before coming to interview.

Through written narratives it was thought that the school leader might have a chance to develop examples, metaphors and other illuminative devices, which might not be generated spontaneously during interviews. Following these discussions I decided to gather data as written narratives from practicing school leaders.

As previously described (Chapter 2, p. 80) narrative research is widely recognised as a useful and appropriate methodology for the study of leadership (Hurty's, 1995; Kentucky Department of Education, 1996; Meltzer, 1997; Sawyer, 2001).

The opportunity to collect narrative data from practising school leaders came in 1998. At this time in my capacity as Principal Education Officer, I organised the Leadership In Action (LIA) Program. This was a five-day leadership seminar for school practitioners. During this program I asked sixteen of the educators attending this conference, including a Superintendent, Principals, Head Teachers, and Assistant Principals, to provide narratives of their leadership. Each participant was followed up by phone and narratives were collected over a two month period. In this manner, sixteen narratives were collected (some narratives were made up of two or more stories) from practising school leaders.

In the narrative collection process, the participants were given the following directions:

You are asked to describe your thinking as a leader by providing stories (narratives) that describe your leadership interest. In writing you are asked to describe what you see as your own preferred way of thinking as an educational manager. When faced with a situation, do you logically and rationally work out the best solution? Do you like to start by interpreting the situation? Do you want to know the reasons behind situations, for example the politics?

The stories you tell should be brief and you should pick stories that you think describe your leadership, or that illustrate the influences on your leadership development. These are the stories that you have most likely told before, or at least stories that come readily to mind of the times, situations and people that have affected you and your leadership, and of the things you have done.

When you send in your stories, please begin by describing your context. Briefly tell me how the stories are ‘placed’, what work you were doing at the time, something about the school, something about the people, something about the ‘time’.

After you have sent me your stories I will send you back my comments and thoughts, hopefully this will be both an interesting and useful exercise that you will enjoy!

A list of the participants is provided in the following table (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 A list of the school leaders who provided narrative data

Name	Position
Bernie	Faculty Leader large urban primary school.
Bill	Principal of a large urban primary school.
Cecilly	Assistant Principal.
Coleen	Senior Teacher urban primary school.
Derek	Group School Principal.
Felicity	Teacher of Exemplary Practice (TEP) 2 & Senior Teacher.
Hayden	Group School Principal.
Helen	Head Teacher Pre-school.
Jennifer	Assistant Principal large urban primary school.
Jill	Principal of an urban primary school.
Miriam	Assistant Principal of a large urban school.
Pam	Assistant Principal of an urban primary school.
Patricia	Project Manager, Department of Education.
Raylene	Assistant Principal of an urban primary school.
Steven	Principal of remote community school.
Zoe	School Adviser & Head Teacher small school.

Following the collection of narratives, I took on the role of critical colleague and gave feedback to the participants on the narratives they had provided. The purpose of these responses was to assist the participants to reflect upon their leadership through their experiences as narrated in their stories. After sending them my responses I again phoned each participant to discuss their stories, and during these calls notes were made on each narrative.

Participants responded very favourably to this exercise. In their narratives, many participants provided stories that they believed were relevant in revealing an aspect of their leadership interest. Many commented in the subsequent phone conversations, that they not only enjoyed the writing and ‘retelling’ of their stories immensely, but they had also felt they had gained insight into their role as school

leader. In one particular case a participant said that she was so affected by the exercise, including the telling of stories to her husband, that she had gone on to incorporate the process of story telling as a deliberate process in her school with her staff.

The collection of narratives was a means of enhancing the trustworthiness of this study. In the spirit of triangulation (Jick, 1979), it was accepted that the use of multiple data sources as a means for increasing the variety of informants, could lead to a 'maximum diversity' sample. The use of more than one source of data collection was also considered to provide a degree of confirmability to the investigation (Yin 1989, p. 97). Finally, I believed that the use of narrative data – in support of the interview data I had already collected – would serve to “prevent the investigator from accepting too readily the validity of initial impressions; it enhances the scope, density and clarity of constructs developed during the course of the investigation” (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 48).

In conclusion, the research method had evolved from the collection of data through interviews to include a second source of data, written narratives of leadership. In the process of this research I learnt a great deal as an educational consultant about the use of narratives and stories in educational leadership. I discovered from the literature that narrative research and stories research in educational leadership is a very promising field of study. An offshoot of my research into the stories of school leaders was a paper that I developed with a colleague entitled *Using Stories as an Essential School Leadership Tool* (Quong & Walker, 1999).

Phase 5: A first attempt at data analysis

Having decided to move from an instrumental study to interpretative research I turned to the literature to discern a useful way to analyse the data. I initially adopted Giorgi's steps for phenomenological psychological research (1985) (see Chapter 3), as an appropriate model on which to ground the data analysis and to develop a cognitive interest profile for each of the school leaders who had participated in the study.

Using this process each of the transcripts of the fifteen interviews with practising school leaders was analysed. For each interview, a case study was

developed that described the school leader's cognitive interest. This was called a cognitive interest profile. The following profile, developed from the interrogation of Steve's interview data, is provided as an example of the application of Giorgi's steps. This example is given in detail to serve two purposes: First, it is an example of the analysis of results that were instrumental in encouraging me to move on with the investigation, to trial the *Educational Leadership for Classroom Teachers* workshop; second, it is a sample that can be used by the reader for comparison with the detailed discourse analysis later derived from the use of Membership Categorisation Analysis (MCA). This comparison will demonstrate the difference in the two processes of analysis, and illustrate why the MCA process was adopted as a more rigorous process of analysis in responding to the research questions.

Steve's Leadership Profile

Background: Steve is 52. He is Principal of a public school that delivers secondary education programs via distance mode. The school has 35 staff and one Assistant Principal. The school delivers both Board of Studies secondary curricula, and Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs. The school has students enrolled as far away as Malaysia and Indonesia, although most of its students are in isolated parts of the Northern Territory, with many students from Aboriginal communities. Steve has been principal at the school for two years. Prior to this appointment Steve was principal at another large urban secondary school for six years.

Leadership Profile: In this interview, Steve comes across as having a both a practical cognitive interest and a concurrent technical interest cognitive interest.

Steve's practical cognitive interest is apparent in the following two extracts in which he would appear to be more interested in collaborative dialogue and discussion to determine the appropriateness of decisions and actions, than in control and prediction. He seems to believe that there is no absolute 'bottom line' upon which to justify knowledge claims and, hence, in his mind there is no possibility of certitude in leadership decision-making.

I would describe my leadership style as eclectic, there are elements of all sorts of style of people I have worked with and I've learned from them...personal philosophy that I apply would be described as that eclectic sort of mode I tend to take good ideas where I find them and try to apply them to my own personal circumstances (Q.1).

And,

Of course there can be more than one right answer, there can be as many right answers as there are views of a particular problem. I think what a manager certainly in public education has to think about and ...is what the best answer might be maybe we should say the best answer rather than the right answer... the best answer is for most of the people who are going to be affected by it (Q.4).

What Steve seems to accept as reasonable in terms of knowledge about our social and educational lives, is the product of a socially and historically conditioned agreement, a practical cognitive interest that focuses on imagination, interpretation, the weighing of alternatives, and the application of open criteria.

I mean...any rule that exists in my work place has had fairly significant discussion and involvement by the people who work with the rules in the first place in fact I don't think we have a rule which has been specifically imposed by me without some sort of discussion ... So I guess I would look back at that ...I would ask the question why was it a difficult rule to meet. What was the specific problem associated with meeting that rule and I think I would talk about why the rule had been decided upon in the first place usually there is quite legitimate technical or program system reasons why it has to be there...with regard to the collaborative approach...that's something I would encourage in the workplace... (Q.5).

And,

Well I would accept that it worked for him and I'd accept his evidence and you assume that people are being honest and straight forward in telling you the truth, but I wouldn't make a decision to introduce it on that basis alone in my own organisation, that would involve me...because each organisation is different the clients are different the expectations in some ways are different ...and you need to make sure that it fits and adapt it to what you are doing, its not going to work in the same way for me as it works for him (Q.8).

Steve's dominant practical cognitive interest is also apparent in his reflections because he says that he does not believe that it is possible to make 'value free' decisions. Rather, he believes that it is impossible for anyone to discard their personal beliefs, and that every leader needs to accept that their decisions are based on what they personally believe and for leaders to include in their decision making, the values and beliefs of their staff.

Well you deal with values all the time, and in public education in particular you deal with a whole range of values and they can be from one extreme to another I think it is important that you have a fairly clear picture of what your own values are and that you have an idea of what impact those values will have on your decisions I think it is also important to talk about the values you have with others who may have slightly different values, or at least others who are in a similar sort of role so that you can put some sort of perspective on your values as compared to mainstream values or others people who do similar work. But I think you need to have values ... certainly can't be valueless and I, I firmly believe that you cannot divorce your values from your decision making process (Q.3).

And,

I think that in all fairness that it is the Superintendent's job to be able to see that there is something that will work across the system and try to implement it. But I think that each school has its own client group needs and different values that would make it very difficult for the one solution to work in all schools (Q.10).

While holding a dominant practical cognitive interest, some of his comments have shown that he also, at times, emphasises a concurrent technical cognitive interest. Intermingled in his responses were comments that demonstrated that he sometimes favours knowledge that is measured and quantified, and thinking processes that focus on hypothetical-deductive and empirical-analytical methods.

There is lots of different kinds of information...provided that your objective data is reliable well collected ...and ...all those characteristics are there then yes I think that scientific data is very important because you can always go back to it and say well look this is what... this is pretty solid basis on which to make our decision, this is what... this research is telling us this is what people think or want or what ever...so yes there is certainly ah...I would certainly support the scientific collection, the objective collection of data (Q.4).

And,

because the bottom line is that you have a highly skilled highly trained individual who is a asset to the organisation who...in many cases is not easy to replace and ... you need to determine (a) why what is happening is happening and then try to find solutions to get them back into you know a 100% sort of performance mode (Q.5).

A technical cognitive interest is also apparent in this interview when Steve makes comments on his deeply held beliefs on the importance of the role of the leader. At these times it seems that he believes that a leader is essential and that the leader is 'ultimately responsible'. This emphasises a more conservative ideology and a technical cognitive interest in that the leader is considered ultimately able to use his or her superior deductive capacity or knowledge or both, to make the 'right' decisions.

Well ultimately somebody has to be responsible but if you have set up your organisation in an appropriate way and maintained it...nurtured it and so forth that are lots of place to where the buck can go so that buck implies that ultimate something serious ends up with the boss, you should be managing things in such a way that those of incidences of seriousness are less frequent rather than more frequent (Q.2.7).

And,

The team always has a captain OK and I think ...that's something you have to remember working as a team implies, and as principal that you are the captain of the team and a good captain of a team is one who makes use of all the divergent skills of the various members of the team to achieve a victory (Q.6).

Taken overall, it can be suggested that Steve's leadership praxis was informed by both a practical and technical cognitive interest.

Preliminary results based on the use of Giorgi's steps for data analysis

Using Giorgi's steps, profile studies like this one on Steve were developed for each of the fifteen school leaders who were interviewed. These profiles provided evidence of how Habermas' technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests were manifest in the work of practising school leaders. A brief table of results is provided in Table 4.4. This table provides the names of the fifteen school practitioners, their dominant interest, a count of the number of coded segments of discourse (called indicators) and an example of the language used by the practitioner.

Table 4.4. Results of applying Giorgi's steps to the analysis of interview data

Name and position	Summary of cognitive interest profile	Technical Indicators	Practical Indicators	Critical Indicators	Example of language from interview.
Kym Principal	Dominantly Technical	16	4	0	"I am sorry you CAN and you WILL! You are looking for efficiencies here. If you do not go through these particular procedures and it is important here not to have incredibly demanding or numerous expectations like that. You want the job of teaching to be done and done efficiently so you trim to the bone those external demands on the teacher. You want them to do their job but there ARE some absolute bottom lines. Expectations. The place can't function without them."
Paul Principal	Dominantly Technical	16	4	0	"What if one of your experienced teachers says they can't do the performance management stuff? Well if they're an experienced teacher I would say "Get stuffed no choice". Really the bottom line is, as I have said to this lot, we delayed it a while, its all going now, I said to this lot, "Look it is a legislative requirement, we either do it and get something out of it or we do it and don't get anything out of it, the choice is yours."
Jo Principal	Dominantly Practical	3	15	1	"If someone said "I really want to do that" but I thought that they were going to be not successful or a disaster I would talk to them...this is the extent to which one could bring ones personal values into it...interpreting how they would proceed. You base the decision on having the knowledge and understanding, having the information. It has come up here as it has come up in every school too. Placing certain children with certain teachers. Values come into it quite a lot. In some cases you place a kid with a teacher that you think can do the right thing. A bit of intuition, based on what you know."

Sharon Principal	Technical / Practical	11	7	0	<p>“No, No, I'm into efficiency and even though its not broken it might not be running efficiency and it might be energy draining. Efficiency in schools could be measured by stress, on time and cost.”</p> <p>“I believe principals have a balance ... it works on knowing what's happening in the school including in that what the students are thinking and feeling, what the parents are thinking and feeling, what teachers are thinking and feeling.”</p>
Steve Principal	Practical / Technical	9	13	0	<p>“There is lots of different kinds of information...provided that your objective data is reliable well collected ...and ...all those characteristics are there then yes I think that scientific data is very important because you can always go back to it and say well look this is what... this is pretty solid basis on which to make our decision, this is what... this research is telling us this is what people think or want or what ever...so yes there is certainly... ah...I would certainly support the scientific collection, the objective collection of data.”</p>
Bill Ex-principal	Emancipatory/technical	0	1	15	<p>“That is rubbish! That is a value-laden statement. It's like saying we will inject value-free education when all they are doing then is saying we value value-free education so it's totally meaningless. Everything is value -laden. Its just a question of which values you acquire at any particular time and that's a question of personal choice, personal judgment, personal preference and most importantly bad training.”</p>
Ruary Principal	Dominantly Practical	0	17	0	<p>“Work through with the person, exactly what the real issue is. Sometimes the perceived issue is not the real issue. Sometimes the person does not have an effective understanding of what the rule was. And it may be from that, that the rule needs to be re-examined. Not so much in terms of the rule itself, but in terms of the way it is presented and explained and the background to it. The particular danger here is where you have rules by precedent rather than rules through collaboration, and this whole concept of assumed knowledge, that all the new staff are assumed to know everything that the old staff have.”</p>
Mick Principal	Dominantly Practical	1	15	2	<p>“It is foolish to rely on the argument that “the computer did it”. It is as foolish in a leadership context as relying on “the department says” or “Policy says...” You have to interpret. You have to moderate and so on. My response would be “this is an interesting initiative it's probably the way to go, but we haven't got all the bugs out of it yet and I would adopt a combination of all of those things. See what benefits it would bring. Therefore in the longer term you are talking about a trial and double feedback loop so you can improve it. People are working in a collaborative collegial manner, let's sit down talk through the problems.”</p>
Henry Principal	Dominantly Practical	2	16	0	<p>“Management is about doing things right. Leadership is about doing the right thing and I like to do the right thing by my people. Now to me, the people within our organisation are the most important. I teach, I teach class and I'll teach class every week and I always will. I don't just say it, I do it and I know my people and leadership is being there with them. Knowing what they're doing and encouraging them, making them feel good about the organisation, not owning them. But being with them and being a part of them and understanding them even if they don't understand your management contexts. As a leader you need to understand their educational domain and what they're required to do. And I mean that from the view point of teachers and I mean it from the view point of students.”</p>
Wally Superintendent	Dominantly Technical	17	4	2	<p>“Yes research is important. To look at what is happening elsewhere in other educational institutions and other schools. Certainly valuing research and than applying it to your workplace. To see what is happening in education throughout the world and your own country and state and what research is saying. And then your own workplace that has its own characteristics it's very important to weigh up both situations and blend them to make your own plans.”</p>
Helen Principal	Dominantly Technical	17	0	1	<p>“You make sure that everything is being done that is possible to be done. So that when it does break at least you know why and at least there is a process or procedure in place to fix it. I'm a planning person, procedures, and plans. You predict what might happen so that it can all run smoothly so that when a crisis or something unexpected does happen, then at least things can carry on while you fix it. I am certainly not crisis management or spot fire management.”</p>

Maureen Principal	Dominantly Technical	16	2	0	"I am told, and I don't necessarily want to believe, but I am told that I can be quite forceful and therefore I try to back off. Put up an idea and try to back off long enough to allow people to think about it. I am very much the sort of person, who likes to win the war, so I am happy to lose the odd skirmish or two. But if I put up an idea I have probably already made a decision as to whether I am happy to lose that or not happy to lose it."
Chris Principal	Dominantly Practical	0	17	0	"Research can give us wonderful ideas and is a great resource to use, but you have to see if it works for us you can't just grab it because research says it's the best way to go. You have to trial it, talk about it, what works for us is about people and context. Teachers have to feel comfortable with it."
Ray Superintendent	Dominantly Practical	2	15	0	"I think that the whole thing is predicated upon personal values. All of it is predicated on personal values. Education is so dynamic and it depends solely on interaction, personal interaction between people."
Neil Principal	Dominantly Practical	0	17	2	"I think the 'buck stops here' is too easy too pat an answer, I think from my time at CASU, I can only think of a few instances where I would have even thought to say that. But on every occasion it was to say OK, if the seniors of our Department are not going to allow that - and I have been directed to say that you are not allowed to have that - and it is happening still, then speak to me. Let us work out what we are going to do about it together."

The Giorgi steps for phenomenological research (1985) were successfully applied in the analysis of interview data, and provided insight into the cognitive interest of the fifteen school leaders. Based on this analysis, I felt confident that Habermas' theory did have relevance to school leadership. The lack of evidence of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest (only one of the fifteen participants) was a feature of this analysis and this issue is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

In conclusion, I now felt vindicated in my choice of Habermas' theory. I believed that while this result was by no means conclusive, I now had some evidence that justified the use of Habermas' theory in grounding leadership development. No longer was it just my personal belief that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests could be applied to school leadership. The change in me as an educational consultant was that I now had the confidence to apply Habermas' theory in a leadership program.

Phase 6: A trial of a two-day leadership preparation workshop

I had started this research investigation because I wanted to develop a new way of informing school leadership preparation programs. By November 1998 I had been working with Habermas' theory for nearly three years. Also by this time, I had

completed the analysis of the interview data using Giorgi's method. Because of these activities I was confident that Habermas' technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests were manifest in school leadership and therefore could be legitimately applied to illuminating school leadership.

What I now wanted to know was how school leaders would react to Habermas' cognitive interests framework. Before analysing the narrative data, I decided to 'field test' the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests with practicing school leaders, by using them in a school leadership preparation workshop.

Educational Leadership for Classroom Teachers Workshop

With the consent of my colleagues within the Human Resource Development Unit, I developed and conducted a two-day workshop program based on Habermas' theory. The workshop called *Educational Leadership for Classroom Teachers* was conducted in late 1998. The program had two purposes: First to ascertain if the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests could be used to ground coherent and useful school leader preparation activities; second, as a means of determining how practising school leaders would respond to the cognitive interests framework.

The workshop was advertised in the Department of Education Bulletin and attracted eighteen applicants. Given that the usual maximum enrolment allowed for two days Human Resource Branch workshops was fifteen participants this was a good response. The participants were senior teachers (Faculty Heads), assistant principals, and the principal of a school. Of the eighteen participants, five were men and the ages ranged from late twenties to one person in her late fifties. The participants came from a range of school contexts, with five from secondary schools, four from community schools and the remainder from urban primary schools.

The two-day workshop was designed around eleven sessions. The overall purpose of these sessions was to teach the school practitioners about the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests. The practitioners to enhance their leadership practice could then, hopefully, use this knowledge. The program involved me, as facilitator, leading the participants through a series of leadership situations or vignettes. These included reflecting on their preferred way of

responding – and therefore presumably their cognitive interest – to such ‘leadership problems’ as encouraging staff to accept performance management, achieving consensual decision-making, dealing with conflict, and effective report writing. I adopted the process of ‘facilitation’ described by Woolfolk (1997):

- Inquire about students’ understandings of concepts before sharing my own understandings of those concepts;
- Encourage students to engage in dialogue;
- Encourage student inquiry by asking thoughtful, open-ended questions;
- Encourage students to ask questions of each other;
- Seek elaboration of students’ initial responses;
- Engage students in experiences that might engender contradictions to their initial hypotheses and then encourage discussion;
- Allow wait time after posing questions; and,
- Provide time for students to discover relationships and create metaphors.

The conduct of these eleven sessions involved the following strategies:

- *Instructional conversations/discourse.* Participants were asked to engage in conversation with others. This included written conversations in the form of shared tasks, as well as oral discussion. The process involved clarifying reflections and sharing experiences.
- *Reflective writings.* Participants were asked to engage in various writing tasks, including a process of self-reflection at the end of sessions.
- *Mini-lectures.* Brief talks were given on the specific topics with which the participants were asked to engage.
- *Group work.* The participants were responsible for engaging others in activities, often through group discussions and role-plays (e.g. conflict case studies). The group work was mainly focused on solving set problems.
- *Synthesis of concepts and choosing a personal platform.* Based on self-reflection, participants were involved in connecting the concepts that had been covered in the program in order to form a cognitive interest strategy or platform that they could use in their leadership practice.

A brief summary of the eleven sessions of the workshop is provided in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Educational Leadership for Classroom Teachers Overview

Session	Content
Session 1 Introduction	Which model best represents leadership in your school? Collaborative Leadership, Leader as Hub, Leader as Boundary Rider, Leader as 'Go Between'
Session 2 Overview	Why study leadership? Practice vs praxis. An operational definition of leadership. What are frameworks? Background on Habermas theory of cognitive interests. The program outline.
Session 3 The TPE Framework	Technical, Practical, Critical. The Football Analogy. Three case studies, School Situation (1), (2), and (3). Three case studies, Casey, Georgette, and Anna.
Session 4 Applying the Frame to Performance Management	Four stage model of performance management. Implications of TPE cognitive interests to performance management. Strategies in one-on-one negotiations in performance management (use of case studies).
Session 5 Applying the Frame to the classroom	What would you see when a teacher with one strong cognitive interest has a student of a different cognitive interest in their class?
Session 6. TPE and models of school leadership.	What are you in the TPE Frame? Power in the lexicon of leadership. A discussion on collaboration and "collaborative schools". A discussion on 'flattened hierarchies in schools, the creation of mini-schools without Senior Teachers.
Session 7. Applying the Frame to writing memos and reports	Write a memo seeking the purchase of a new computer, to three different principals (who have three different dominant cognitive interests, i.e.. technical, practical, and emancipatory).
Session 8. Applying the Frame to Decision Making.	Collaborative, majority rules, and consensus decision-making in schools. Vision from the perspective of the TPE Frame.
Session 9. Applying the Frame to understanding conflict.	An examination of two case studies of conflict in schools.
Session 10. Theories and Models of Leadership	Theories, models and approaches to understanding leadership and organisations, selected in terms of the technical, practical and critical cognitive interests.
Session 11. Evaluation	Summary session. A cognitive interest strategy and personal 'platform'. Includes end-point valuation of the two day workshop.

The evaluation methodology for this trial was structured around the need to ensure that the participants to the program were not being exposed to a meaningless

workshop. This was achieved by assessing its validity early in the program and continuously throughout the two days. Preparations had been made to shift to a previously used leadership preparation program should there be any indications that the cognitive interest framework was inappropriate.

The program and its evaluation are described in detail in Chapter 5. The high average rating given to the workshop and its various sessions and the very positive nature of the comments recorded by participants in the evaluation suggested to me that the leadership program had been well received. The data in my research journal were also very encouraging and therefore my considered opinion was that the program had been highly successful (I was later to change my views as discussed in Chapter 6, p. 271). It did, at the time, serve to confirm for me that Habermas' theory was manifest in school leadership and it also confirmed my belief that the theory held promise of being an exciting frame from which to inform school leadership preparation.

Overall, the 1998 trial served to strengthen my conviction that Habermas' theory was worth pursuing. Further, the process of workshopping – which involved explaining the cognitive interests to school leaders, and the resulting discussions and participants' feedback – had greatly enhanced my own understanding of the cognitive interests.

One of the important outcomes of the trial of the two day school leadership preparation program, was that for the first time I had been able to spend time in exploring and discussing the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests with practising school leaders. A function of my role as course facilitator had involved me in explaining the framework to participants, and the resulting two-way discourse had in turn been a catalyst for my own self-reflection on Habermas' theory. From this process, I was able to reaffirm and consolidate my understanding of how the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests are manifest in school leadership.

A good example of how the workshop was useful in informing my understanding of the cognitive interests was the emergence of 'false images' of school leaders with strong cognitive interests. During the workshop I had, on a number of occasions, asked the school practitioners to relate the technical, practical or emancipatory cognitive interests to people they worked with, particularly their school leaders. Following on from this process, I would then ask the participants to describe a 'general image' of what they thought a person with each of the cognitive interests would be like.

I had originally perceived, for example, the technical cognitive interest would manifest in a leader who was concerned for prediction and technical control. The technical mode is “based on empirical knowledge, and is governed by technical rules” (Mezirow, 1981, p. 144). Such a leader would be someone who, if a teacher brought to them a proposal, would require that the proposal contain informed data and strong supporting evidence (based on a scientific rationality).

Unfortunately, the image that some of the workshop participants developed of a school leader with a technical cognitive interest, was of someone for whom you would have to ‘cross your t’s and dot your i’s’. One participant suggested that a school principal with a strong technical cognitive interest would be someone who went over their teachers’ programs with a “fine tooth” comb picking up inconsistencies, requiring measurable outcomes and demanding cross-referencing to curriculum documents. In this case the cognitive interest in ‘facts’, research evidence, and knowledge supported by scientific endeavour, had been linked in this particular participant’s mind to someone that they worked with, who was meticulous (even pedantic) in his/her need for correctness and detail.

I was not sure that such an image was accurate. Rather, it was my view that being pedantic about detail and correctness was not a ‘trait’ of a technical cognitive interest, but a personality characteristic that could be seen in any school leader regardless of their cognitive interest.

Another example of an image to emerge from the workshop involved the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. Emancipatory actions, it had been explained, involved self-knowledge and reflection on the effects of one’s lived experience, and the problematising of power structures with a view to emancipation from the inequities. This mode is related to the empowering of human beings through the critique of ideologies (Mezirow, 1981). While the essence of an emancipatory interest was in knowledge that served to remove barriers and constraints, some of the participants in the workshop linked this to school leaders who were lateral thinkers and inventive.

What emerged from at least five of the workshop participants, was the image of a leader with a strong emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest, as an ‘ideas person’, someone who was always looking for better ways of doing things. This image was attractive to the many of the participants, and they saw the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest as the ideal. That is, a ‘good’ school leader was one who would have a dominant emancipatory cognitive interest because they questioned ‘the ways things are’ and were creative and inventive. One participant said that they were

“principals who were able to ‘break out of the box’, constantly seeking new and innovative ways to create better, empowering learning environments.” Such an image was of concern to me. I personally held that ‘creative’ thinking and finding better ways of doing things, were characteristics that could also be demonstrated by leaders with both a technical and practical cognitive interest, and that such thinking was not necessarily linked to Habermas’ knowledge-constitutive interests.

The image of a school leader with a strong practical cognitive interest was of a person who was highly involving, highly collaborative and nurturing as a leader. Again I did not necessarily believe that this was an accurate image of a person with a strong practical cognitive interest, but I could see where this connection was being made. The practical mode had been described to the group as having a concern with human relationships and communication, with the building of consensual understandings and norms for action (Mezirow, 1981, p. 144).

The problem was, that one of the purposes of this trial workshop was to gather data from school leaders about how the cognitive interests were manifest in school leadership. Perhaps school leaders with a strong emancipatory cognitive interest do demonstrate characteristics that lead those who work with them to see them as creative thinkers (emphasising the critical potential for creating empowering learning environments)? Perhaps some leaders with a strong technical cognitive interest do come across to their staff as being ‘sticklers’ for detail, overly concerned for facts and data correctness? Certainly the image of a leader with a strong practical cognitive interest as someone who is highly involving, collaborative and nurturing does meld with the practical mode of the building of consensual understandings and norms for action.

These questions, and others like them – for example, how the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests might illuminate the interaction of classroom teacher and students in effective learning strategies? – were the catalysts for my own reflections on how Habermas’ cognitive interests were manifest in school leadership.

In conclusion, the impact on me personally was immense. During the two-day workshop I had been able to discuss Habermas’ theory for the first time with school practitioners, and they had found it to be not only professionally acceptable (in the sense of adding to their knowledge of leadership), but also very exciting. During this program I had also been able to take the technical, practical and emancipatory cognitive interests frame from theory to practice. I had been able to try out my ideas and they had been well received.

In reflecting on my research journal of the time, it is clear that this program reaffirmed my belief in the purpose of my research, but it also had another effect, which was to shift my own cognitive interest from the practical interest to a greater acceptance of the emancipatory cognitive interest. This change came about after the conclusion of the two-day program, when in later reflecting on the outcomes, I began to view the purposes behind the conduct of such two-day leadership development programs, as problematic (see discussion Chapter 6, p. 271-272).

Phase 7: Data analysis using MCA

In 1999 the need for yet another research change – another research cycle – emerged from the unfolding results. Although I still believed that I had successfully analysed all fifteen interview transcripts using Giorgi' (1985) method, what emerged following the trial of the school leadership preparation program, was the need to find another more rigorous method for data analysis.

As the evaluation results for the workshop demonstrate (see Chapter 5), the school leadership preparation activities had been well regarded by participants. They had accepted the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests as a conceptual model that had meaning in the context of their schools. Furthermore the participants – all practising school leaders – supported the use of the framework in illuminating leadership practice.

As well as confirming the validity of the framework, the workshop had served another purpose. Through the two days of intensive interaction with school practitioners, for the first time I had been able to discuss the cognitive interests (and their impact on school leadership) with professional school based colleagues. This interaction had shaped my understanding of the framework, and had given me new insights into how it was manifest in school leader practice.

In 1999 I returned to re-examine the fifteen leadership profiles (based on interview data) developed using Giorgi's method. My purpose for re-examining these studies of school leadership was that because of discussions held during the workshop, I had some concerns for the images that the participants were forming of school leaders with a technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive

interests, and I was concerned for the definitions that I had been using. In revisiting my Giorgi-based leadership profiles, however, what emerged was the need to change my method of data analysis.

Two reasons prompted the change in research design. First, I was aware that the method chosen for analysis would have an effect on the outcome of the research (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994), and that the method therefore had to be directly linked to the paradigm of research being employed. Giorgi's steps for phenomenological psychological research (1985) are, as titled, a process of analysis for phenomenological research. Phenomenological research is research into the lived experience of that which is being studied. It is a description of experience. "To do justice to the lived aspects of human phenomena ... one first has to know how someone actually experienced what has been lived" (Giorgi, 1985, p. 1). What I was doing was not examining 'lived experience' rather I was looking at the discourse of school leaders in an attempt to determine, from the language that was being used, if Habermas' theory of cognitive interests could be interpreted to exist.

My study was discourse research into cognitive interests and not a phenomenological study of school leadership. What was needed, I came to believe, was a method of analysis that was designed not for phenomenological purposes (the study of each participant's experience of leadership), but for discourse research (to analyse the interview and narrative data to gain access to the language participants' used that can be inferred to denote their cognitive interests).

I came to accept that I needed a process of analysis that centred on language, on discourse analysis. Discourse research provides insight into the resources individuals rely upon to define the situation and establish their work within participant structures, as well as insights into the social and cognitive processes embedded in the enactment (Wallat & Piazza, 1997).

The second and directly related reason for abandoning the Giorgi analysis, was that the process lacked in the structure or rigour needed to substantiate my claims that from the discourse of the school leaders could be inferred their technical, practical or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests. Having discussed the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests at great length with school practitioners during the workshop, I was very confident that the framework was manifest in school leadership. What I needed to do was ensure that my claims, that various language statements demonstrated this, were supported by an appropriate research analysis methodology.

The Giorgi steps for phenomenological research (1985) did not provide a structured means for language analysis. Using the Giorgi method I had read and reread the interview transcripts, and selected and coded various segments of language that indicated a particular cognitive interest. But my decision as to which segments of language indicated a technical, practical or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest was not justified nor detailed in the resulting leadership profiles. Attention to such detail was not part of the Giorgi methodology. What I needed to do was to find a more structured discourse analysis methodology that would better demonstrate this in my thesis.

A new process for the analysis of data

I put aside my work with Giorgi's (1985) method (and the months spent in analysing interview data) and sought a different system of data analysis. The work I had done in ploughing through the interview data, coding, and extracting examples of the cognitive interests, was not wasted. In the first instance the results of this effort had confirmed for me that I was on the right track. While the Giorgi-based analysis was not what was needed to answer the research questions, the emergent themes had provided evidence that Habermas' framework could be discerned within the discourse of the research sample of school leaders. Secondly, this process had given me valuable insight into the language that school leaders were using and this resulted in a further shaping of what I came to think of, as the profile indicators of the three cognitive interests. In a sense, this work had served the purpose of enabling me to 'turn' over the data and to get a feel for what was there and how it could be used.

I began by returning to Habermas' theory. Habermas' concern for three knowledge-constitutive interests was based on a desire to attack scientific reasoning and rationality as the sole foundation of genuine knowledge, and this was firmly grounded in Habermas' belief in the 'ideal speech situation' (Habermas 1987). As Kenter (1998) notes, Habermas' claims that an 'ideal speech situation' is not a theoretical construct, but something that is inherent in language. This is so, because human speech is not meaningless. In an 'ideal speech situation' everything that is said is fully understood and communication is totally open. The goal for free language use underlies the usage of all language. Thus the fully emancipated society, which Habermas seeks, is inherently present in language.

I came to accept that I needed a process of analysis that centred on language, on discourse analysis with possibly an emancipatory interest. Detailed examination of Habermas' work led me to realise that as a philosopher and social theorist, Habermas himself had not fully explored nor postulated a research methodology that would be useful to my investigation. I also discovered that other researchers who had used Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests to frame their work, had also needed to grapple with the problem of a legitimate methodology (Fischer, 1985; Mezirow, 1981). I shifted my search of the literature for a system of analysis based in discourse analysis, which might possibly have been used by others with a critical intention or emancipatory purpose.

It was through reading a Department of Education Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA) report on literacy practices in school education, that a useful Australian study (Griffiths University) came to light. This study used a process called Membership Categorisation Analysis (MCA) to interrogate interview data (Gunn, Forrest & Freebody, 1995). While not a study grounded in critical theory, the intention of the study, to illuminate barriers to achievement in literacy practices in disadvantaged groups of society, could be argued to hold an emancipatory purpose.

Enhancing the trustworthiness of the MCA process

Given the false starts already experienced, while I felt confident that the MCA process would enable me to achieve my research purpose, I needed to confirm that my application of the MCA processes was trustworthy. To this end I went back to my critical colleague who had assisted me in my earlier reflective practices in applying Habermas' theory to develop profile indicators (see page 96). I had undertaken an MCD analysis of a number of the interview transcripts, and at random selected one that I sent to my critical colleague. He was also sent a copy of the original transcript, a detailed statement of the MCD process and my MCD analysis of the interview. He conducted his own MCD analysis of the transcript and then read my analysis. While he pointed out some minor points of difference between his analysis and mine (re the MCDs), he was able to confirm that overall my application of the MCA process was trustworthy.

Two examples of the MCA process

The MCA process was used to re-analyse the transcripts of the interviews with fifteen school leaders and also to analyse the sixteen written narratives of leadership. To illustrate these processes two examples are provided here. These are based on excerpts taken from the transcripts of interview with the school leaders Helen and Chris.

Example of the MCA process from interview transcript with Helen

<p>Q. 4. <i>As a leader, how important is it to you for your people to get the 'right answer every time'?</i></p> <p><i>Helen:</i> You make decisions on the information you have to hand and we are not all bloody perfect. It's very important to get all the right information to do all the research. If someone comes to me and they want to try something new or, if I go to the teachers and want to try out something new or change something with Council. I've got to do my research; I've got to have my facts. ... I've got to do a presentation. However, I am also a person that ... sometimes all that is crap and garbage why not just put it in one sentence. Something like school fees. You know its not working, so why do I have to sit there for two hours trying to do a paper on it, just to get it right. And so we will just spend five minutes on it and come up with a brilliant solution and we will do it.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Research</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders as 'researchers'.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders rely upon research. Leaders check their facts.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who collaborate with staff to make decisions based on hermeneutics and shared understandings.</p> <p>Authentication Reporting of affect; "all that is crap and garbage ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people know that they need to check their facts and have their information ready.</p>
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While Helen was asked to discuss the importance of accuracy in her role as principal, "How important is it to get things right?" her answer nonetheless turns immediately to categories drawn from the MCD 'research'. Her first response is "you need to get all the right information" and, "I've got to do my research. I've got to have my facts". The *category-bound attribute* is that effective leaders rely upon research and they need to 'check their facts'. She then shifts in her account and offers by inference the *Standard Relationship Pair* (SRP), that doing lots of research to get facts can take too much time. She notes that she can spend two hours on a proposal that is dealt with in 'five minutes' by the School Council. This implies that there might be some school leaders *not of this category* who would not bother with the research and still come up with the correct outcome. Her *reporting of affect*, where

she draws upon strong language like “bloody” and “crap and garbage”, appears to substantiate that facts and research are of importance to the speaker. The *cause - effect* apparent in this account is that; as she places a high value on facts and research, then the effect on her staff will be that she would also insist or require the same from them. Thus staff bringing proposals to her would need to ensure that they have got their evidence or facts prepared. Overall this statement illustrates Habermas’ technical cognitive interest in “information that expands our power of technical control” (Habermas, 1971, p. 309) and is based upon empirical investigation.

Example of the MCA process from interview transcript with Chris

<p>Q. 4 "As a leader, how important is it to you for your people to get the 'right answer every time'.</p> <p><i>Chris:</i> I don't think you can get it right. I mean if you get it right today does that mean it is right tomorrow? One thing I like to see is that we have living policies and say the behaviour management policy. We have a draft from another school but that policy will be reviewed every two or three council meetings and staff meetings. Is it working is it not working? If you got it right every time you would not learn anything. Living policies are important.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Policies (living policies)</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders as change agents</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders see policies as 'living', they grow and develop. Leaders involve their people in an on-going process of reviewing policies and practices.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who believe that policies must be adhered to without change.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; "say the behaviour management policy...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - leaders would be constantly involving their staff and parents in reviewing and changing what the school is doing.</p>
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In responding to the question on the importance of “getting it right”? Chris says “I don't think you can get it right”. This is the opposite of a technical interest in knowledge for control. He goes on in this account to use the MCD of policies. He uses the metaphor of “living” to imply that policies grow and develop constantly.

The *category-bound activity* is that effective leaders ensure that policies are reviewed as a part of an ongoing process - not by him - but by the people of his school, represented by the council and staff meeting. This implies a process of learning, of interpretation and the development of historical understanding (policies that were appropriate at one point may no longer be suited), as Chris says, “If you got it right every time you would not learn anything”.

The SRP implied is that there are leaders, *not of this category*, who do seek to get it 'right', to put into place the correct policies and adhere to them. It is also implied that there are leaders who develop policies themselves based on their own research and gathering of information and evidence of what is 'right'.

The *cause - effect* of such a category of leadership, would be a school where staff and parents are actively involved in an ongoing review of the school's operations. This in turn suggests clear communication and a process of hermeneutic understanding by parents and staff of what is actually going on in the school.

This demonstrates a practical cognitive interest where Chris as a leader has an interest in knowledge based on interpretation and hermeneutics (there is never one right answer). Such knowledge arises from the efforts of people to understand and communicate with each other. The interest is for knowledge that enables 'understanding' (subjective) as opposed to 'rationalising' or 'theorising' (objective).

In these two examples, Helen and Chris responded to the same question in ways that demonstrate two of Habermas' three cognitive interests.

Final adjustments to the research problem

Having collected data and established what I believed to be an appropriate methodology for analysis, I was now concerned for an effective format for reporting on my work. Collaboratively with my supervisors, I once again reflected on the need to reframe the research problem. Through all the changes I had made my essential purpose had not varied: to ascertain if Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests could be used as the basis for understanding school leadership and informing leadership preparation. But what was now apparent, was that my research journey of six years constituted both a qualitative study of cognitive interests in school leadership and a record of my personal growth as an educational practitioner and training consultant. I came to realise that the results of this study were emerging as a duality: First, the results drawn from data collected from school leaders that held the possibility of adding to the qualitative body of knowledge about school leadership and leadership preparation; second the results of my own development as an educational consultant and how my own cognitive interest had changed over the course of the research journey (I have described these personal changes in Chapter 6 (p. 267).

The central problem guiding the research was now restated as:

What are the implications of Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests for an enhanced understanding of school leadership practice?

This problem was addressed through the following two research questions:

1. In what ways are the knowledge-constitutive interests evident in school leaders' descriptions of their professional practice?
2. What is the potential of Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests to enhance school leadership practice and the preparation of school leaders?

To these I also added a third research question that contributed significantly to the understanding of Habermas' theory and its implications for leadership.

3. How did the experience of researching school leaders' practice, influence the researcher's personal growth as an educational leader?

Chapter conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide a detailed description of the research carried out in this study. This has been told as a personal account of my research journey, a journey that has involved a number of research cycles as the research has changed and evolved over time. Overall this study has comprised seven cycles or phases of research over six years.

In Phase 1 I had begun this investigation seeking to develop an instrument, based on Habermas' theory that could be used to identify the cognitive interests of school leaders. This had involved surveys of school leaders and focus group investigations.

In Phase 2 I conducted an unsuccessful trial of the focus group process as a method for data collection

In Phase 3 I had shifted my research focus (and reframed my research problem and questions) from the development of an instrument for determining cognitive interest, to interpreting if Habermas' cognitive interests were manifest in the discourse of practising school leaders. I then successfully tested and collected data using qualitative interviews.

In Phase 4 I collected data as written narratives of leadership.

In Phase 5 I analysed all interview data using Giorgi's steps for phenomenological research (1985).

In Phase 6 I applied the cognitive interests framework in a two-day leadership preparation workshop with school leaders.

In Phase 7 I re-analysed all data using Membership Categorisation Analysis. I also reframed my research problem and questions.

The key results of this research are provided in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: THE RESEARCH RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter provides the results of the three key research activities that have contributed significantly to the study's findings. These are the:

1. Trial of a two-day school leadership preparation workshop;
2. Collection of interview data and analysis using MCA;
3. Collection of narrative data and analysis using MCA.

The field trial of a leadership preparation program

Introduction

As described previously (Chapter 1) one of the main reasons for undertaking this research was to explore my hypothesis that Habermas' theory could be used as the basis for developing a school leadership preparation program. From the early analysis of interview data using Giorgi's method, I had become reasonably confident that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework was valid in the context of school leadership. I therefore decided to trial a two-day leadership preparation workshop. The trial had two purposes. The first purpose was to see if the technical, practical and emancipatory cognitive interests framework could be used to develop practical applications for a school leadership preparation workshop. The second was to discover if school leaders would find the framework meaningful when reflecting upon their leadership and the leadership of others.

Planning the evaluation

Planning the evaluation of a professional development program can be complex. Consideration of evaluation philosophies, evaluation methodologies, analysis of data and evaluation instruments are all part of the planning process.

Some approaches to evaluation (e.g. program evaluation (Owens & Rodgers, 1999)) emphasise the importance of determining criteria by which the professional development program can be judged. Others question if it is necessary to have criteria for evaluation. The positivist answer is affirmative. For constructivists, the issue is more problematic, for they hold that the interpretation of any such criteria would vary between individuals. This position allows that meaning gained from a professional development program is individually derived (although understandings have some commonality from individual to individual and over time).

Guskey (2000) discusses five levels of professional development evaluation that are helpful in determining the overall success of the activity. The first level of assessment is to gauge the participants' reactions, usually through questionnaires following a session. Did the school leaders think their time was well spent? Were the activities meaningful? Did they think the activities would be useful in practice?

The second level for assessment examines participants' learning; it measures the knowledge, skills, and perhaps the new attitudes school leaders have acquired as a result of the professional development activities, not just the subjective indications of impact. This type of assessment could be a pencil and paper exercise, a simulation or skill demonstration, oral or written personal reflections, portfolio evaluation, or similar activities.

The third assessment level comes after an appropriate length of time has passed. This more complicated type of assessment analyses organisational support for the skills gained in professional development. At the fourth level, the participants' use of new knowledge and skills is assessed by asking whether they are using what they learned and using it well. The fifth level addresses student learning outcomes that are the end result of the professional development activity for school leaders. Did students show improvement in academic, behaviour, or other areas?

As previously noted the purpose of the evaluation of the workshop was to determine if a workshop for school leaders, based on the Technical, Practical and Emancipatory (Critical) framework was – in the view of the participants – was considered to be useful and of practical value to the development of their leadership. The evaluation methodology was also structured around the need early in the program, to ensure that the participants to the program were not being exposed to a meaningless workshop. This was assessed early in the program and continuously throughout the two days.

To achieve this purpose, the evaluation process adopted in this study was based on the first two levels of Guskey (2000) and on instruments / strategies developed from ideas suggested by Champion (2000).

Evaluation of the program

The evaluation had three elements:

1. *End Point Evaluation.* At the end of the program the participants were asked to complete a written evaluation that included rating the sessions and program.
2. *The maintenance of an investigative journal.* At the end of each of the sessions separated by breaks, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and at the end of each day, time was taken to record observations of the activities and exercises including observations of participants' responses.
3. *Participant feedback.* At the end of three main periods, Day 1 lunch, Day 1 end-of-day and Day 2 lunch, the participants were asked to form into small groups to discuss the program and then write their ideas as comments on evaluation cards that were collected and analysed.

Endpoint evaluation rating results

At the conclusion of the two-day program, participants were asked to rate the workshop and the various sessions on a subjective scale of 1 to 5, where 1 meant Poor, 3 meant Average and 5 meant Excellent. The result was an overall average rating of 4.4. This suggests that the participants thought very highly of the program and that the workshop can be considered to have been a success. The highest average rating of 4.5 was given to the session on performance management, and the lowest average rating 4.2 was given to the session on conflict resolution (this session had been reduced to 60 minutes and the participants felt more time was needed). The results of the ratings are listed in the following Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1. Results of ratings analysis of workshop evaluation

Question	Rating (1-5)
Q.1 Did you find this program useful?	100% Yes
Q.2 Overall rating of this program	4.4
Q.3 Value of TPC model to school leadership	4.4
Q.4 Value of performance management exercise	4.5
Q.5 Value of memo writing exercise	4.4
Q.6 Value of the decision making exercise	4.4
Q.7 Value of dealing with conflict exercise	4.2

End point evaluation comments

In addition to the ratings scale, participants were asked to write comments on the program. These responses are provided in **Appendix 2**. They demonstrate that the participants found the program to be very valuable and the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest framework to be meaningful. The comments also suggest that the participants accepted the way in which Habermas' cognitive interest framework was presented in the leadership activities. No negative comments were received. The high average rating given to the workshop and its various sessions, and the very positive nature of the comments recorded in the evaluation, suggests that the leadership program was highly regarded by the eighteen participants. The following are three samples of the evaluation comments received from participants (TPC model refers to the Technical, Practical and Critical cognitive interests frame).

I think the application of the TPC model to leadership issues is an interesting and useful approach. I believe we intuitively shift our ways of operating with various people and in various situations and have learned from the outcomes of these. For future events, my practice will be more informed from the experience of these past two days. As a result I may experience less personal internal conflict. Thanks for your efforts Terry. It was great to meet new people.

I believe TPC as a model for learning is very useful in terms of leadership in the sense that knowing who your audiences are the better communication you can make or do and the result if the efforts you made would be successful, most highly. And don't use technical words to a non-technical audience/people.

I found TPC most valuable, it's funny how you can feel responses from people are all wrong only to realise there were two different thought process happening. I will be more aware of this in approaching people differently and hopefully will be more successful.

Evaluation journal

The evaluation journal served as a record of my reflections and understandings as researcher / presenter that were noted immediately at the end of each session. The journal also records the comments of the participants collected during the program. At three key points (Lunch Day 1, End Day 1, Lunch Day 2), the participants were asked to reflect on the program, discuss it with their peers, and write their comments down on a sheet of paper. A sample of the journal entries and participants' comments is provided in **Appendix 3**. This sample is indicative of the very positive way in which the participants responded to all aspects of this trial leadership program. These comments, and my journal also support the End –point evaluation that Habermas theory of cognitive interests was well accepted by the school leaders in this program. A sample of the comments is provided here to illustrate this point.

Participants' Comments (Session 2 End Day 1)

- TPC - interesting to realise the dynamics existing within these cognitive interest groupings. Have already identified staff members who may fit into these groupings - and have pick up some hints on how to approach Performance Management with them. Helpful advice - thank you.
- I found your presentation informative, interesting and presented in a way we will remember it.
- It's not repetitive - the TPC 'lectures' have been sequential so we can learn how to use it in real 'settings'.
- Tomorrow - how to deal with people when 'we' have taken the course on TPC but they know nothing on TPC/communication/dealing with conflict/ can make what you know difficult to put into practice.
- Session so far: informative, interesting, I've found something I'd never have thought of before - the TPC concept.
- The notion of the TPC has been valuable from the point of view that it gives a base starting point on understanding and dealing with colleagues etc. It would be good to have the opportunity to discuss how a leader could approach a difficult staff member who has little/no ability to accept "leadership".

Keeping the journal enabled me to engage in a process of self-reflection and to evaluate the potential applicability of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests frame as the basis for developing activities that could be used to prepare school leaders.

While the results of the evaluation of the two-day workshop were useful, the most significant evidence for the research questions came from the Interviews with school leaders and the narratives of leadership.

Interviews with school leaders

Introduction

As previously discussed, initially the data collected from the interviews were analysed using Giorgi's method, but later reanalysed using Membership Categorisation Analysis (MCA). By a process of 'raking' through the transcripts – which involved a meticulous recording of each instance in which the categories used by the participant demonstrated a technical, practical or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest – evidence for how each interest is manifest in the discourse of practising school leaders was collated.

For reporting purposes, the remainder of this section is divided into three parts, one for each of the three cognitive interests. The interview questions are attached as **Appendix 1**.

The technical cognitive interest

A technical cognitive interest was evident in many of the interview transcripts. The definition of a technical interest is recalled from Chapter 2. A technical cognitive interest is an interest in knowledge that is aimed at a causal understanding of events. A knowable, external, value-free reality is presumed to exist and a positivist epistemology is followed. It is an interest in creating new knowledge in order to be able to make predictions and for achieving control. It is based on a need to look for causes and to find the 'right' solutions. Knowledge comes from hypothetical-deductive and rational thinking and decision-making is based on 'hard' quantifiable evidence.

The importance of finding solutions or the ‘right’ solution

An interest in finding the ‘right’ solution is indicative of hypothetical-deductive reasoning and is manifest in the data. An example of this is provided in the following extract from the interview with Helen.

<p><i>Q. 4. As a leader, how important is it to you for your people to get the ‘right answer every time’? That is, to find the right solution for the problem?</i></p> <p><i>Helen:</i> You make decisions on the information you have to hand and we are not all bloody perfect. It's very important to get all the right information to do all the research. If someone comes to me and they want to try something new or, if I go to the teachers and want to try out something new or change something with Council. I've got to do my research; I've got to have my facts. I've got to do a presentation. However, I am also a person that ... sometimes all that is crap and garbage why not just put it them in one sentence. Something like school fees. You know its not working, so what do I have to sit there for two hours trying to do a paper on it, just to get it right. And so we will just spend 5 minutes on it and come up with a brilliant solution and we will do it.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Research</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders as ‘researchers’.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders rely upon research. Leaders check their facts. Leaders operate on their own intuition.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who collaborate with staff to make decisions based on hermeneutics and shared understandings.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; “Something like school fees ...”. Reporting of affect; “...all that is crap and garbage ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people know that they need to check their facts and have their 'hard' information ready when taking proposals to the leader.</p>
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In describing ‘getting the right solution’, Helen uses the MCD of ‘researcher’, with the attribute that it is very important to get the ‘right information’. She says “if I go to the teachers and want to try out something new or change something with council. I’ve got to do my research, I’ve got to have my facts...”. She attributes to school leaders the importance of finding ‘facts’ and providing these to her staff. This indicates a technical cognitive interest.

A reliance on evidence, facts, or other ‘scientific’ data

A further example of this technical interest in facts and positivist data is manifest in the following extract from the interview with Kym.

<p>Q.1. My leadership style</p> <p><i>Kym:</i> It's not a single factor. One of the most important things is interpersonal relationships, in which one builds up as far as one can a relationship of trust and confidence and expectations. ...</p> <p>You must follow up always. I've really never reflected on it, I just do it. I assume that every thing people tell me is the truth, but there are times when you have to look at what some one says and who that some one is that is saying that. I've got a memo at the moment from a member of staff, and this member of staff has been wanting one thing for quite a considerable period of time. I know that what she will give me in the memo is to her true but I also know that interpretation by others isn't quite the same as she has. Her perception isn't someone else's reality.</p> <p>Perception is reality ... now I had an example of that this morning, where I had the yr 7 coordinator with a parent, a child and me. Now I knew that the story that the child was given, because of information from other sources, was untrue and the information was going to the parent and the parent was being misled. So I had to talk to the child, the parent, present the evidence tell the child she was wrong and tell the parent that her response to the child was incorrect.</p> <p>You have to validate everything. That's facts, very many facts. Facts dictate impressions. And if you are only operating off one fact than your impression is most likely wrong.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Leadership</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders who seek to validate</p> <p>Attributes Category-bound activities Leaders need to check the facts and validate statements and situations. Leaders cannot rely upon what people say. Leaders must be consistent.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders, who do not need facts and validation, but trust their staff.</p> <p>Authentication Recent experience, anecdotal evidence.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people know that their principal requires that they get the facts and validate their propositions.</p>
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Kym begins his discussion of leadership by referring to human relations skills (e.g. consistency) but quickly shifts his focus to a discussion of the category of people who misconstrue situations or needs. In Kym's view a school leader should not trust what people say, rather they should always check "facts, very much facts. Facts dictate impressions". Kym's cognitive interest lies in the technical need for evidence and scientific data. He also expresses his belief that you cannot trust what people tell you; this also indicates a need for technical control.

A need for control

A further example of a need for control is manifest in an extract taken from the interview with Sharon.

<p><i>Q.5. A teacher is unable to follow a school regulation</i></p> <p><i>Sharon:</i> I would clarify the point ... are you telling me you can't do it or are you are going to be a week late and you are willing to do it. If they say no they are not going to do it, then I would give them a session on accountability and responsibility.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes MCD: Accountability</p> <p>Category used in the talk Accountability and responsibility.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> School regulations must be followed by staff, only irresponsible teachers or teachers who ignore their accountability would not do so.</p> <p>SRP Leaders who seek to understand the reasons why a person cannot follow a school regulation, and try to work with the person to remove the barriers.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; "I would give them a lesson on accountability...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people expect that the leader will control the situation and enforce school regulations.</p>
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The category of leadership expressed here attributes to leaders the need for accountability. Teachers must follow school regulations otherwise they are irresponsible and can be held accountable. This interest is proffered in language that suggests that some school leaders see their role as ultimately one of maintaining and ensuring technical control over staff. Another example of technical control is manifest in the following extract taken from Paul.

<p><i>Q.1. My leadership style</i></p> <p><i>Paul:</i> It's a style where I like to involve as many people as possible while still retaining the final decision, which as principal is what you have to do. I would put it as collaborative, but within certain frameworks. You let me know what you think about it, weigh it all up and say right what you've come up with is fine. But if they come up with something I don't consider fine well I reserve the right to say no. You operate through a senior team. Through unit meetings through staff meetings. Initially you look at the beginning of the year at what our priorities are what the department priorities are. ... From senior staff; "right this is what we need to look at, where do we go from here?" then generally to the Unit meetings. I find it easier to get things sorted before we go to the general staff meeting. Full staff meetings are 30 odd people and degenerate into a bun fight rather rapidly [laugh] ...</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes MCD: Decision-making</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leader control.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders involve staff in collaborative decision-making but reserve the right to say no to any decision they don't agree with.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) People who would dispute this processes of decision making as contrived collaboration.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; "I find it easier...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff believe that 'collaborative' decision making is contrived.</p>
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Paul, in discussing his leadership, says that he believes in a type of contrived collaboration where staff are involved in decision-making (senior staff not the general staff). It is contrived because ultimately he reserves the right to say no to any decision he does not agree with. Paul says that he prefers to have everything decided before going to the general staff, as the general staff meeting is difficult to control. Paul is indicating a need for technical control and a lack of interest in communication and understanding.

A concern for evidence and facts

Technical control is also indicated by a need for ‘evidence’ and ‘facts’. An example of this is evidenced in the extract taken from the interview with Wally.

<p><i>Q.2.10 Can you separate your values and beliefs say in class allocation?</i></p> <p><i>Wally:</i> I don't think that personal views and assumptions about people clouded my decision making. I think when it comes to staff that their strengths and weaknesses as teachers ... I really think that it is so important for leaders to understand their staff their characteristics of their teachers, and to match that to their workplace situation. So I was really zealous in delving deep into the abilities of teachers, so I always believed it was important to move about the workplace of the school to get an understanding of the strengths of teachers and their weaknesses and apply that to the right situations. I always went to the n'th degree and was certainly well known and criticised for going to the n'th degree to match horses to courses. ... I set up situation that everyone could have his or her input. But once the input was all there, then the decisions had to be made and often you had to make a hard decision. Because often the more choice, the wider choice that you gave people the more difficult it was to make a decision once everyone had their input. It's about making sure you have all the right evidence and information. ... With 14 or 15 schools whatever, you have that capability to mix and match and you pride yourself on getting the right staff to the right places</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Decision-making</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders who make decisions.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders need all the right evidence and information in order to make decisions. Leaders need to seek understanding about their staff's characteristics, strengths and weaknesses. Leaders allow everyone to give input but make the hard decisions themselves.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who don't seek knowledge about their staff's strengths and weaknesses, but seek to work with their staff to build knowledge that arises from the efforts of people to understand and communicate with each other. Leaders involve staff in making hard decisions.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; "So I was really ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - In seeking the 'right' evidence and information leaders encourage staff input before making the hard decisions themselves.</p>
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In responding to this question on values and beliefs, Wally chooses to respond by discussing the MCD of ‘decision-making’. Wally says that leaders need to seek the “right evidence and information”. They need to be zealous in getting as much information as possible on their staff’s weaknesses and strengths, in order to make the hard decisions themselves. Wally is describing a technical interest in control and prediction.

An emphasis on rational and objective leadership

This emphasis on “getting all the information” before making a decision, is an example of rationality and objectivity in leadership. Two further examples of this technical indicator are manifest in extracts taken from the interview with Bill and Ruary.

<p><i>Q. 1. My leadership style</i></p> <p><i>Bill:</i> I would describe it as having draconian fun and by that I mean I am quite happy to be quite directive in my management and hold people highly accountable for the outcomes but I make sure that everyone has a ball while they are doing it. I like in my office everyone laughing being jovial but where I require things to be done like managing a profitable company I make sure of that and therefore my style is highly directional but highly fun and engaging so there is a huge amount of consultation participation but if it gets to a point where a decision has to be made and if its one that is at odds with what I believe is correct my decision stands. I am an iconoclast...someone who tears down icons. If something is up there I tear it down. TQM says that we should be doing ‘it’. Forget that! What do you think you should do! I am for a common sense form of management. I am for injecting good thinking clear thinking</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Directed leadership</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Directive leaders</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders are highly directional. Leaders reject program/innovations unless they are rational “good thinking, clear thinking”. Leaders who reserve the right to make the final decision.</p> <p>SRP Leaders who collaborate with staff to mutual determine what is appropriate and to make joint decisions.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; “TQM says that we should be ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people accept top-down directed leadership.</p>
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Bill says that he would expect that staff would comply with rational requests, but that he himself is unwilling to comply with various ‘iconic’ requirements where

these requirements conflict with what he sees as useful to his organisation. The criterion of effective control of reality, “good thinking, clear thinking”, direct what is or is not appropriate action. In this perspective the organisation is considered to be an instrument, rationally designed to serve the purposes of an individual (the leader). Another example of this technical indicator is demonstrated in the following extract taken from the interview with Ruary.

<p><i>Q.2.1 If it's not broken don't fix it.</i></p> <p><i>Ruary:</i> I don't agree with this idea it is a cop out. On the other hand I don't believe you should go around and pull things apart just to see if you can break it. There's a point somewhere in between. The point is that even if it is not broken it may no longer be relevant to this day and age. ... We have a review process. We are now identifying a 'sunset' clause for any particular project. In saying that we will examine something in 6 months time or 2 years time or what ever. We try to identify the sort of data in a general sense that will help us with the review. We may still have a place for anecdotal evidence but perhaps we can say it would have been easier if we had kept this sort of records or if we had done a bit of research about this or if someone had spoken to a few people about this that or the other ...so maybe when we look at this in 2 years these are some of the bits of evidence or some of the things we should be doing in preparation. The other part of the process is that in this review process people are more conscious during the timeline to be looking for things they can contribute when the review comes up. You know articles they read, or things they hear about from other schools that relate to the project</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Review</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Researcher</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders set timelines and collect data (not anecdotal evidence) that will enable a review of programs. Leaders inform people that they have to collect evidence to inform the review.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not rely upon 'hard' evidence and data but review programs based on 'anecdotal' evidence (feelings of the people concerned).</p> <p>Authentication Professional experience; “We have a review process ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - leaders establish review processes that require staff to collect evidence and other hard data on programs.</p>
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Ruary says that he has established a review process that requires staff to collect evidence and data on programs. He suggests that this is to overcome the need to rely upon anecdotal evidence, by which is taken to mean the feelings of people and their understanding of how a program has been run. In this account Ruary is indicating a need to search for causality, a purpose or reason behind the program, and this is indicative of a technical cognitive interest.

A search for causality

Another example of this technical indicator is demonstrated in the following extract from the interview with Sharon.

<p><i>Q.8. Your AP comes to you with an innovative computer based program for class allocations</i></p> <p><i>Sharon: I think ‘C’ ... I'd ask why? What's the problem? Why are you looking for change? I would have to say how come? What was wrong with the old system? What is the fault? And then you would see it if suits and it is back to the research again</i></p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Clarification</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders who question change.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders use hypo-deductive processes to clarify situations before making decisions. Leaders need research evidence before they will support innovation.</p> <p>SRP Leaders who do not need research evidence, but would support the change proposal based on trust of the AP or on intuition and interpretative understanding.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people expect that the leader will control the situation. He/she will use ‘scientific’ questioning/research before making a decision to support or deny the action. They would need to be prepared to give the leader the specific facts that he/she wants.</p>
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In describing the category of “leaders who accept change”, Sharon says that she would trust the Assistant Principal but would still seek knowledge through research to clarify all the issues. Clarification is based on a form of hypo-deductive process involving forming questions and finding the answers to them. This demonstrates an interest in causal knowledge and a need for technical control. The Assistant Principal needs to come prepared to put all the ‘evidence’ for why the innovation should be implemented and why it would be effective, before Sharon would consent to its introduction. This indicates a technical cognitive interest.

An example of a school leader with a dominant technical interest

Arising from the data was evidence that some school principals demonstrated a clearly dominant technical interest. In the interests of full reporting, a more detailed example is provided here of the analysis of the interview with Maureen.

Background and context of interview with Maureen: Maureen is the founding principal of a new primary school built in an urban area. The school has 450 students and is expected to grow substantially over the coming years. Maureen is 54. Before coming to her current school she had been principal of three other schools over a fifteen year period.

MCA of Maureen’s interview

<p><i>Q. 1 Describe your Leadership Style</i></p> <p><i>Maureen:</i> My leadership style is one of collaboration, hopefully. Its probably a little old fashioned now-a-days, but I tend to walk a lot I try to keep in contact by staff by that. A lot of opportunities for people to share their ideas to work in small groups and come up with their ideas. And that’s taken me quite some time to come to. I am told, and I don’t necessarily want to believe, but I am told that I can be quite forceful and therefore I try to back off. Put up an idea and try to back off long enough to allow people to think about it. I am very much the sort of person, who likes to win the war, so I am happy to lose the odd skirmish or two. But if I put up an idea I have probably already made a decision as to whether I am happy to lose that or not happy to lose it.</p> <p>You have to inspire people to want to do things, you have to be enthusiastic about what you are doing, you have to believe in what you are doing and you have to be able to market what you are doing. Your style has to be energetic.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Winning and Losing</p> <p>Category used in the talk Leader as winner.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders allow staff to win some decisions, providing they are not important ones. The Leader must ‘win the war’.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who are not concerned with winning but with collaboration. Family or garden metaphors may be used.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I am told ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - leaders must keep contact with staff, be “enthusiastic and energetic”, and believe in themselves, in order to ‘win’ over their staff.</p>
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Regardless of her stating that her “leadership style is one of collaboration” it seems apparent that she has a technical and not a practical cognitive interest. Maureen uses a war metaphor to describe her leadership style. This possibly indicates competition and even conflict. This is indicative of a technical cognitive interest where leaders have an interest in knowledge that gives a causal understanding of events, that enables prediction and that gives them control. It is an interest in finding the ‘right’ solutions to problems because for them a knowable, external,

reality is presumed to exist. Maureen confirms her technical interest in the statement, “But if I put up an idea I have probably already made a decision as to whether I am happy to lose that or not happy to lose it”.

<p><i>Q. 2.3 Research says</i></p> <p><i>Maureen:</i> You can’t just do it because research says. Who’s to say our experience isn’t some form of research. Therefore if you have 20 years invested in something even though it hasn’t been formalised into a written document a-la research, and it doesn’t have all the right benchmarks applied to it. You have to trust your own intuition too and your own experience. But research will often give you the confidence to proceed with something because it endorses what you are doing, or is line with what you are doing. You are often doing all those things but research puts it into a framework for you.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Experience</p> <p>Category used in the talk: Leaders with experience.</p> <p>Attributes Leaders have to trust their intuition.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not need research to endorse what they are doing, but are supported by their staff.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “You have to trust your own ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people experience leaders who act intuitively.</p>
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Maureen says that research is important in endorsing a leader’s actions. She justifies the importance of a leader’s intuition by proposing that experience is a form of research. This is in contradiction to what, she as a leader, will accept from her staff. What she wants is the provision of details and strong evidence to support their actions.

<p><i>Q. 2.4 Do effective leaders believe in continuous improvement?</i></p> <p><i>Maureen:</i> Yes they do but it doesn’t mean that what you are doing isn’t right or not good. But some places [schools] are like dinosaurs they fossilise. Some places are doing really good things but you would like to give them a bit of a shake and say have a look at yourself.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Need for Change</p> <p>Category used in the talk: Leaders as change agents.</p> <p>Attributes Schools left to their own devices will not grow or change.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who believe that staff are self-motivated.</p> <p>Authentication Her own experiences; “Yes they do but...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people become reliant upon the leader to initiate change.</p>
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Discussing the concept of ‘Continuous Improvement’, Maureen used the MCD of ‘need for change’. The categories she named in this interview transcript were the school leader (implied) and the metaphor of a ‘dinosaur’ for schools. For Maureen, schools, even schools doing ‘good things’ need to have a strong leader who will give them “a bit of a shake” otherwise they tend to fossilise. This is a leader-centred view that is in opposition to the concept of continuous improvement, which as a change management process is usually associated with staff centred and initiated change processes. Maureen may also be indicating that it is the leader who has to drive continuous improvement; in either case Maureen’s response is indicative of a technical cognitive interest.

<p>Q. 2.7 <i>The buck stops here</i> <i>Maureen:</i> I hear it all the time ultimately I agree with it. I get paid good money to make the hard decisions. If someone screws up down below and I have my hand on the wheel so to speak, ultimately it comes back to me. And I expect that as part of my role.</p> <p>Q. 2.9 <i>To make the right decision you need all the information</i> <i>Maureen:</i> Someone once said to me I would rather you made the wrong decision than no decision at all. You try to get all the information, you won't make a decision without trying to get all the information, but often something will come out of your blind side, that you should have made the effort to get the information on as well.</p> <p>Q.4 <i>How important is it to get things right all the time?</i> <i>Maureen:</i> No, what we would be looking at would be to get the best answer we believe at that particular moment in time. In most instances there are multiple answers, and any one of them can be good depending upon the context of the situation the particular time fame, and that’s why we review things on a regular basis here. A lot of our stuff here is in draft form, the idea is that we can go back regularly and have another look at it. If you set it up as the answer, people don’t look at it again.</p> <p>Q.9.b <i>Can there be one right solution?</i> <i>Maureen:</i> Yes again there has to be an element of that, it is no good knee jerking all the time to things. The concept of a right solution bothers me. I am a crisis manager. When I sell an idea I like to think I have good information to base it on.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Decision making</p> <p>Category used in the talk Leader as driver (hands on the wheel)</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders 'watch their blind side'</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Good drivers - informed leaders Poor drivers - non-informed leaders</p> <p>Cause – Effect Decisions are based on as much information as possible, and are rational (like a driving a car)</p> <p>Category used in the talk Leader as crisis manager.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> With this category of leadership - leaders look for the best solution in a given context based on the available information.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Non-crisis manager – “knee jerking” responding and understanding people they do not see their role as one of providing solutions.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - school leaders become crisis managers who use as much information as possible to provide the best solutions.</p>
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Maureen uses two related metaphors to describe her leadership. These are, leader as ‘driver’ and leader as ‘crisis manager’. The category-bound activities are that the leader needs to have as much information as possible (no ‘blind side’) and provide the best solution in the given context (avoid ‘knee jerking’). Both membership categories imply a technical cognitive interest.

<p><i>Q. 2.10 Can you make value free decisions</i></p> <p><i>Maureen:</i> Again as you evolve, I look back and shudder at times and think, “Oh god”, but for me now values play a major role. If you don’t recognise what people bring to a job, their prior learning, the whole gamut of it than you are only getting a small part of that person’s potential or value as such. A good teacher has to value or recognise what those kids bring to the classroom. Every kid brings something.</p> <p><i>Q. 3 Can you separate your beliefs and values say in class allocation?</i></p> <p><i>Maureen:</i> People put up what they want, we solicit what they want, we do that in early forth term. There is a format that goes out as to how they can do it. I say to people that I would look at everything in the whole school context, and would try to enable people to teach what they want to, but if I can’t then I would talk to those people at the end and say. “Looking at it in context can you see another way of you achieving what you want to achieve or being where you want to be?” I would hope I could put my personal values to one side. Everyone can hopefully contribute something at some times it is very hard to see what some can contribute; it’s very very hard. Yes I hope I can look at it with out overlaying what ideas I have got.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Valuing people</p> <p>Category used in the talk Leaders who define 'value' in terms of a person’s worth.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> The leader needs to be able to ‘value’ something in everyone, regardless of how ‘good’ or ‘bad’ they are. Putting aside personal values means putting aside your dislikes to strive to find something of worth in another person.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who see values as educational beliefs to be considered and understood.</p> <p>Authentication Past personal experience and reporting of affect “...it’s very, very hard ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people would feel the need to ‘prove’ their value to the principal.</p>
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In regards to the two related questions of the leader’s values and beliefs, Maureen has responded to these with the MCD of ‘valuing others’ or finding something of value in others. This demonstrates a technical interest as it centres on the leader (herself) as essentially value-free – she has not ‘questioned’ her own values (these are a given) – but chooses to focus on putting aside her personal dislikes in order to find something of worth in all staff, no matter how difficult.

<p>Q.5 Rules can't be broken</p> <p><i>Maureen:</i> There is a common understanding that a written program is intrinsic to your operation and what you do. If you find programming difficult. How can I help you do it this time, but the reality is that it WILL be done but we are prepared to give you some support to make it happen this time around. Where do you have the problem, how can we help. Not “No you don’t have to do it” I would have no hesitation in pointing out that it is a prerequisite or a requirement of the position. When you take up a teaching position in the school you would have the clear understanding. For instance we have a way of reporting here that some staff find difficult. Now we have accepted this as a staff and in the initial instance, and it is really easy when you are setting up a school because you can put lots of things in place. In the initial instance it was the way I wanted to handle reporting in first and third term. But after 12 months a lot of discussion had to be done about that. Do we proceed? A common understanding, but we have now accepted as a staff that that is how it is going to be done. You don’t want to do it? There is NO choice. If you really don’t want me to help you do it you just got a mental block set that you are not going to do it, then you need to review whether you are in the right place</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Inability</p> <p>Category used in the talk Staff who choose not to follow directions</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Majority rules. What the majority of staff agrees is a common understanding, all individuals must follow. The leader’s role is to enforce the requirements of a position.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who believe that rules must be flexible and that that rules set by the majority cannot apply equally to everyone.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; “For instance we have a way of reporting there that some staff find difficult ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - If a person chooses not to follow directions set by majority, then they need to transfer somewhere else.</p>
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Maureen gives anecdotal evidence of reporting. She says that some people find the reporting requirements at her school difficult. She says that she initially proposed how it was to be done. After twelve months of discussion a common understanding was reached with the majority of staff. Now with this in place Maureen would tell any new staff (or existing staff) who cannot accept this reporting requirement, “There is NO choice”. This indicates an interest in technical control.

<p><i>Q. 8 The AP brings an innovative idea to you about programming</i></p> <p><i>Maureen:</i> I think we should explore all the options that would help facilitate this happening, I would be very happy to look at it. I would want a trial and you have to have an end date and people are more comfortable, staff are more comfortable if they can see that it has a finite life in the first instance and if they are happy with it than you can extend the life some more. Often if you have something innovative than I would say to people “Well can we try it out?” In the trailing I would be looking to see if it was efficient and effective and that it did achieve good outcomes. But also a part of the trailing has to be, that the recipients at the other end of that innovation are comfortable. If they are not and you still want to proceed with that, then during that process you should be educating them, informing them; otherwise you are not going to win. You market. You modify and sometimes its like, if you want to win the war, than there are some modifications that will win it.</p> <p><i>Q.10 "Superintendent forces all schools to adopt an innovation"</i></p> <p><i>Maureen:</i> When you are wanting to introduce something new into a school and you feel that this is not going to go down quite as well and you know ... you would get two or three people you know who you can sell it to, right? And then you say “Can you try this out for me? Can you work this in?” Because I’ve got this bee in my bonnet, now everyone here always shudders when they hear me say that. “I say you try it out for me, I believe it is a really good idea, but I don’t want to be shot out of the water” That would be approach I would take. The super may need to get a principal and two or three staff from that school on side to start it off. And market well and get those people really gung-ho and go from there. The Department does that regularly really. A lot of good ideas don’t survive not because the idea wasn’t good but because the marketing or implementation is appalling.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Implementing Change</p> <p>Category used in the talk People (staff) as ‘warring’ opponents.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound relationship</u> Implementing change is like winning a war (“win the war”, “shot out of the water”). When the leader brings in a successful innovation he/she <i>wins</i> over the staff. Successful in trials involve efficiency and effectiveness in achieving outcomes. If people are not happy with an innovation you need to educate them and use marketing to win them over.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who determine success not as winning but as working collaboratively to achieve goals.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “a lot of good ideas don’t survive...”</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - Change occurs when leaders ‘win’. Winning means greater effectiveness and efficiency in achieving outcomes. People who are not happy with a change should be educated and there should be more marketing to win them over.</p>
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Maureen adopts a ‘war’ metaphor to describe her views of implementing change. To Maureen implementing change means ‘winning’. The use of ‘war’ metaphors indicates a competition-based view of the school (leader versus staff). Good change is measured by efficient and effective achievement of outcomes. Staff members who are unhappy with an innovation need to be ‘educated’ or greater marketing needs to happen to win them over. This emphasis on the leader and staff as opponents, the view that those who are not happy with an innovation should be ‘educated’, and the emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness, all indicate a strong technical cognitive interest. Overall in this interview Maureen has provided evidence of a strong technical cognitive interest.

The practical cognitive interest

Evidence of a practical cognitive interest was also found in the interviews with school leaders. A practical cognitive interest is an interest in knowledge that is aimed at interpretation and understanding. Hermeneutic understanding and conceptions of how society and social relations ought to be structured are important in the practical interest. Knowledge in this interest is based on communication and intersubjectivity (understanding of meaning) rather than causality, in which values and people are central. It is characterised by collaborative decision-making and open communication.

A lack of concern at losing control, or allowing others to lead

While many of the participating leaders demonstrated an interest in technical control, an almost equal number indicated that they had no concern of losing control or allowing others to lead. An example of this can be seen in the following extract taken from the interview with Henry.

<p><i>Q. 1. My leadership style</i></p> <p><i>Henry:</i> viewed from the top, I stand on top of the pyramid as a pyramidal structure but if you stand back and look at it from the side elevation I'm on the same frame as everybody else. Now our school motto here is 'Together-as-One'. ... That diminishes my position as authoritarian too but it's the way I feel, so the way I want to be. ... Now in management terms we have a structure whereby information flows into the school and is disseminated and that is where our support staff from different areas, the dissemination should go through. For some things, quite a lot of things, that I don't really need to see. Because they belong in the domain of people to whom delegation is entrusted. And those delegations carry delegation of task, ... they carry delegation of decision. And I'll support their decision I don't need to be consulted in all matters ascertained through everything that goes on in this school. ... there's lots of things that relate to curriculum matters that belong to the curriculum committee and other information that relates to sub committees that are set up in the frame of our school that really can hit the school and skive off and goes straight into the committees and they deal with those issues and feed back to the full staff.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Delegation</p> <p>Category used in the talk Leaders who share leadership.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound relationship</u> Leaders who do not need to be informed or consulted on all issues in the school. Even matters such as curriculum can be fully dealt with by the Curriculum Committee without the principal's approval.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who need to be fully informed (and consulted) on all issues within the school.</p> <p>Authentication Reporting of affect; "That diminishes my ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – people are empowered to make collaborative group decisions. People are not required to have each decision approved by the principal.</p>
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Henry says that he does not have to be fully consulted about all school issues. He says that he will support the decisions of his committees, even in such essential areas as the curriculum, without his direct involvement. Henry says, “I’m on the same frame as everybody else. Now our school motto here is ‘Together-as-One’ and I like to be one of everybody”. Through this lack of concern for control, and belief in shared leadership, Henry demonstrates a practical interest.

A need for understanding and the importance of interpretation

In the previous extract, Henry stresses the importance of interpretation and understanding. Further evidence for this practical indicator is provided in the following example taken from the interview with Mick.

<p><i>Q.5. A staff member cannot follow a rule</i></p> <p>Mick: I would be grateful that a staff member could raise such a matter in such an honest and open collegial way. My approach would be let’s explore the issue together. Here is the policy, here’s why we have it, here’s what I believe, now can you tell me what your concerns are and let’s see if we can have an intermeshing of those concerns. If there’s a real problem and it is causing you certain concerns lets see if we can come up with alternatives I am quite happy to go back to our staff and say “Hey guys we are having a problem with this, is it interfering with what you are trying to do? Let’s come up with a better approach let’s work with this collegially”. My experience is that people will respond to that situation very well. They believe they are being listened to, they believe they are being treated as a professional, they believe there concerns are carried for ... Now it may very well be that the solutions are not to everyone’s liking, or they might be compromise solutions.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Rules</p> <p>Category used in the talk People who are unable to follow rules/regulations.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders do not force rules upon staff, but seek through collaborative effort to resolve issues that prevent staff from implementing rules. Leaders are willing to question rules, to take them back to the staff to see if they should be changed.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who enforce rules and are not willing to negotiate or collaborative with staff to revising rules.</p> <p>Authentication Professional experience; “My experience is that they will respond well”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people, who cannot follow a rule/regulation, expect that the leader will work with them to see how they can assist and the leader may even take the rule back to the full staff to see if the rule should be changed.</p>
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Mick attributes to leadership the importance of interpretation, of understanding what staff want; “Let’s explore the issue together”. Leaders do not

force rules upon staff, but seek through collaborative effort to resolve issues that impede staff from implementing the rules. The leader would be willing to take the rule back to the full staff to see if it should be changed. It is implied by Mick that his school staff would be collaborative and able to work together to resolve issues. For Mick leadership is a matter of collaboration and hermeneutics that indicates a practical cognitive interest.

A disregard for facts or evidence where they conflict with subjective understanding

Further evidence for a practical cognitive interest is provided in the following example taken from the interview with Chris.

<p><i>Q 2.2 Research Says</i></p> <p><i>Chris:</i> I do use that expression. Lets have a look and see what it can do for us. Research can give us wonderful ideas and is a great resource to use but you have to see if it ‘works for us’. You can’t just grab it because research says it’s the best way to go. You have to trial it, talk about it. ‘Works for us’ is about people and context; teachers have to feel comfortable with it.</p> <p><i>Q 2.9 The right decision can only be made if you have all the information</i></p> <p><i>Chris:</i> Oh no sometimes you can’t get all the information and you just got to make decisions that are right at the time with the information available. I am trying right now to talk to the department about how many teachers we need, but I have no idea at all of how many kids we will have next year. The demographer is saying that there are ‘X’ number of kids, well everybody’s feelings are that he is wrong. And this is what we have to work with, with good will. My schools have always been known for caring for the individual child and the needs of kids with special needs.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Research</p> <p>Category used in the talk Leaders who are not comfortable with research.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders do not accept research findings without assessing it, talking about it with people.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who make decisions based upon information from research and disregard the views of staff.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; “The demographer is saying that there are ‘x’ number ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people do not accept research regardless of its authority, without assessing if it has validity in the context of what the people of the school see as right.</p>
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Chris says that leaders should not accept information from research without confirming its worth, where worth is defined in terms of the understanding and feelings of the staff, not evidence or facts. An initiative should not be approved until

it is taken to the “staff to see what they think”. A leader with a technical cognitive interest would accept the demographer’s research without question, but Chris demonstrates a practical cognitive interest and values people over such authoritative sources of data.

A concern for values

In the previous extract Chris is attributing to the category of leadership a concern for values and the importance of accepting personal beliefs. The following example further illustrates this practical cognitive interest indicator; it is taken from the interview with Steve.

<p><i>Q.2.10. As a professional I can put my personal beliefs to one side and make value-free decisions</i></p> <p><i>Steve:</i> I don’t think that any body can ultimately be totally value-free. The main thing is that you recognise what those values may be and how they may impact on decisions that you make and that you are honest about what your values are when you are making the decision.</p> <p><i>Q.3. In your leadership what role do values play?</i></p> <p><i>Steve:</i> Well you deal with values all the time, and in public education in particular, you deal with a whole range of values and they can be from one extreme to another. I think it is important that you have a fairly clear picture of what your own values are and that you have an idea of what impact those values will have on your decisions. I think it is also important to talk about the values you have with others who may have slightly different values, or at least others who are in a similar sort of role so that you can put some sort of perspective on your values as compared to mainstream values or others people who do similar work. But I think you need to have values... certainly you can’t be valueless and I, I firmly believe that you cannot divorce your values from your decision making process.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Values</p> <p>Category used in the talk Leaders who acknowledge the importance of values.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders recognise and build values into their decisions. Leaders openly communicate their values with others.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who operate as ‘value-free’ professionals, leaving their values out of their work. Leaders who never discuss their personal values with anyone at work.</p> <p>Authentication The reporting of affect; “It is important...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - leaders should recognise the importance of their values and communicate these openly with others in the school.</p>
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Steve believes that leaders should acknowledge their values and build them into their decision-making. He says that it is important to communicate your values with others including those who may hold different values positions. This is different to the scientific approach that holds that a leader should be ‘value-free’, that is, they should keep their personal values out of their work. The importance of

communicating values with others indicates a need to consult with others and for collaboration in leadership. This is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

A need to consult and an emphasis on authentic collaboration

Evidence of a concern for authentic collaboration is provided in the following example taken from the interview with Jo. In this account Jo answers the question about leadership style using the MCD of collaboration and delegation.

<p><i>Q.1. My leadership style</i></p> <p>I think it is fairly collaborative. I do believe in shared decision making. My style is such that I like to involve other people, not just by collaborative decision-making but also by delegation. Delegation is giving people responsibility to do certain things. One of the difficulties of delegating is to make sure you don't interfere you really have to have faith and if you are going to delegate you have to delegate it and not stand over someone. Be available to discuss it and hopefully if it is possible be a part of the collaborative group that might eventually come up with the decision.</p> <p><i>Q. 2.5. Followers become leaders and leaders followers</i></p> <p>I agree. There's a lot of stuff in which I rely upon other people to do it for me and they would take a leadership role in a particular thing. I like to be kind of 'on top of things' because in the end it comes to ... you know I am the principal so you need to have an understanding of it all but I would encourage people to take a leadership role and mine is to support them.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Delegation</p> <p>Category used in the talk Leaders who see their role as supporting others.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound relationship</u> Leaders encourage people to take on leadership and they see their role as supporting them. Leaders see their role as being part of a collaborative group that makes decisions. Leaders need to have an understanding of what is happening.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not share leadership.</p> <p>Authentication Shared understanding; "You know I am the principal so you ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - leaders share leadership and take on a supporting role.</p>
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Jo says that leaders need to have an understanding of what is happening and where possible be a part of the collaborative group that make decisions. Jo attributes to leaders the need for understanding – as opposed to control – further she attributes to leaders the need to be supportive, “but I would encourage people to take a leadership role and mine is to support them”. This represents a belief that there can be more than one right answer, that others can be the leader because they have a different ‘answer’ that deserves the leader’s support.

A belief that there is no absolute ‘bottom line’ upon which to justify knowledge claims

The belief that there is no absolute ‘bottom line’, upon which the leader can justify his or her knowledge claims, is evident in the following extract.

<p><i>Q.4. How important is it to get it right all the time?</i></p> <p><i>Mick:</i> If you try to get something right all the time in the school context you are asking for trouble. What is right in a school often will vary from day to day. Take policy development in the school. If you are ever finished your policy development then there is something wrong with your school. Because your school is changing all the time, every policy is out of date the moment it is written in many ways. You need to be constantly revisiting them. ... My understanding of education, of teachers and students and so on, is that what is right is changing a lot of the time. And therefore what is right one day is not going to be right the next. I do not mean to imply a sense of anarchy at all, a school has structures, which it generally follows, but you need to revisit them all the time. I do not expect my leaders to get it right all the time. What I would expect is a ‘wise’ decision based on experience, etc</p> <p><i>Q. 9.e Work where things constantly change</i></p> <p>This is an imperative. One of the exciting and daunting things about education is that everything is open to challenge. Everything is open to challenge. Everything should be challenged some of the time. Not all the time because you would never cope with it, but we are in the business of developing quality, of developing people. We have to look at new ways of doing things, we have to ask why? We have to challenge. We’ve got to experiment, to take risks, and be prepared to fail. We need to learn and move on.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Change</p> <p>Category used in the talk Leaders who accept the importance of change.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound relationship</u> Believe that what is right one day is not going to be right the next. An acceptance that there can be more than one right answer.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who believe that too much change leads to a break down of structures, that also leads to anarchy.</p> <p>Authentication Professional experience; “My understanding of...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - leaders cannot get it right all the time because the school is constantly changing. What is ‘right’ is constantly changing.</p>
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In discussing “getting it right all the time”, Mick uses the MCD of continuous change, that change is constant in schools. He says that “what is right is constantly changing” and requires ongoing understanding and interpretation. He attributes to leaders a practical concern for hermeneutic understanding. There is no certitude, no positivist conviction of the ‘right’ answer. The example is given of policy development, “If you are ever finished your policy development then there is something wrong with your school”, because the school itself is changing all the time. Leaders need to use their experience and evidence to make ‘wise’ decisions based on experience and understanding current needs. This indicates a practical cognitive interest.

An example of a school leader with a dominant practical cognitive interest

There was evidence arising from the data that some school principals held a dominant practical cognitive interest. For the purpose of providing the reader with a full picture of the results of this research, and as a direct comparison with the example previously offered of Maureen, a detailed example is provided here of Neil's dominant cognitive interest.

Background and context of interview with Neil: At the time of interview Neil had only recently been transferred to the principalship of a large urban secondary school. Prior to this he had been Director for seven years of the Curriculum Advisory Support Unit (CASU). CASU is a Division of 34 staff that provides curriculum and program advisory support to teachers. Neil has a teaching background in Special Education, English and Literacy. Neil is in his early fifties.

MCA of Neil's Interview

<p>Q.1. Describe your leadership</p> <p><i>Neil:</i> I am inclined to say that I lead from behind and lead by example and when it's necessary lead up front. I guess the generally preferred style would be to empower my staff to enable them to have autonomy in what ever they are doing whether it is a project or program or particular issue and for them to be confident that I am there for advice.</p> <p>The point is. What are the needs of the school, as expressed by the staff? So the school actually has a stake in it. Options that take the person away from the now to where they or the school want to end up. It's a timeline in a sense. Looking at what outcomes need to be achieved what outcomes need to be modified. Don't just stick to the same outcomes. Who sets the outcomes, in the CASU context? The project officers do it in liaison with myself or the assistant manager or project officer or committee that set up the project negotiate the outcomes.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Empowerment</p> <p>Category used in the talk Leaders who empower staff.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders empower staff. Staff have autonomy to set outcomes, "what are the needs of the school as expressed by the staff?"</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leader gives orders/directions and set outcomes without collaboration with staff.</p> <p>Authentication Authenticated by own experience, previous success as Director of CASU.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people have autonomy and set outcomes in line with school needs.</p>
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Neil says that as a principal he empowers staff to set school outcomes. To Neil school and staff are synonymous and leaders negotiate outcomes not set them. In this response Neil is exhibiting a strong practical cognitive interest.

<p>Q. 2.1. <i>If it isn't broken don't fix it</i></p> <p><i>Neil:</i> It's dependent on context. I think, that there are some very good things that move us into the future that you do not want to break, but a book I read, ages ago, "If it isn't broke break it". Something like that, which is actually suggesting that you should constantly question what it is that you are doing and I tend to agree with that, in some instances this statement is fine, but I wouldn't say for a whole organisation or a school for instance or a unit. I think that is tantamount to putting your head in a bucket.</p> <p>Q. 2.2. <i>Research say</i></p> <p><i>Neil:</i> I think that research is really important, however, there are ... I think that it is very important ... CASU was established on the basis of research in professional development, but it was also based on something else which is also crucially important which is experience. An accumulated experience and a range of experience, so not just my experience but also what other people have experienced and the opinions they hold and research can assist in justification of those views. Actually you can find research that will justify just about anything, depends on what research you want at a particular time.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Managing Change</p> <p>Categories used in the talk: Individuals and change Organisations and change</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders constantly question what they are doing. Leaders value their experiences and the experiences of their people over research findings. Research can justify just about anything.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who value research findings over the experience of people.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; "CASU was established ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - organisational change is important but must be informed by personal experience.</p>
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Neil demonstrates a practical concern for hermeneutic understanding. He stresses the need to see the individual as separate from the organisation. He stresses that people should be questioning what they are doing. He says that change should not be driven by research alone but also by experience. He holds that the experiences of others and people's opinion are important. He argues against research and says that it can be used to justify "just about anything". This indicates a practical cognitive interest.

<p>Q.2.3. Continuous Improvement.</p> <p><i>Neil:</i> Yeah. I think that's true but I think there's also incredible need for consolidation of those things that you do well so you continue to do them well, and continue to learn from them to actually adapt them and to move what ever it is you are doing forward, that step that needs to be taken. What signs would I see that things need to move forward? Enthusiasm of the person who is responsible for the moving it forward or involved in the program. The way things are perceived by your client group who ever they may be. I guess at a system level you can see people picking up on it, you can see other people adopting their practices as a result of what they have observed from what ever that program is. Understandings change I mean, it's a building block situation, advancing. You have to trust the people you work with and the other thing you do is you try to have another group of people that actually have if not all or more, then certainly some of the understandings. It might be a committee; it might be a professional association.</p> <p>What's the point of having so many committees and bodies? A good question. They bring another perspective, often a very different perspective to one that the project officer or myself might hold and raise different questions. Throw a challenge out. There's no point in having a group of people who agree with you. Questioning must come in.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Managing Change</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leader as Change Agent.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Change agents must be enthusiastic. Leaders must trust the people they work with. Leaders accept that understandings (and beliefs) change and advance like building blocks. Leaders form committees able to question and bring different perspectives.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not trust their staff</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience as a successful change leader</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - successful change means being an enthusiastic leader, trusting your people, and having a committee that will challenge and raise different views.</p>
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Neil uses the MCD of ‘managing change’. In Neil’s view managing change is all about people. The leader must be enthusiastic and the perceptions of clients must be that things are happening. Leaders have to trust the people they work with, and most of all they need to form committees that will bring other perspectives and that will question and raise challenges. Neil says that understandings and beliefs are important and that they change. This is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

<p>Q.2.5. Followers can become leaders and leaders followers</p> <p><i>Neil:</i> Yeah I go along with that, but the conditions have got to be established for that to occur. You've got to set up an environment where people feel empowered enough to move from a follower to a leader because there are certain expectations laid on a leader, either at the system level or particular organisational level. ... I think it is important that somebody in a leadership role can learn to be a follower and to be humble about it. If you respect your operators then you can take a back seat. From my time at CASU it was interesting to see people come into projects from schools where there was definite hierarchies, and it takes them a while to grapple with the fact that they might come to me but I might not have the answer or I might not make the decision for them because I find it important for people, people have the answer, they just don't have the opportunity to talk it through and rationalise it.</p> <p>Q. 2.6. Leaders are made not born</p> <p><i>Neil:</i> Its an interesting one because if I look back at my own life, I am not a particularly confident person, far from it I lack an incredible amount of confidence, and yet I can remember going back to being two or three and being leader of the kids in the sandpit not that I wanted it. I have seen this in our daughter, in her schooling. Teachers say she is a born leader, yet she lacks confidence in herself. So I think there is an element of that being born as a leader. On the Executive Development Program, or helping to facilitate the last one last week, the participants are all seen as the senior leaders of their departments. Through the team building exercises the people are just not all that confident. Sometimes I think that the danger in making a leader is that they are been made under the... someone else is making them to their mould, but that is fine if it is to the good of the organisation, but there is a danger in it, imagine Hitler making someone a leader to follow him.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Leaders and Followers</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders who empower staff.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders do not establish organisational hierarchies. Leaders do not provide answers but encourage staff to come up with their own. Leaders who believe that there is a danger in a system 'making' leaders (e.g. Hitler making someone to follow him).</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who establish rigid hierarchical schools. Leaders expect staff to look to them for answers.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience. "From my time at CASU ..."</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people learn to come up with their own answers and not see the role of the leader as providing all solutions.</p>
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Neil says that he disputes the leadership category of 'system' or hierarchical leader. Under this category leaders have the attribute of knowing all the answers and are always self-confident. He further explains the notion of follower in terms of operators and that followers are people - people who "have the answers" themselves - if given the opportunity and respect of leaders. Neil says that he does not promote hierarchical leadership and does not value systems that create such leaders. In this extract, Neil has rejected an interest in knowledge for technical control and indicates a practical cognitive interest. The notion of staff providing the answers may also indicate an emancipatory interest in shared leadership.

<p>Q. 2.4 <i>Leaders are today's version of ritualised heroes</i></p> <p><i>Neil:</i> I certainly don't see myself as a hero, and I wouldn't have thought others see me as such, but it was an interesting experience when I was leaving CASU last Friday, because there was a consultant that I have brought up - as an outsider to our system - and he was sitting observing a speech that was directed to me at my farewell, and he had a lot of people talking to him. And he made the comment as I was taking him to the airport. He said "I don't think you realise how you have affected people, and that some of them are very excited for you but really feel that you hold so much of the corporate knowledge of CASU and they actually see you in an exalted light". Which is not something that I had seen, or didn't believe I practised, because I have always believed in placing people in positions of being autonomous operators. They are the ones with the knowledge, for that particular project. He used the word hero, because he said you know in Victoria where he comes from there wouldn't be anywhere where they talk about managers like your lot talks about you, which is a bit scary.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Heroes</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders share leadership.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders share leadership with those who have the knowledge.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not share leadership. Leaders have corporate knowledge.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; "when I was...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – people share leadership as autonomous operators.</p>
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Neil says that he was surprised by the comments of an 'outsider'. The outsider had used the word 'hero' to denote the way that his staff relate to him. Neil uses the category of 'hero' to suggest that in his organisation, staff relate well to him because he shares leadership, not because he has knowledge that no one else has (corporate knowledge). Neil says that he believes in placing people in positions of being autonomous operators for "they are the ones with the knowledge...".

<p>Q. 2.9 <i>You cannot make the right decision without all the information</i></p> <p><i>Neil:</i> I have heard myself say it, but when do you have all the information? People here were saying, you are getting a biased view, but if I spoke to all the staff I would still get a biased view. I have to make a decision about how much more information I need. So I think you need to be conscious of the number of views that might exist in an organisation and listen to those. Then you declare that there are these different views and what you then do is open it up.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Decision -making</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders as decision-makers.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> The information needed for making decisions is attributed directly to people - <i>not</i> research or systems etc. People are all important.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who use research findings to make decisions and not people.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; "I spoke to all the staff ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - making decisions means involving people.</p>
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Neil says that information is vital for decision-making but he then immediately equates information to people and the different perspectives of people in the organisation. To Neil an organisation is made up of different values. Neil says that the leader has to declare his interests and whom he recognises as representing different views. By omission, Neil has indicated that he does not link information with systems or research but with people and interpretation. This indicates a practical cognitive interest.

<p>Q2.7. The buck stops here</p> <p><i>Neil:</i> I think that is just sometimes a way of dealing with difficult issues and often communication issues. I think in my experience at CASU anyway, most people appreciated that I was the manager and there were occasions where I might have to say. “Sorry you can’t do that because of what ever reason”. So they can see that as the buck stops here, I have said it then, however, how could we meet that need through different ways? So once again you are providing alternatives.</p> <p>I think the “buck stops here” is too easy, too pat an answer, I think from my time at CASU, I can only think of a few instances where I would have even thought to say that, but on every occasion it was to say OK, if the seniors of our Department are not going to allow that. And I have been directed to say that you are not allowed to have that and it is happening still, then speak to me. Let us work out what we are going to do about it together.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Communication</p> <p>Categories used in the talk: Leaders who work with staff to come up with alternatives.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders “work out what we are going to do about it together.” Leaders forced to say ‘no’ by system use this as a starting point an opportunity for mutually working out ways of proceeding.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who believe that they are paid more to make the hard decisions and enforce rules.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience. “I can only think of a few ...”</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - when a leader has to say ‘no’ because of system requirements, it is a point of departure for working even closer with staff to find other ways of proceeding.</p>
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Neil aligns the leader with his/her staff. In responding to the notion of “buck stops here” he uses the MCD of ‘communication’. He suggests that if he is forced by the system to say “no”, then he would use that as a point of departure for working with staff to find better ways of progressing. This indicates a practical cognitive interest in knowledge built from communication and based on understanding people.

<p><i>Q. 2.12. Leaders vs Managers</i></p> <p><i>Neil:</i> Yeah there is a difference between management and leadership. Leadership is about a lot of things I have been saying. Leading people forward, empowering people, allowing people to be autonomous operators. Seeing the vision. Management whilst it's not separate from that is the organisational thing of having people move along and making sure the administrative perspectives of the organisation operates. Saving the resources for people to operate, net working, although this shifts too.</p> <p>In my new position here, I tend to think that mine will be a management role. In that time to express the issues which will start to move into a leadership role. I hope.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Management</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders as managers.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders empower people, leading forward, developing people into autonomous operators. Managers provide “resources for people to operate, networking, and administration”.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not see themselves as taking a management role.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - the leadership role can be a development of the manager’s role.</p>
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Neil makes the distinction between leader and manager. For Neil the manager provides resources for people to operate, for networking and administration. He sees leadership as a development of the management role that has to do with empowering people. He indicates his belief that he would rather have the leadership role. In his thinking the management role has a technical cognitive interest and the leadership role has a practical cognitive interest.

<p><i>Q. 2.10. I can make value free decisions</i></p> <p><i>Neil:</i> I think most managers try to do that. ... Many a time in CASU there has been things that have occurred that are right against what I believe in. But I've allowed ... not allowed ... part of the process or procedures are to enable considered opinion to go ahead, much against perhaps my considered opinion but I haven't sort of said anything more than just putting my case forward when the discussion is going. And quite frankly the same sorts of ends have been achieved. It might have been slower, it might have been done differently, it might have had some hiccups along the way, but generally what I wanted achieved and what the rest have wanted achieved has been achieved but differently. It's all part of empowering staff.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Decision-making</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders as decision-makers.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders empower staff by letting things happen even when they are counter to the leader’s considered opinion.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who make all the decisions.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; “I haven’t said anything ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people will be involved in shared leadership and are empowered to make decisions.</p>
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Neil argues here that a leader should not impose his or her values on others. By taking this stance he accepts that staff are able to make decisions on policy and procedure that might run counter to his considered opinion. He believes in shared leadership and in empowering staff and collaborative decision-making. This is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

<p>Q. 3. Can you separate values and beliefs?</p> <p><i>Neil:</i> This poses a lot of problems. I came from an English Lit background, actually a Special Ed background and I have actually tried to overcome that if you like, by being fair to all kinds. While there is still perceptions in the Territory that I am still literacy based, and I am still involved in the Literacy Educators Association. I've actually become an advocate for a whole range of other things just to move myself away. The other thing. If I took the example of Environmental Education that I don't have a lot of understanding of, but I value as being important. Social justice area. That's a really difficult one to maintain because senior members of our Dept don't share the same level of valuing of it. So I have taken on board the role of pushing it or supporting other people who lobby for it. So obviously values impact. You just have to be careful that they don't overtake to the exclusion of something else that is equally as valuable to teachers.</p> <p>The other thing that is important is the values you have about people. Values you have about learning. Values you have about collaboration and all those sorts of things. I guess rather than preaching that at people it is a case of doing it.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Values</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leader's values. People with different values.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders promote are advocates for their values. Leaders do not have the right to impose their values on others.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who are 'value-free', able to leave their personal values and beliefs out of their working life.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; "If I take the example of Environmental Education ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people will come to know what the leader believes in, but will also know that they are expected to be advocates for their own values positions.</p>
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Neil argues here that values are important, but that a leader should not impose his or her values on others. By taking this stance he accepts that staff (and his superiors) have different values and that there is no one set of 'right' values that have to be maintained in schools. He holds that negotiating value positions - including advocating for what he values and expecting his staff to do the same - is important and achieves results. This is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

<p><i>Q. 4. As a leader, how important is it to get things right all the time?</i></p> <p>No it is not important. It's important to achieve, and in achieving there are a lot of occasions where you make a lot of what are commonly called mistakes. Certainly an ethos that I believe in here is that we don't have problems we have challenges.</p> <p>What's right today isn't right tomorrow, or what is right for you isn't right to me. You've got to work with a whole lot of contingencies a whole lot of values, and it's really naïve to believe that you've got it right so I think - you know it's the same thing about taking risk. I mean I've never known anyone to take a risk - well I've certainly not seen it - taking a risk and not learning from it. I have seen very few risks go wrong.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Risk taking</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders who take risks.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category - bound activity</u> Leaders are risk takers who learn from their risk taking. Getting it 'right' is linked to different values and change in values.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not take risks. Who make sure they have all the information and all the facts before proceeding.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; "I've never known anyone ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people are encouraged to take risks.</p>
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Neil does not link 'getting it right' to a technical cognitive interest (e.g. goal achievement, targets, etc) but links it to the practical concerns of shifting values. To Neil achievement is linked to learning from taking risks. People need to be encouraged to proceed without all the information, without waiting for all the evidence or facts, to take risks and learn from it.

<p><i>Q. 5 A staff member will not follow directions in reporting</i></p> <p>That sort of example is generally up front that it is a requirement of the project or funding body. It is requirement so we can't not do it so it would be a case of spending some time talking about some of the blocks to that person completing the report, spend some time providing models of reporting or sitting down with someone else to assist in that report writing whether it is yourself or often it is better to be someone else in the project or similar project who knows how to go about that process and do it efficiently.</p> <p>Showing them some options for writing reports and negotiating with them the sort of people they can work with to get things done and giving them reasonable time lines.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Collaborative problem solving</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders who talk to the teacher about the problem and assist by providing other options and by working collaborative with others.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders believe that working with others can assist people who are unable to meet requirements. The leader - or others - can help to remove these blocks by working together.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who enforce rules.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - people who cannot follow rules will expect that the leader will work with them and assist them.</p>
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In discussing a staff member who says that he/she will not meet reporting requirements, Neil sees the need for working collaboratively to achieve success. In his view the leaders should spend time with the teacher to find out what the problem is and then offer other options. Leaders should also enable teachers to working with others to overcome problems. This emphasis on collaboration and interpretation is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

<p><i>Q. 10 The Hunter method is imposed by the Superintendent. How do you respond?</i></p> <p>In fact I saw this happen when I was living in Canada with Madaleine Hunters stuff. These were great back by in the 40s, 50s, and used in the 60s and 70s. It had people like the superintendent who saw nothing else but this and saw it narrowly rather than looking at it broadly or more developed beliefs about teaching and it actually disadvantaged a lot of people. So I think that - it is like I was saying before - sometimes you have to listen to those people who have a different opinion. Not sometimes... YOU need to listen to those who have a different opinion and challenge, because it is from that that you often develop, and do develop, quite a productive relationship, and you develop methodology that benefits kids and teachers and a whole range of people.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD:</p> <p>Categories used in the talk People who have a different opinion.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound relationship</u> Effective leaders listen to, challenge and incorporate, different opinions and views on education.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leader who do not listen to people but accept research findings as important.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - leaders listen to people with a different opinion and challenge innovations.</p>
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Neil indicates a strong practical cognitive interest. He advocates listening and challenging innovation in order to develop an understanding of different people's opinions and views. He holds that it is only through this interpretation and understanding that effective schools can be developed that benefit students and teachers.

Overall in this interview Neil has provided clear evidence of a dominant practical cognitive interest. In the following statement Neil's response, however, takes a departure from his overall practical cognitive interest, and can be interpreted to provide evidence of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest.

<p>Q. 9.D. <i>Work in which you are able to seek input</i></p> <p><i>Neil:</i> Yes. I think we should always question what is. Unfortunately what happens in systems is that all too often we just continue on and nothing ever innovates. It just stagnates and can die. I really think education is at a really interesting time because there is going to be some revolution. We are now coming into the next century and we are still using last century's beliefs about schools. An exercise on the beliefs about learning needs to happen here, a day where everyone questions what they believe about learning</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Beliefs</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leader question beliefs.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders question what they believe about learning.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not question beliefs about education.</p> <p>Authentication Reporting of affect; "...going to be some revolution"</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – leaders involve staff in critical reflection on beliefs about education.</p>
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In this statement Neil says that in his school he is about to get everyone together for a day where “everyone questions what they believe about learning”. He holds that schools need to be freed from “last century’s beliefs”. This is a departure from a practical cognitive interest and is possibly indicative of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest.

The emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest

While the practical and technical cognitive interests were clearly in evidence in the interview data, finding evidence of the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest was more problematic. While none of the fifteen school practitioners demonstrated a strong emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest, a number of the school leaders indicated aspects of this interest in response to various interview questions. Examples of the discourse that can be construed to have indicated an emancipatory (critical) interest are provided here.

A need to question purpose, outcomes and beliefs

Neil, in the previous segment, indicated an emancipatory cognitive interest by advocating a day where his staff would critically reflect on their beliefs about

education. In the following extract, Steve attributes to leadership a similar emancipatory interest.

<p><i>Q. 9.e Work in which you explore and question the basic structures...</i></p> <p><i>Steve:</i> Well again I think you need to do that all the time ... I think you have to be fairly careful of statements like - this is the way we do things around here - it may be the way we do things now but there may be a better way to do it some other time or in the future. So I think you need to question that. I think you need to question the desirability of outcomes. Is that outcome the one you really want? Maybe it's the one you are getting, and maybe you can measure your program by saying that you are getting that outcome. Maybe it's an irrelevant outcome maybe an outcome whose time is passed maybe an outcome whose desirability is not what it once was.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Outcomes</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders who question outcomes.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders should question the purpose, desirability of outcomes.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not question outcomes.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; "The school I am at now, we ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - school are seen as human organisations, leaders therefore should not take the outcomes of schools as given but should constantly question their desirability.</p>
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Steve's emancipatory interest is manifest in the statements; "So I think you need to question that. I think you need to question the desirability of outcomes. Is that outcome the one you really want?" Here he is questioning the domination of positivist intentions such as the need to achieve set outcomes. Steve also says that asking the question "who sees what as important?" is an attribute of leaders. Such a question can be construed to imply a lack of democracy and a need to remove hidden agendas and constraints. This is indicative of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest.

A concern to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people's attainment

The need to explore hidden agendas and constraints implies a need to remove barriers that restrict achievement. The following two examples, taken from the interviews with Ray and Wally, illustrate this emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest indicator.

<p><i>Q. 2.12. Let the managers manage and the leaders lead</i></p> <p><i>Ray:</i> It's part of the ten tenets that I handed out to principals in the region. They need to understand that they have almost total autonomy to do almost anything in their schools. Not to do something because it is against the directive from the department, that would be beneficial to their staff and school, is merely a cop out. They have the autonomy to do it, to make the changes.</p> <p>I believe that the true leader is the person who will not be bound rigidly by rules and directions. But will exhibit the fluidity and flexibility to move within a general framework, to manipulate things to make sure they work properly. ... A principal should not have a computer on their desk. I said "David if you take that computer off your desk and put it somewhere out there in the school your blood pressure will go down twenty points, because he is concerning himself with stuff that he doesn't need to be concerned with."</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Autonomy</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders who are autonomous.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders are not bound by rules and directions. The role of leaders is "to service the needs of their staff and empower their staff in order to enhance the outcomes".</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who see their role as the Department's representative who must enforce regulations.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence. Example given to substantiate views; "David if you take ..."</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - leaders have autonomy to be flexible and should not feel that rules and regulations bind them.</p>
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In responding to the question on the difference between managers and leaders, Ray chooses the MCD of 'Autonomy'. Ray says that leaders should see themselves as autonomous and not bound rigidly by rules and regulations. In his view they should empower their staff to question regulations and rules themselves. In this extract Ray says that he told a principal to free himself from the computer (representing administrative work and bureaucratic restrictions) and to focus on working with people. This is indicative of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest.

In the following extract Wally, another Superintendent, expresses a similar interest. Wally says he has been involved in moving "outside the norm to try to break down barriers to explore whether there isn't a better way of achieving things". He says that the school he was at, "knocked out the walls of the school and selected the principal and staff to create their own philosophy". This language is suggestive of a need to examine how social relationships - such as exist in schools - are manipulated by imposed structures, and indicates a possible emancipatory cognitive interest.

<p><i>Q.9.e. Work in which you explore and question the basic structures that govern the 'way things are done'</i></p> <p>Wally: Yes certainly. And I think now that you get closer to the centralised system you do that less. There are times when I have gone outside the norm to try to break down the barriers to explore whether there isn't a better way of achieving things.</p> <p>You go right back to 72 where the school I was AP at was seen as the most innovative school. They knocked out the walls of the school, and selected the principal and staff to create their own philosophy. For instance we opened the school as a six day school we opened on Saturday. We collected many people with skills and talents we employed a lot of people to run programs</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Barriers</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Leaders who seek to break down barriers</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Leaders go outside the norm to try to break down barriers to explore whether there isn't a better way of achieving things.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) A leader who, as principal is the Department's representative and enforces the Departments structures.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; "back to 1972 where the school I was AP ..."</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - leaders seek better ways of doing things, going outside the norm to break down barriers.</p>
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How social relationships are manipulated by power and privilege

An example of the need to explore distortions and manipulation comes from the interview with Ray.

<p><i>Q. 6. A principal who will work with and abide by the directions of the School Council</i></p> <p>Ray: If Spring [CEO Victoria Education] had the opportunity to make individual school councils responsible for all the financing all of the staffing all of the aspects of running a school, then that advert would be applicable, but while ever the Ministry retains control of certain important functions within the running to the school that is a nonsense.</p> <p>Schools of the Future are those schools that are staffed by people who are able to create the curriculum that will reflect the needs of the local community entirely. That's what Schools of the Future are, nothing to do with Ministers or superintendents, I hope that sometime in my life time we will get to that point where teachers are valued and recognised to the level where the people who are working in our schools are certainly the best available people bar none and that we can move down that pathway.</p>	<p>MCA Categories and Attributes</p> <p>MCD: Schools of the Future</p> <p>Categories used in the talk Future schools</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activities</u> Schools where teachers are valued. Teachers not central agencies set school curriculum.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Teachers are not valued. Schools where the curriculum is not set by the staff of the school with regard to local needs, but by a central authority.</p> <p>Authentication The reporting of affect; "I hope that sometime in my ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership - teachers would be valued and would be allowed to set the curriculum based on the needs of the local community</p>
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In responding to this question, Ray used the MCD of ‘Schools of the Future’. Ray is cynical of the Department’s rhetoric. He has argued for a shift of schools away from the manipulation of the Department. Ray says that his ideal school is one where the teachers are valued (implying that they are not currently valued), and the teachers are able to set the curriculum based on the needs of the local community. In seeking freedom from central control, and school manipulation Ray possibly indicates an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest.

Conclusion

Through the application of the MCA process to the interview data, fifteen profile studies were developed that illuminate how the three cognitive interests are manifest in the discourse of practising school leaders. While many examples of the technical and practical cognitive interests were manifest in the interview data, fewer examples of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest are apparent.

Based on the MCA evidence it was possible to summarise that of the fifteen interviews with school leaders, eight indicated a dominant technical cognitive interest, four indicated a dominant practical cognitive interest, two indicated a mix of technical and practical cognitive interest and one was a mixture of all three interests. This is illustrated in Figure 5.2 below.

Figure 5.2. Summary of the cognitive interests of 15 interviewed school leaders.

Technical (T)	Practical (P)	Emancipatory (E)	Technical/ Practical	T / P / E
8	4	0	2	1

Overall this research has provided evidence for the validity of applying the theory to enhance an understanding of school leadership. A summary of the findings is provided in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Summary of analysis of interview data

<i>Name</i>	<i>Cognitive Interest (CI)</i>
<i>Maureen Primary Principal</i>	<i>Technical CI</i> For Maureen the notion of winning, as if leadership is a conflict in which the leader must come out on top, is quite strong in this interview. She spoke often of war metaphors and of strategies for getting her staff to do things her way. This included educating them to come to accept her view and in getting the knowledge and information required to achieve her ends. She is seen by staff as a very ‘authoritarian leader’ who keeps close control. Maureen comes over as a ‘strict’ and forceful principal who leads from the ‘top’ and has a strong technical cognitive interest.
<i>Helen Primary principal</i>	<i>Technical CI</i> Helen is a school principal who believes strongly in plans, preparation, structures, systems and research. From this interview she can be described as an ‘authoritarian’ figure (she calls herself an authoritarian democrat) and strategic leader. Helen has shown little interest throughout this interview for participative decision making or collaborative practices, rather her leadership is focused on getting the best out of people and making sure that structures and plans are in place and that they are achieved. Helen comes across as a principal who is quite ‘rigid’ in her ideas and who has a need for control. From this interview it would appear that she has a technical cognitive interest.
<i>Kym Secondary Principal</i>	<i>Technical CI</i> Kym, in his interview, can be described as a strong leader with definite ideas and a strong sense of authority and control. Kim reiterated the importance of facts in decision making. He also argued for the importance of prescience, a ‘developed consciousness’, but in his view the leader needs to ensure that decisions are made based on facts, not intuition. He does not accept what he calls generalisations. What teachers understand about their students is not good enough. He rejects the practical interest in hermeneutics. Kym demonstrated a technical cognitive interest.
<i>Paul Primary Principal</i>	<i>Technical CI</i> In this interview Paul demonstrated a strong predilection for control and a strong emphasis on his own intuition and positional authority. Paul presents an authoritarian viewpoint focused on tight leadership control. In discussing a teacher who cannot follow rules, and who thinks the rules are unfair, his response was “Get stuffed - no choice”. Similarly with regard to inability, his response is to seek evidence, proof, to legitimate action. Paul demonstrated a technical cognitive interest.
<i>Wally Superintend ent (was a Primary Principal)</i>	<i>Technical CI (with one critical statement)</i> As a Superintendent Wally is the Department’s representative and in this position he works mainly in isolation to provide support and direction to school principals. In this interview he makes no mention of working in teams with principals, which is interesting as schools are self-managing and committees and working parties form a major part of the administration of education across the system. In this interview Wally has demonstrated a strong technical cognitive interest.

<p><i>Bill</i> <i>Primary</i> <i>principal</i></p>	<p><i>Technical CI (with two emancipatory interest statements)</i> It is in the nature of Bill’s work – as a management consultant (ex-principal) – that he should be controversial. He is engaged to question existing structures and review and restructure organisations. Bill’s language therefore seems highly questioning and at times even critical, but it is clear from the overall interview, that his interest is strongly technical. There was no indication in this interview of a practical interest, but there are a few examples where Bill indicated an interest in an emancipatory cognitive interest in the Habermasian sense of an interest in knowledge that liberates and demystifies people from limiting psychological, ideological and social perspectives.</p>
<p><i>Ruary</i> <i>Secondary</i> <i>Principal</i></p>	<p><i>Technical CI (with two practical interests statements)</i> Ruary has a PhD with his research based on artificial intelligence in school. His college is large and he has instigated a Quality Assurance System of management. It is therefore not surprising that he presents as having a technical cognitive interest. In his interview, he also, however, indicated a willingness to hand over control to others and he placed a high emphasis on personal values and interpretation of context which are indicators of a practical cognitive interest)</p>
<p><i>Sharon</i> <i>Primary</i> <i>Principal</i></p>	<p><i>Technical CI (with two practical interest statements)</i> Sharon is new to the principalship. She seems to have a strong regard for collaborative practices involving staff but balances this against her own need to exert her position as an emerging ‘leader’. Contextual issues are important, for not only is she a ‘neophyte’ principal, but her Assistant Principal and Senior Teacher (members of her senior team) are both vastly more experienced than her. She therefore involved them in decisions. From this interview it is apparent that Sharon’s leadership is framed from within a technical frame but with some indications of a practical interest.</p>
<p><i>Neil</i> <i>Primary</i> <i>Principal</i></p>	<p><i>Practical CI</i> From the data provided by Neil in this interview, it is apparent that Neil has a preference for a practical cognitive interest. Leaders who adopt this interest, generally acquire their knowledge through describing and analysing social situations historically or developmentally and their leadership is geared towards helping individuals to understand social events that are ongoing and situational, and not necessarily be judged on what is shown to be technically efficient or effective.</p>
<p><i>Henry</i> <i>Primary</i> <i>Principal</i></p>	<p><i>Practical CI</i> Henry has a long experience as a principal and is a regular and well known commentator on education. Henry’s leadership would appear, from this interview, to be strongly influenced by an interest in knowledge that is aimed at interpretation and understanding. He is well admired by his staff and seen as highly involving and collaborative. His leadership is based on communication and intersubjectivity (understanding of meaning) rather than causality, in which values and people are central. Overall, in this interview he demonstrated a clearly practical cognitive interest.</p>
<p><i>Mick</i> <i>Primary</i> <i>Principal</i></p>	<p><i>Practical CI</i> Mick’s leadership would appear, from this interview, to be strongly influenced by collaborative management and participative staff decision making. He has a Doctorate in Education from a school that is known for its emphasis on collaborative leadership. On top of this he has a long and successful experience in the principalship and clearly trusts his staff and senior team. His interview indicated a practical cognitive interest.</p>

<p><i>Chris Primary Principal</i></p>	<p><i>Practical CI</i> In this interview Chris described both his new position as planning principal and his last posting at a school. He emphasised the importance of collaboration and that he values what people think and understand over statistics and statistics. He also said that he is not concerned with knowledge for control. In this interview Chris gave responses that suggest that he has a strong practical cognitive interest.</p>
<p><i>Steve Secondary Principal</i></p>	<p><i>Practical CI (with 2 technical and 1 emancipatory statement).</i> Steve is an experienced principal working in an unusual school setting. As a correspondence school, there are no ‘regular’ classes or students in the building. The purpose of the school is to overcome disadvantage and provide alternative education for students in isolated areas. Steve seems to be a collaborative leader who involves staff in decision making and management. From this interview Steve came across as having a practical cognitive interest.</p>
<p><i>Jo Primary Principal</i></p>	<p><i>Four technical, and three practical statements.</i> From this interview it does not seem possible to determine if Jo operates predominantly from within one frame or another. She did appear to place a high regard on facts or rules, and yet she also emphasised values and interpretation. She did seem to have a strong predilection to control but also said that collaboration and negotiation are important. She demonstrated both a practical and technical cognitive interest.</p>
<p><i>Ray Superintendent (ex- Primary Principal)</i></p>	<p><i>Three technical, three practical, and two emancipatory statements.</i> In Ray’s view the principal has full autonomy and his role, as Superintendent, is purely supportive. Ray does not see himself as holding a position that is responsible for reinforcing rules, for causality, or control. Yet Ray also said that knowledge from research is vital and that leaders need to disassociate themselves from the personal values in striving to achieve overall efficiency and productivity gains. As a result, in this interview Ray demonstrated all three cognitive interests, the technical interest, the practical and the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest.</p>

Narratives of school leadership

As described in Chapter 4, written narratives of leadership were collected from sixteen practising school leaders. These narratives were sometimes nothing more than a series of fragments or vignettes, but most were comprised of two or more short stories. While some participants provided written descriptions of the practical and sometimes ethical conflicts that they faced in their leadership, they all provided personal accounts of incidents and significant happenings that they perceived to be important in the formation of their leadership.

The narratives were analysed using Membership Categorisation Analysis (MCA) (described in Chapter 3). The narratives were read, then reread and analysed against emerging Membership Categorisation Devices (MCDs). By a process of ‘raking’ through the narratives – which involved a meticulous recording of each instance in which the categories used by the participant demonstrated a technical, practical or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest – evidence for how each interest is manifest in the discourse of practising school leaders was collated. For reporting purposes, this section is divided into three parts, one for each of the three cognitive interests.

Evidence for a technical cognitive interest

In order to demonstrate how the technical cognitive interest is manifest in participant’s narratives, a number of extracts from each of the narratives has been provided in this section.

Narratives of leadership: Jill

Jill has been the Assistant Principal of a rural town Area School for eight years and recently was appointed as the principal of a large urban primary school.

An emphasis on rational and objective, not subjective, leadership

<p><i>Jill:</i> So after talking to the STAR Centre, I decided to trial moving the student to another older class, with the sole male classroom teacher, Sam could be grouped with some academically slow learners.</p>	<p>MCD: Decision-making</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as decision maker.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders who believe that it is important to find the ‘right solution’. Leaders who need knowledge for control, “I decided to...”.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who would work collaboratively with the teachers, parents, and others to come up with a strategy for understanding and working with Sam.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I decided to ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff rely on their leader to ‘find’ the solution.</p>
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Jill’s technical interest is demonstrated in the story of dealing with ‘Sam’. There was no collaboration with Sam’s teachers or the whole staff. Jill as the leader took on responsibility for the problem and after taking advice from the experts (‘STAR Centre’), and based on sound research, she made her decision. This is an example of a technical decision making process that offered the ‘right’ solution.

A search for causality

<p><i>Jill:</i> Part of the role of the Principal is to draw attention to actions that may result in litigation. Late in 1995 a teacher new to the school was accused of kicking eight year old Roy. The teacher denied the action. The child’s mother went to Aboriginal Legal Aid and they stated that there was a case... The ensuing months were cause for much stress for the teacher and Principal, but after Departmental lawyers became involved the case was withdrawn. As a result the Behaviour Management Policy was revised and all staff were in-serviced on the changes.</p>	<p>MCD: Rules and legal requirements.</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as adviser on rules and laws.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders search for causality e.g. “...draw attention to actions which may result in litigation”.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) A leader who sees his or her role as providing support and understanding.</p> <p>Authentication Reporting of affect; “The ensuing months were cause for much stress”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – leaders see their role as searching for causality, for example, making sure that legal rules and directions are followed.</p>
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Jill's response indicates a need for causality and for systemic solutions. As a principal she needs to make sure that rules are followed and as in the case described, that the 'problem' is 'dealt' with by the system. The problem was identified, the policy was changed and training used to 'teach' staff so they would not make the same mistake again. Cause and effect are important to Jill and this indicates a technical cognitive interest.

The importance of finding solutions or the 'right' solution

<p><i>Jill:</i> ...as educational leaders it is our role to be knowledgeable about new ideas, current practice and teacher development, to actively encourage teacher growth and innovation, as well as facilitating teachers working together. The use of technology is an important aspect of our school's culture. Six years ago the Principal's thrust was to upgrade the computer facilities and integrate computer learning throughout the school. His foresight and knowledge have ensured that the school is to the fore with the latest IT. Staff were in-serviced by peers and experts, The School Action Plan targeted IT so that funds could be spent on hardware and software. Although this hasn't worked as well as expected due to the personality of the person employed; it has meant the continuation of the IT thrust.</p>	<p>MCD: Strategy</p> <p>Category named in the talk Strategic leaders.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders have the knowledge and therefore the vision that enables them to plan the effectiveness of the organisation.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who recognise and encourage the vision and knowledge of others.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; "His foresight and knowledge have ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – leaders have an interest in knowledge for control. People can stand in the way of achieving what the leader has envisioned.</p>
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Jill stresses the importance of strategic leadership, the belief that leaders need to have vision and to be able to set into place plans for the future (such as Action Plans and IT plans). This represents a technical cognitive interest where the role of the leader is to have the 'solutions', which their staff must be encouraged to adopt. Jill also discusses the importance of the visionary leader, "His foresight and knowledge have ensured that..." this also is possibly indicative of a technical cognitive interest in prediction and control.

A need for control

<p><i>Jill:</i> Staff expect the Principal and Senior Staff to make decisions, but where the decisions affect them, the stakeholders, expect input and collaboration. Often it is better to start with individuals or small groups to make change occur, discussing things with them, building positive relations, using them as a sounding board, asking their stories to build ideas and actions. The more complex an idea to be implemented however, the greater the need for a vision and action. Ultimately of course the Principal must be accountable, so on many occasions must take charge; address problems and issues to suit individual situations.</p>	<p>MCD: Decision Making</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leaders as decision makers.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders allow staff to be involved in simple decisions, but ‘complex’ ideas require vision and action that comes from the leader.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who involve staff collaboratively at all levels and not just the less complex. The more complex the greater the consultation.</p> <p>Authentication Shared understandings; “Ultimately of course the Principal must ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – leaders endorse contrived collaboration; staff are allowed input to less ‘complex’ decisions.</p>
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Jill’s technical cognitive interest is demonstrated clearly in her thinking on getting staff to be involved in decision-making. She begins by stating that staff can only be involved with less complex ideas, for more complex ones require greater vision and action. She then goes on to suggest that as leader she should manipulate the ‘problem’ posed to staff to ensure that they did not feel threatened by it, in this way increasing the likelihood of it being accepted.

An emphasis on rational and objective, not subjective, leadership

<p><i>Jill:</i> This year we had an inservice on stress management put into the School Action Plan because the previous year several teachers became chronically stressed, to the point where work health became involved. ... I was interested to observe at the inservice that the people who criticised it most or failed to attend were those I considered needed it most. One teacher, I was amazed to discover was marking her student’s work during some sessions.</p>	<p>MCD: problem solving</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as problem solver.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders deal with the problem of staff stress by putting on a training program</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who deal with staff stress by seeking to understand the issues and concerns of staff.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I am told ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is an emphasis finding solutions to problems. If staff are feeling stress then put on a training program to fix it.</p>
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Jill does not seek understanding of the teacher’s concerns (or causes of stress), but seeks to deal with the organisational problem as a whole. There is a problem with stress, therefore there is a need to put on a stress training workshop. This is an example of cause-and-effect that is an indicator of a technical interest. Jill also expresses her concern that some teachers do not seem to appreciate this ‘solution’.

Narratives of leadership: Pam

Pam is the Assistant Principal in an urban school with a student population of about 320. About half of the students are Indigenous Australians.

A search for causality

<p><i>Pam:</i> In October each year the MAP tests are conducted and one student from this successful group scored quite poorly. This was a cause for concern. No inability to perform independently had been detected in this student by the teacher in their class work. If we were a learning organisation it would be reflected in how we dealt with this issue. A Learning Organisation is skilled at creating, acquiring and transferring knowledge and at modifying its behaviour to reflect new knowledge and insights...</p>	<p>MCD: problem solving</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as problem-solver.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders search for causes and rely upon evidence, facts and other ‘scientific solutions’. The systematic MAP tests indicated that a student was not performing, an inability not detected by the teacher.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who would discredit such systematic testing in favour of teachers more subjective knowledge about student performance.</p> <p>Authentication Official discourses; “In October each year the MAP tests are ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is an emphasis on evidence from ‘scientific’ testing. The leader favours the test results over the teacher’s subjective beliefs about the child’s performance.</p>
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Pam describes the importance of scientific testing in detecting poor student performance not picked up by the teacher. She attributes to leaders a belief in the importance of such controlled testing and of cause and effect. A school should respond to such results “modifying its behaviour to reflect new knowledge”. A leader with a practical interest would most likely ignore the systemic test result, favouring instead the opinion of the teacher who has worked with the child all year.

The importance of finding solutions or the ‘right’ solution

<p><i>Pam:</i> My other concern was to ensure that our solution to the issue wasn't limited by the extent of our own knowledge and that we weren't trapped into returning to old solutions for new problems. I knew then that part of my role, as an educational leader, was to look at assessment tools and practices and be sure that staff were aware of a range of effective assessment devices.</p>	<p>MCD: Rational problem solving</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leaders who provide solutions.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders investigate and research best practices in order to provide staff with the best possible solutions.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who actively assist teachers to find their own preferred (subjective) assessment methods.</p> <p>Authentication Shared understandings; “I knew then that my role as an educational ...”</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is an emphasis on the leader finding the best solutions.</p>
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Pam says that the leader’s role is to find appropriate assessment tools and practices, to provide staff with the right solutions. This attributes to leaders the importance of research and a positivist concern for controlled assessment.

A reliance on evidence, facts, or other scientific data

<p><i>Pam:</i> Recent reading had introduced me to the work of Helen Woodward and M. Drummond and they emphasised the need for careful, focused observation of students’ work, at the content and metacognitive levels, by co researching. I could see how this would be helpful to staff in assessing students’ work for the profiling and it was a methodology that would also aid teacher's evaluation of students’ work for placement on the First Steps Continua. I could see the potential for this but was uncertain as to the best way to get staff to implement it.</p>	<p>MCD: Rational problem solving</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as researcher</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders value research and research skills including data gathering through objective observation of students’ work.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not value objective data collecting methods – but favour subjective understanding - nor solutions offered in scientific research (readings).</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I could see how this would be useful ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is an emphasis on scientific method and the findings of research. A solution presented in the literature is valued, particularly as it is a solution that promotes data gathering.</p>
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Pam attributes to leaders the importance of the work of researchers - such as Woodward and Drummond [unsourced] - and reiterates the importance of “careful, focussed observation of students’ work”. This is indicative of a concern for positivist endeavour and reflects a technical cognitive interest.

Stories of leadership: Steven

Steven is the principal of a remote Indigenous school with six non-Indigenous teachers and six Indigenous teacher aides and assistants.

A concern for values-free decisions

<p><i>Steven:</i> While the qualified teachers could be relied on to attend work everyday, except when ill, the indigenous assistant teachers and teacher aides regularly attended for only three or four days of each week. Absenteeism was sometimes the result of illness, family commitments or cultural commitments but usually form alcohol related problems... I felt that I was wasting my time by constantly checking time books and completing leave forms with indigenous staff. I was frustrated with a system that through its insistence on full time work instead of permanent part time or casual work allowed this frustration to continue...</p> <p>My negotiations with the human resources section resulted in them allowing us to change all assistant teacher positions to permanent part time positions instead of full time positions. This meant that instead of the three people that were presently doing the jobs, I was able to have five people working three day weeks....</p> <p>At the individual meetings we looked at the patterns of individuals attendance and decided which was the best work roster for them. Two of the assistant teachers chose three day a week contracts, while the third chose a four day a week contract. This left us with five days to be worked so we advertised and filled a three day and two day contract. All the teacher aides agreed to go onto casual and it was agreed that while it was expected that each would work on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, they could also attend work and be paid for Thursday and Friday</p>	<p>MCD: Rational problem solving</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as resource manager</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders deliberately manipulate staff to attain the most effective use of resources</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not focus on the most effective use of staff but on meeting the cultural needs of their staff</p> <p>Authentication Personal or professional experience; “I was able to ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is an emphasis on rational and objective management with a need for controlling their environment in order to directly influence their staff. The deliberate negotiation of staff working conditions to reduce the cost of staff absenteeism by putting Indigenous staff onto casual payment rates.</p>
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In dealing with the problem of high absenteeism in an Indigenous community school, Steven negotiates for Indigenous staff to go onto casual contracts, such that they are only paid for the days they work. This decision enables the most cost effective use of resources, but does not focus on the cultural values of the Indigenous staff. This is indicative of a technical cognitive interest.

Narratives of leadership: Raylene

Raelene is Assistant Principal at a small urban primary school of 260 students. She has been a primary teacher for 27 years.

A need for control

<p><i>Raylene:</i> Having gained the position of temporary Assistant Principal for this half of the year, I have endeavoured to set the style of my leadership. My first task was to rearrange the AP's office to reflect this style. I moved the desk such that I wasn't sitting behind it in an executive fashion, but when speaking to visitors to the office, I was part of a circle with them. In this way I wished to reflect friendliness and concern, not authority. I cleared a notice board of class timetables, and asked teachers to send their best work to be displayed on that board. I have obtained stickers and jellybeans for rewards for children coming into the office for positive reasons, and have encouraged teachers to send students to the office for rewards and encouragement, not merely for discipline. Finally I have a radio playing continually with unobtrusive classical music. There will be pictures bought for the walls, and new curtains in due course. In all of this I am making my style of leadership approachable and 'user-friendly'. There is a combination of the day-to-day administration that is necessary, hence the desk, and a personable approach for both adults and children.</p>	<p>MCD: Rational problem solving</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as image maker</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders deliberately manipulate the image of how they wish to be perceived. There is a desire to control their environment. Leaders believe that there is causal relationship between image and effect on staff and others.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not rely upon artifacts such as office settings in order to influence staff perceptions, rather they would be concerned with open communication and being understood and in turn understanding their staff.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; "I have obtained ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is an emphasis on rational and objective management with a need for controlling their environment in order to directly influence their staff. The deliberate planning of her 'office' is an attempt to find the 'right solution'.</p>
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Raylene attributes to leadership a strong interest in controlling their environment. The office layout is planned and purposeful in order to elicit behavioural responses from those she leads. She has decided that the solution to being an effective leader is to play music, put up pictures and purposefully plan to be “approachable and ‘user-friendly’”. Such a deliberate and systematic approach to leadership indicates a technical cognitive interest.

A concern for values-free decisions

<p><i>Raylene:</i> In one situation last year, a teacher and a Special Aide were having difficulties determining the parameters of their respective roles. The teacher was very experienced, but was working at a year level at which she was not particularly knowledgeable. She was also dealing with a child with special needs and was unable to adjust her teaching to take in account the needs of that child. She was not prepared to admit that she did not have the teaching skills, or the right attitude to work with this child. On the other hand, the Aide was not trained but had gained a lot of experience with children with special needs, was the mother of a child having difficulties at school, and had read widely on the subject. The Aide tried to 'help' the teacher, thus overstepping her line of authority. This caused antagonism with the classroom teacher. My task was to determine and describe the roles of each, and encourage them to share their specific knowledge to enable them to better fulfill their individual roles. After discussion with both parties, there was an agreement found and they were able to share their knowledge and work together as a team.</p>	<p>MCD: Rational dispute resolution</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as arbitrator.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders deal with disputes by finding causes and rationally determining the most appropriate response. Dealing with a dispute between two staff is an objective matter of clarifying roles (based on superior knowledge) and forming agreements that establish clear boundaries.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who deal with disputes more subjectively through mediation in which emotions, feeling and mutual understanding are the key focus. What does the teacher/aide, want, and need, what is she ‘scared of’? What are her concerns?</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; “In one situation last year ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is an emphasis on rational and objective means for dealing with disputes. Values give rise to emotions and are avoided. The leader, determines the causes of the dispute, identifies the knowledge (experiences) of the disputants, and establishes clear roles.</p>
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In a problematic situation arising between two staff, Raylene attributes to the leader the need to “determine and describe the roles of each, and encourage them to share their specific knowledge to enable them to better fulfil their individual roles”. Such a response overlooks the values laden nature of the dispute she has described.

A leader with a practical interest would be more concerned with values and helping the teacher and aide to share their beliefs about what is important for the child. Thus Raylene has demonstrated a technical cognitive interest in this extract.

Narratives of leadership: Ben

Ben has worked for four different educational authorities in three countries. He has taught in an Aboriginal community school, a one teacher rural school, urban NT schools, and suburban environments. Currently he is Principal of a large urban primary school with over fifty staff.

A need for control

<p><i>Ben:</i> The EBA dispute [extended union strike action for teacher pay and conditions] did cause a lot of tension in our school. The collaboration that we had developed over a number of years I believe led to "a united we stand" approach from staff during the dispute. This in itself was not a bad thing but certain power groups were able to wield control and towards the end of the dispute attempted with some success to intimidate others. Some of the negativeness of this dispute etched away at the professionalism of some staff. When staff talked about taking up certain tasks after the EBA, others urged them not to take on these 'extras' again. It was interesting to note that the ones urging were the ones that had never involved themselves in these extra tasks in the first place.</p>	<p>MCD: Rational problem solving</p> <p>Category named in the talk Non-professional teachers</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Staff collaboration can strengthen employees in their ability to oppose the employer during industrial action. Staff who oppose extra-curricula duties during an industrial action are not professional.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Teachers who do not take industrial action and who are therefore professionals.</p> <p>Authentication Shared understanding; "It was interesting to note ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of teachers – teachers who impose work bans during an EBA dispute are seen as non-professional by the leader.</p>
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Ben notes in the extract above that the school had established collaborative approaches to leadership, but that this was used against the school when it came to an industrial dispute, as “certain power groups were able to wield control”. Ben attributes to such teachers a lack of professionalism “the ones urging were the ones that had never involved themselves in these extra tasks in the first place”. Ben’s interest during the industrial dispute was not to try to understand the situation or

needs of teachers, but in the loss of control he suffered as a leader. This indicates a technical cognitive interest.

An emphasis on rational and objective, not subjective, leadership

<p><i>Ben:</i> Recently I have found my role in the school to be more of a bureaucratic exercise. Pressure from supervisors to implement programs such as profiles and performance management in the short time frame allowed, and the difficulties in finding and retaining suitable staff have created this. The move to establish a Departmental Plan and an Operation’s South Strategic Plan is clearly an indication of the accountability pressure that we are under. On one hand we are saying you (Council and School Community) can control your own destiny / direction through local decision making but on the other we are saying as long as it includes what the Department says it should.</p> <p>In theory the self-managing schools reflect what we see as a postmodern organisation but in reality I see something different. Devolution it is claimed is more responsive to the community as it provides flexibility of resourcing, staffing and planning to meet the individual needs of the students and their parents. What we are really seeing is summed up by Blackwood (1996) when she refers to the paradoxes of leadership. She claims that the focus now has become more towards top down system initiated change rather than teacher led change. We are seeing a greater introduction of controlling mechanisms such as standardised testing, performance management and curriculum frameworks.</p>	<p>MCD: Strategic Leadership</p> <p>Category named in the talk Strategic leader</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders implement Department directions. Leaders understand the need for central control and the need to put personal (local) needs aside in order to implement central initiatives and requirements.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not see their role as implementing centralised directions, but who believe that their role is the implementation of local community directions - based on developing a collaboratively derived understanding and interpretation of local needs.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “Recently I have found my ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – the effect is an emphasis on leadership for control and causality. There is a reliance on the ‘fact’ that the directions originating within the central agency are ‘right’ and should be implemented without question. The emphasis is on rational and objective leadership not subjective or humanistic leadership.</p>
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Ben says that attributed to school leadership is the need for control and accountability. There is an emphasis in the work of school leaders on rational and objective leadership, incorporating “controlling mechanisms such as standardised testing, performance management and curriculum frameworks”. The role of school principals is to implement Department directives and there is an emphasis on top-down change, not teacher driven change.

Narratives of leadership: Miriam

Miriam is 48 years old. She spent five years at a large Aboriginal community school as the Assistant Principal and then she transferred to a large urban high school as a Faculty Senior. Recently she held the position of Assistant Principal Junior School for a semester.

A need for control

<p><i>Miriam:</i> At times as an Assistant Principal it is easy to become driven by the need to get beautiful programs from teachers early each term or semester. One of the most bizarre programs I ever received was from an indigenous New Zealand teacher. It was a few scraps of writing on a grotty torn piece of paper. His classroom was bright and interesting and he always had a crowd of parents sitting in the class to check out the fun things that were going on. Very little which was going on in the classroom had any relationship to the jottings on the ‘program’ that I had received. However the students were learning probably more than they ever had because they were engaged in the learning process and the teacher had the ability to extend them. I was in a dilemma - was I to insist upon my good programming standard and make him redo his program to my standards or what? Other teachers had seen the submitted program and were horrified - why should they spend hours on their programs while someone else gets away with a minimal effort! I discussed the situation with the Principal and then decided that I would go through the program with the teacher again, stating the programming requirements, which were acceptable by the school system. This I did, with the teacher acknowledging that there were improvements, which he could make. He did resubmit a program, only marginally improved, and went on his merry way of having a wonderful time teaching his students in his unique and highly effective manner.</p>	<p>MCD: Valuing differences</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leaders who value individual differences.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders try to enforce school rules and regulations. Leaders need get teachers to program in accordance with school requirements regardless of the teacher’s achievements in the classroom. Leaders are concerned for what other teachers see as ‘fair’.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who would not impose / force teachers to program in only one way – the way dictated by ‘best practice’ or research – and therefore they would value individual teachers’ approaches and successes.</p> <p>Authentication Reporting of affect; “One of the most bizarre...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – leaders try to enforce school requirements regardless of the achievement of the teacher.</p>
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By all the evidence presented, the teacher’s program was perceived by Maureen to be unacceptable and therefore the teacher’s performance should have been poor. Regardless of the teacher’s achievement with students, Maureen as the leader presses ahead with trying to force him to program in accordance with school requirements. This story demonstrates that Maureen as leader was interested in technical control, but was unable to get the teacher to do as he was directed.

Evidence of a practical cognitive interest

Evidence of Habermas’ practical cognitive interest could be clearly inferred in the narrative data. In order to demonstrate the practical cognitive interest, extracts are provided in this section, from the narratives collected from various school leaders.

Narratives of leadership: Colleen

Colleen is 37, a teacher for sixteen years she is a Senior Teacher in the early childhood section of a large urban primary school, as well as a Teacher of Exemplary Practice, Level 2 (TEP2).

A need for understanding, the importance of interpretation and values

<p><i>Colleen:</i> I thought she was ‘weird’. The following year when I took up the Band Two position I was forced to become more interactive with her on a professional level. I was horrified at what I found. At the beginning of each year Helen’s room was empty and sparse. However, as the year progressed, the classroom began to gather, for the want of a better word, ‘resources’. To my eyes it was junk. The physical learning area became smaller and smaller until there was just a wee space in front of the piano where the entire class squashed for daily singing, and of course their cluttered desks around which you could not circulate. I felt compelled to bring these concerns to attention of our principal who informed me I had till the end of the year to help Helen shape up or she would have to ship out. It was not until she had left the school and the district that I became aware of the amazing circumstances of her personal life. Looking back I realise at the time that I didn’t value her difference because I believed she had nothing to value. How wrong I was. She was in fact a courageous and resilient woman who battled against the odds just to get to work each morning. A woman who took refuge in her religious beliefs and who loved and cared for the children in her somewhat cluttered class. ... What did I learn from this? To take a step back, to view the whole picture, to become more compassionate and see ‘my staff’ as human with human problems. That everyone, no matter how different, has something to share, some strength, something I can learn from.</p>	<p>MCD: Learning from others</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as human being</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders get to ‘know’ their staff. They learn about them as humans with human problems.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not view staff as ‘humans’ but as professionals who have a job to do, and as failures if they do not.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I became aware of ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is an emphasis on hermeneutic understanding, on interpretation and sharing. An emphasis on leaders learning about their staff so that they can better appreciate their strengths and to help with their difficulties.</p>
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Colleen’s story provides a good example of what can be inferred to be a practical cognitive interest. She attributes to leadership an emphasis on hermeneutic understanding, on interpretation and sharing. To Colleen leadership is a values-laden phenomenon, within which leaders see ‘staff’ as human with human problems. That everyone, no matter how different, has something “to share, some strength, something I can learn from”. Colleen’s statement does not indicate an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest, for she does not say that she should have tried to help this women to remove the barriers that she had to battle “just to get to work each morning”, nor even to seek to discover what caused these barriers. The lesson she says she has learnt from this experience is to seek greater practical knowledge – an interest in knowledge for subjective understanding.

A need to consult, and a belief that there is no absolute ‘bottom line’ upon which to justify knowledge claims

<p><i>Colleen:</i> Judy and I decided to try team teaching with an escape button. If either of us felt it wasn’t working we would shut the doors with no hard feelings. After all, we were very different in age, teaching experience, philosophy classroom management, and organisation. I will suffice to say that I was devastated when, three years later Judy decided to retire to spend more time with her grand children, leaving me once more to teach solo. We had hit it off instantly. I learnt the techniques Judy used to promote and maintain the delightfully composed and serene atmosphere in her classroom. She enjoyed the energetic and flamboyant activities I brought to the program. She made a mess, I tidied it up. I collected resources, alias ‘junk’, she threw them out. But most importantly, we taught each other to pause occasionally, take a deep breath and enjoy our chosen profession and the children we were working with.</p>	<p>MCD: collaborative team teaching</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as team member</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders work in teams, balancing their skills and strengths. Leaders appreciate other’s competencies, and seek to learn from them.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders, who do not work in teams, but are hierarchical, giving directions and instructions from a position of authority.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I marveled at the ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is an emphasis on understanding, interpretation and sharing. This is a concern to balance different skills and competencies, with neither dominating the other.</p>
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Colleen attributes to classroom leaders the ability to collaborate, share and learn from each other. No one person has all the answers, there is no absolute

‘bottom line’ upon which to justify knowledge claims about what is the best way to teach a class. This is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

Narratives of leadership: Bernie

Bernie is 44 and has taught for twenty years. He is currently an Assistant Principal in an urban primary school.

A need to consult and an emphasis on authentic collaboration

<p><i>Bernie:</i> At a staff discussion one lunch hour, not during a staff meeting, a teacher who had shown no previous enthusiasm for community involvement began to tell about her times as a teacher at Aboriginal communities. We were all amazed and questions flew from everywhere. We had not known about this before. Lunchtime passed quickly and I was surprised when the next day staff began the questioning again as if we had never left. I asked why the Aboriginal parents seemed so keen to be involved in the communities she was in but would not come near our school. She said that they didn’t just open up the school and ask parents to come in because the parents saw the role of the school as one of educating their children and they did not want to interfere.</p> <p>Instead the school gave these people jobs. Not paid positions but positions of trust and importance, which had a part to play in the education process. For example, a lady was in charge of health and cleanliness. This lady had previous experience and took the job very seriously. Another lady was involved in the reading program and not just as someone to read to. These people had status in the school. They had input into decisions and did not feel that they were visiting parents; they were part of the school. Each had brought a skill to the school and was proud to use and display it. From our teacher’s descriptions of the schools she had been in we asked if it could work in our situation. The teacher took on the task of approaching Aboriginal parents and of ‘training’ us to work with them. The program is still building but the success is obvious.</p>	<p>MCD: Problem solving</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as problem solver</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders have a need for understanding and place importance on interpretation. Leaders seek knowledge through understanding the experiences of others and how it relates to their situation. Leaders seek authentic collaboration amongst staff and are guided by it.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who seek scientific research-based solutions to the problem of attendance, solutions that are quantifiable and not based on the experiences of one staff member.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I am told ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff feel valued and willingly share their knowledge and experiences. Solutions to problems are derived from the collaboration of staff and the sharing of their experiences. People want to be involved in sharing their skills with the school.</p>
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Bernie attributes to school leaders the importance of making staff feel valued and sharing their knowledge and experiences. Solutions to problems are derived through collaboration with staff. In this story Bernie also describes the importance of interpretation and understanding in collaborating with Indigenous parents. “She said that they didn’t just open up the school and ask parents to come in because the parents saw the role of the school as one of educating their children and they did not want to interfere...”.

This statement could also possibly indicate an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. An interest in knowledge to remove barriers and distortions that stands in the way of an Aboriginal person participating in the school. In the overall context of the statement it most likely indicates a practical cognitive interest in seeking knowledge for understanding and ways of valuing the input of Indigenous people that they find appropriate.

A need to consult and a concern for values

<p><i>Bernie:</i> I find my own approach to management has been formed by reflecting on what it was that caused me to work well in an organisation and also by what caused me at times to opt out and not work in with the organisation. Enhancing co-operation between teachers helps to overcome problems of isolation that can occur when times get difficult. The co-operation can be in planning or teaching or in other organisational areas in the school (e.g. curriculum committees, School Council reps.). Because of the stresses involved in teaching it is important that teachers do not feel that every problem they confront is theirs alone. The opportunity to approach situations with advice or help from others helps overcome feelings of guilt, isolation or inexperience.</p>	<p>MCD: Sharing and Isolation</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leaders who enhance cooperation.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders enhance cooperation between teachers to overcome isolation. Leaders understand that it is “important that teachers do not feel that every problem they confront is theirs alone”.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who view teaching as a profession in which each teacher is solely responsible for dealing with their own classroom ‘problems’. Leaders who do not accept the isolation of teachers as a leadership issue.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I find my own approach to management ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – teachers would openly seek advice and share their problems with other teachers and school leaders, knowing that sharing such problems is welcomed and not a sign of professional weakness.</p>
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Bernie attributes to good leadership, the importance of working together, of understanding and communication. Built into this cooperation is the importance of values in leadership, working with “others help overcome feelings of guilt, isolation or inexperience”. This indicates a practical cognitive interest.

No concern at losing control, or allowing others to lead and make decisions

<p><i>Bernie:</i> Empowerment of teachers to originate ideas or directions in the school leads to feelings of ownership and therefore to increased commitment, enthusiasm and satisfaction. There is a risk not only to the teacher but also the manager. The manager who feels threatened by the successes of those around them will stifle innovation and individuality. However, the manager who values their staff’s assets will feel comfortable with others not only being involved but originating and taking ownership of change.</p>	<p>MCD: Empowerment</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leaders who empower staff.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders have no concern at losing control, or allowing others to lead and make decisions.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who feel threatened by the successes, skills and knowledge of their staff.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff will share their knowledge or skills, and will be willing to collaborate with others. Staff will feel able to originate ideas and promote initiatives or solutions.</p>
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Bernie does not attribute to leaders the need for technical control. Rather he says that, “the manager who values their staff’s assets will feel comfortable with others not only being involved but originating and taking ownership of change”. Bernie believes that leaders should not feel threatened by the success of staff but should share leadership. This is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

Narratives of leadership: Jennifer

Jennifer is 43 and currently she is Assistant Principal at a large urban primary school. She started her working career as a nurse and after having two of her own children, went back to college to become a teacher. She is a music specialist and has worked in four different schools.

A belief that there can always be more than one right answer

<p><i>Jennifer:</i> When I started at Driver as the acting ETI I was very keen to get on and establish a coherent Upper Primary Unit. I knew that recognition of individuals for their skills would allow me to see the teachers’ strengths and help foster a team spirit. I also recognised the value of collaboration and negotiation. Before long I perceived that one of the group was an isolate. I did need everyone’s cooperation and I particularly wanted this person, Sam, as he was reputed to be very volatile and had a history of being very obstructive to new ideas.</p> <p>I believed it was in my interest and ultimately the interest of the school to instill professional confidence into Sam. I hoped that genuine interest, trust, time and valuing his differences would open a pathway for communication and acceptance. To do this I went carefully, slowly, slowly demonstrating a genuine authentic interest in him. I listened intently, trying to understand what made him tick. I thought that the more I learnt, the more I could value and help emancipate him as an individual and as a group member. As time passed he was more willing to tell me stories and I shared my stories. I believe he felt valued and began taking on more responsibility. He made creative contributions to the school; he began innovative classroom practice and was more collegial with other teachers.</p>	<p>MCD: Dealing with poor performance</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as counselor</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders understand that there is a need for understanding and interpretation of individual staff needs and contributions.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who discipline teachers who do not conform to perceived standards of what makes an effective teacher. Leaders who would not take the time or spend the energy required to value this teacher’s contributions.</p> <p>Authentication Reporting of affect; “He was reputed to be very volatile and has a history of being very obstructive ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – teachers feel valued and that their input is important. Collaboration and team work is strengthened.</p>
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Jennifer attributes to leaders an interest in knowledge that is based on communication and intersubjectivity (understanding of meaning), rather than causality, in which values and people are central: “I went carefully, slowly, slowly demonstrating a genuine authentic interest in him. I listened intently, trying to understand what made him tick. I thought that the more I learnt, the more I could value and help emancipate him as an individual and as a group member”. This is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

Narratives of leadership: Miriam

Miriam was described earlier when extracts from her narrative were used to indicate a possible technical cognitive interest. Miriam’s narrative suggests that she might also hold a coincidental practical cognitive interest.

A belief that there can always be more than one right answer

<p><i>Miriam:</i> In Aboriginal Schools, Action Groups or respected community elders are key consultants. By taking the time to consult, value and share information misunderstandings can be avoided. The experience in Ngurruwutthun and Stewart (1996) where the Action Group sells the school piano without consulting the mentoring Principal is a case which highlights a typical situation which can occur when there is not full communication and understanding of roles.</p> <p>By valuing and understanding Aboriginal students’ learning styles pedagogy can be developed which is sound and effective. Being in a leadership position I was able to facilitate and encourage teachers to see if the introduction of computers into their classrooms would aid their students’ writing. However it is important to accept that there is no definitive answer to any pedagogical issue.</p>	<p>MCD: Consultation</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leaders who consult staff.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders place an emphasis on interpreting and understanding cultural differences. Leaders understand that there can always be more than one ‘right answer’ that “there is no definitive answer to any pedagogical issue”.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who impose state of the art teaching strategies on their teachers.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “Being in a leadership position I was able to ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff expect that the principal will consult with them before making decisions. Leaders do not impose pedagogical decisions but encourage staff to be involved in developing their own.</p>
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The focus Miriam places on communication and intersubjectivity on “valuing and understanding Aboriginal students’ learning styles...” indicates a practical interest. Miriam also says, “there is that there is no definitive answer to any pedagogical issue.”

On the other hand, however, the statement “Being in a leadership position I was able to facilitate and encourage teachers to see if the introduction of computers

into their classrooms would aid their students’ writing” is indicative of a technical cognitive interest, an interest in control and manipulation.

No concern at losing control, or allowing others to lead and make decisions

<p><i>Miriam:</i> I have learnt that as a leader I can make changes for improvement by having an idea, then consulting and discussing until consensus is reached. Part of this process is the engaging of those with whom I am consulting so that they develop ownership of the process and are able to extend. By others extending the idea, their differences are valued so that the educative process becomes richer and broader than if one person had imposed an idea on the group they are leading. I see a good and effective educational manager as one who can create an excellent learning community. Essential to this is the ability to collaborate, empower and value staff and students as well as keeping the goals of the learning community in perspective. They are people oriented and honest. They strive to continuously improve the learning environment by recognising and learning from differences. By responding to differences they must be flexible and make meaning of these differences. They are able to motivate and engage teachers to a commitment and performance whereby they respond to ideas, values, beliefs and purposes - they become followers.</p>	<p>MCD: Consultation</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leaders who lead by consultation.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders seek consensus, they engage with staff seeking to develop ownership of the process.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who impose an idea on the group they are leading. Leaders who do not empower their staff or encourage learning.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I have learnt that as a leader ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff expect that the principal will actively encourage collaboration, and empower them through consultation, to have ownership of ideas and initiatives. Leaders have no fear of becoming followers, in losing control or allowing others to lead.</p>
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Miriam says that leaders do not fear becoming followers; rather she attributes to leaders the need to focus on differences, to learn from staff and empower them. She says, “Their differences are valued so that the educative process becomes richer and broader than if one person had imposed an idea on the group that they are leading”. This is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

Narratives of leadership: Felicity

Felicity has been teaching primary school for ten years. Last year she was awarded the level of Teacher of Exemplary Practice 2 (TEP2). For the last six months of this year she was a Senior Teacher (ET2) at a large urban primary school.

A concern for values, and the recognition that personal values cannot be separated from leadership

<p><i>Felicity:</i> The dramatic change over showed me graphically the need for communication and direction amongst a staff. The first principal became sick at school the morning of returning to school after the mid-term break. There was a lot of gossip and speculation among the staff as to how sick? What this means to our school, etc. This went on for several days until one afternoon at pack-up time the Assistant Principal gave out to all staff a memo stating that another principal was to come and take over our school. The first reaction I had was our former principal had died, the hurried answer was “no”. Well has he retired? “No”. We were all left with this, and no one any the wiser. With all this misinformation going around when the new principal did arrive at school she wasn’t given a very welcoming reception. The morale and climate of the school was extremely suspicious and depressed. Because I was the staff member on the School Council, I heard the circumstances of the change over and heard that it wasn’t suspicious etc. I have often thought if only the staff were told the circumstances of the change over at a whole staff meeting and have more open communication, the whole situation could have been averted and a whole different social construct could have been made. From this story I learnt a lot about open communication, sharing of information and compassion to staff members.</p>	<p>MCD: Rational problem solving</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as problem solver</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders understand the need for understanding and the importance of interpretation. Leaders have a clear concern for values, and the recognition that personal values cannot be separated from leadership. They have a need to consult and place a strong emphasis on authentic collaboration.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not openly communicate with staff, but keep information ‘secret’, only telling those with ‘a need to know’. For them knowledge is power.</p> <p>Authentication Reporting of affect; “The morale and climate of the school was extremely suspicious and depressed”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff appreciate the principal’s open communication and sharing of information and knowledge. Understanding and ‘compassion’ – subjective feelings, are as important to the leader as facts and details.</p>
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Felicity’s story describes a situation where there has been a change of principal but staff have not been fully informed of the reasons. This infers the situation were in organisations bureaucratic systems confidentiality is considered to be important part of system control. Felicity says that from this experience she has come to attribute to good leaders the need for open communication, sharing of

information, “understanding and compassion” towards staff members. This demonstrates a practical cognitive interest.

A need for understanding and the importance of interpretation

<p><i>Felicity:</i> A story that concerns a parent complaint about Goosebumps books in our library. The parent involved wrote a letter to the school and then spoke at a School Council Meeting. I was pre-warned and had documentation on Acceptable Library Acquisition available and the standard censorship policy for school libraries worked through in my head. As the parent spoke I did feel empathy for the concern. However maybe not for the horror aspect of the books but because they are not good literature. Other parents howled this parent down because these books had got children, who didn't read, to start to read. Of course this parent was over ruled and not because of what I said but I still felt guilty.</p> <p>The principal then read a Goosebumps book. The principal then wrote a letter to the parent about the principal's personal opinion on a Goosebumps book. Then she put a piece in the Newsletter about the books, stating that if parents didn't want their children reading them, we would not lend Goosebumps to those children. I felt this was a good idea.</p>	<p>MCD: Rational problem solving</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as problem solver.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders seek to understand all parent's points of view, and not just the majority. Leaders have a clear concern for individual values and beliefs. Leaders have a need to consult and place a strong emphasis on authentic collaboration with parents.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who would reject parent's concerns as the voice of a minority and because the decision to have Goosebump books is ratified by Departmental documentation (facts and best practice such as the 'Acceptable Library Acquisitions policy).</p> <p>Authentication Report of affect; "Other parents howled this parent down ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – parents know that the principal is open and encouraging of different points of view. That the principal will actively seek to understand a parent's perspective and respond in positive ways. That the principal does not place 'facts' and 'best practices' over subjective feelings.</p>
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Felicity attributes to leaders the importance of understanding all parents' point of view and not just those of the majority. They have a clear concern for individual values and beliefs. They have a need to consult and place a strong emphasis on authentic collaboration with parents. This is indicative of a practical cognitive interest in mutual interpretation and understanding.

Narratives of leadership: Derek

A teacher of eighteen years experience, Derek taught for six years in high schools in Western Australia and the Northern Territory, before volunteering to transfer to isolated Aboriginal community schools. After twelve years in three different schools, Derek is currently the principal of a cluster of ‘one-teacher’ Indigenous schools that is located in Central Australia.

A disregard for facts, evidence or qualitative data where they conflict with subjective understanding

<p><i>Derek:</i> A few years later I was teaching a mixed Year 5, 6, 7 class at ‘X’ School. I was also the Principal of the school so had responsibilities for management in the wider context apart from just within the classroom. In my class there was a Year 6 student, call him Gerry, who was, to say the least, a behaviour problem. His literacy and numeracy level was behind everyone else in the class and he was a ring leader of class disruptions. The year ended and Gerry was to be one of three year 7 students, the oldest in the school, the next year. I went on holiday ... I gave Gerry some thought. What were we going to do with him? As a school elder, a sports star, and a dominant character he was a role model for all the younger kids. Exactly, I thought, make him school captain. I was reluctant to reward Gerry in such a positive way for what I thought to be negative behaviour but on my return I discussed the idea first with the staff and the Parents' Association, and then with the kids. The idea grew; staff, parents and students were willing to collaborate and work at developing student leadership within the school, giving responsibility not only to Gerry and the other year 7s but also to all students across the school. Gerry’s sudden recognition and ‘high office’ made an indelible impression on him. His behaviour changed over night. He had a badge he wore all the time and the pride he displayed when showing visitors around his school was obvious. He ran school assemblies with the other captains, or encouraged other students to do so, gladly took on other organisational duties, and started to achieve within the classroom. He received his first good school report.</p>	<p>MCD: Problem solving</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as problem solver</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders disregard ‘facts’ such as disruptive students must not be ‘rewarded’ and base their decisions on understanding and interpretation of each situation. Leaders follow their ‘feelings’ about what is best to do for an individual child /staff member.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who would punish the disruptive child applying traditional and ‘proven’ departmental practices, despite these practice being developed in urban ‘white’ schools.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I am told ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff understand that the principal will have a ‘gut feeling’ about what is the right thing to do, and will than discuss it with them seeking their input.</p>
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Derek says above, that leaders should disregard ‘facts’ such as; disruptive students must not be rewarded, and base their decisions on understanding and interpretation of each situation. Leaders follow their ‘feelings’ about what is best to do for an individual child /staff member, there is also a concern for values, and the recognition that the leader’s personal values (what they believe to be important) cannot be separated from his/her leadership. This is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

In this extract, Derek also indicates a possible emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. His statement and the implied actions suggest the intent of removing barriers to this child’s achievement, of finding ways to make education accessible to him.

A belief that there can always be more than one right answer

<p><i>Derek:</i> The kinship system of social structure in Aboriginal society ('skin groups') is a major part of Aboriginal life, and non-Aboriginal teachers are often awarded honourable kin status by friends or community members, and the community members, including the children, take these names seriously. I was placed in the skin group called Gela, or Burrulang. As Gela, I became nominally related to my students and I taught my mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, cousins, poison cousins, brothers and sisters, grannies and young women of ‘right skin’ in the class. The traditional social rules of interaction between skin groups meant that I was expected to treat each skin group formally in a particular fashion and learning these social rules was an important avenue of building relationships with the students. In practice, because I am non-Aboriginal (Balanda) and a teacher some of the rules were relaxed, such as not speaking to a Mother-In-Law or Poison Cousin. Some How then, does the development of teacher-student relationships and the learning styles of secondary aged Aboriginal students relate to my teaching in a cross-cultural situation? Simple: development of positive relations and my learning of social rules (even if not strictly adhered to) enabled each individual student to feel valued. Feeling valued leads to higher self-esteem, a higher self-esteem leads to greater motivation to learn. All I had to do as a teacher then was to provide the opportunity to learn the curriculum I was paid to teach.</p>	<p>MCD: Acceptance</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as kin-relation.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders understand that personal values cannot be separated from leadership, and that cultural acceptance based on the development of positive relationships, is vital in leadership.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who would not accept a place in an Aboriginal skin group, as it would compromise their leadership as a professional who has to teach and may need to discipline one of the skin group members.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I was placed in the skin group...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff would accept that for the principal there is an emphasis on subjective understanding and hermeneutic interpretation. The Aboriginal cultural knowledge is as powerful as traditional school systems.</p>
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Derek attributes to leadership the belief that there is no absolute ‘bottom line’ upon which to justify knowledge claims. The Aboriginal cultural knowledge is as powerful as traditional school systems, and can be more important to Indigenous student, if learning is to occur. Leaders also ensure that those they lead feel valued, as Derek says, “Feeling valued leads to higher self-esteem, a higher self-esteem leads to greater motivation to learn”. This demonstrates a practical cognitive interest.

Narratives of leadership: Zoe

Zoe is presently employed as an Indigenous Education Project Officer. In this role she visits Aboriginal primary schools to ensure that they are familiar with curriculum materials. Prior to this she was Principal of a small school of seven teachers in a traditional Aboriginal community located west of Alice Springs.

A concern for values

<p><i>Zoe:</i> We were having a barbecue at a friend’s house when a co-worker, none of us particularly liked, drove up and stepped out of the vehicle. As we saw him approach quite an audible moan escaped from our little group that stilled the party for about thirty seconds. At the time none of us took very much notice. It was not until the following Monday morning, when our little group were called into the Principal’s office that we started to question what was going on. Basically, the Principal strongly reprimanded each one of us for publicly showing our dislike for this person and told us that it was extremely unprofessional. When we were out of the office each one of us looked to the other and felt humiliated and frustrated because the whole scenario had taken place after hours in a friend’s house. We didn’t believe that what we did or said in our own time should have any bearing on the school. Now, when I look back on this particular incident I see the value in how the Principal behaved. For me it was the first time that I actually thought about my behaviour after hours, and began to realise that when you live in a community you really do have to think about what you do and say at all times. As a non-Aboriginal person you are always a visitor in a community, at times you are accepted into the kin system and become part of different family groups, but you never really belong because your family is elsewhere.</p>	<p>MCD: Professionalism</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as professional</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders understand that how the community out of school perceives you, is as important as in school. Leaders know that non-Indigenous staff in Aboriginal communities need to understand their place to be that of ‘visitors’ to a community.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who separate school and home life. Who believe that what happens outside of school is of no concern to the principal.</p> <p>Authentication Anecdotal evidence; “Now when I look back ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is a need for understanding of roles and the importance of interpretation of cultural issues. There is a concern for values, and the recognition that personal values cannot be separated from the role of teachers.</p>
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Zoe attributes to leadership a need for understanding of roles and the importance of interpretation within cultural context. There is a concern for personal values, and the recognition that values cannot be separated from the role of teachers, when teachers are seen as community leaders. This is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

On the other hand, in this statement Zoe also provides indications that she may cross to an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. The recognition of cultural differences and the process of critical self-reflection are possibly an indicator of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. As she says, “Now, when I look back on this particular incident I see the value in how the Principal behaved. For me it was the first time that I actually thought about my behaviour after hours, and began to realise that when you live in a community you really do have to think about what you do and say at all times”.

Narratives of leadership: Hayden

Hayden’s first placement as principal was at a one-teacher school. He is currently Cluster Principal of six remote schools.

A need for understanding and the importance of interpretation

<p><i>Hayden:</i> Because I visit every three or four weeks, I must build a respect and trust for my staff members and instill within them a strong sense of autonomy. We talk often over the telephone during and after hours, often discussing decisions to be made, and my visits are eagerly awaited. My relationships with each of the schools and communities are positive and trusting due to mutual respect and valuing of our differences. Each of these schools is in the process of change because each staff member has a strong sense of ownership.... To work together interdependently and synergistically within a school and community is my favoured philosophy in educational management. This is achieved through the valuing of individual and group differences ... and the empowerment of decision making within individuals and groups. The more a person or group is able to learn from others that are considered different in their ideas or practices, the more empowered they become - the more empowered they are, the more apt they become in learning from different perspectives.</p>	<p>MCD: Shared leadership</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leaders who shares leadership.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity</u> Leaders value staff. Leaders empower staff and build autonomy and “a strong sense of ownership”.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who require strong central control, and who do not encourage autonomy.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I lead by suggestion ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is an emphasis on interpretation and understanding. The leader does not believe that there is only one ‘right’ solution for managing a school, but many.</p>
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Hayden, above, attributes to leaders the need to empower staff and build autonomy and “a strong sense of ownership”. Leaders do not require rigid and structured reporting, rather there is an emphasis on interpretation and understanding. The leader does not believe that there is only one ‘right’ solution for managing a school, but many. As Hayden says, “The more a person or group is able to learn from others that are considered different in their ideas or practices, the more empowered they become”. This focus is indicative of a practical cognitive interest.

Narratives of leadership: Patricia

Patricia is 53 and has held various positions as Senior Teacher and Assistant Principal. She was the Project Manager for *Tradeswomen on the Move* a program that involved taking four women tradespersons around schools. Her current position is as the Manager for the Project, *Addressing Gender and Violence in Schools*.

A need for understanding and the importance of interpretation

<p><i>Patricia:</i> When I saw him at school the next day I mentioned that I had seen him dance and complemented him on his wonderful performance. His face lit up and he smiled and said, “Would you like me to dance for you now?” Here I had to make a very quick decision - Should I, or should I not, allow this child to put himself 'on the line' in front of his peers? “That would be great”, I said, “you don’t mind dancing here in front of all the other students?” I hoped there would be time before the bell went for him to do a whole dance. I hoped the other students wouldn't do or say anything to embarrass or harass him. He moved unselfconsciously to a space between the desks directly in front of me and started a Hakka. He sang the words clearly. His feet and hands moved gracefully and purposefully through the dance. Frank had a powerful presence as a dancer. All the other children in the class stopped what they were doing to watch, there was absolute silence, the students were riveted to the scene unfolding before them. A transformation took place. This child, who for them had been less than whole, who had been the butt of their bullying, became, through his joyous and unselfconscious acknowledgment of his culture, a gifted being, someone admirable and worth knowing.</p>	<p>MCD: Policy Making</p> <p>Category named in the talk Constructivist leader</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders understand that groups need to develop shared meaning through a sharing of their knowledge and skills. Knowledge can come in many forms, including dance</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who would see dance as outside the role of school and not enable the student to share his expert knowledge with the group.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – There is a belief that there is no absolute ‘bottom line’ upon which to justify knowledge claims in the classroom. Practical leadership is also focused on enabling others to come together to share knowledge and understanding.</p>
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Patricia's story is an example of classroom leadership with a practical cognitive interest. What school leaders come to accept as reasonable in terms of knowledge about curriculum and pedagogy is the product of a socially and historically conditioned agreement. Knowledge can come in many forms, including dance. Patricia attributes to leaders the need to seek understanding. In her example it was to understand the child through the child's expression of self through his dance. There is a belief that there can always be more than one right answer, that there is no absolute 'bottom line' upon which to justify knowledge claims in the classroom. Practical leadership is also focused on enabling others to come together to share knowledge and understanding. By encouraging the child to dance, she had enabled sharing. This is because as a practical leader she understands "the importance that coming to know has for group participants" (Lambert 1995, p.91). Leaders recognise the limitations of their own knowledge and value that of others by facilitating dialogue in these unfamiliar arenas.

Evidence of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest

Evidence of Habermas' emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest was apparent in the narrative data. In order to demonstrate this interest, extracts are provided from the narratives collected from various school leaders.

Narratives of leadership: Helena

Helena was born in Alice Springs and spent her early years at an Indigenous Community Mission with her family. She has been a teacher in various urban and community schools and is currently Teacher-in-Charge (T.I.C.) in the Preschool Centre in an Indigenous school. The school caters for an enrolment of 260 children from Preschool to Year 10. Helena supervises four staff at the Preschool Centre.

A concern to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people's attainment or cause inequity

<p><i>Helena:</i> As a white woman brought into the Preschool at the request of the Aboriginal Community, I often feel I have been expected to be the 'fix-it' person because I am white, not necessarily because I apparently have better skills in educational administration. There is a direct contradiction between this and the principles of self-determination. Georgina, the Community Teacher, knows an enormous amount about the community, the children, the tribal groups and the history of 'X' and the area. She has been excluded from the Position of T.I.C. because she "did not possess the skills necessary" to take on the role. There has been little done to aid Georgina in developing the skills necessary to be able to take on the T.I.C. role. However, Georgina did not want the position either. This could be partly due to the administration's lack of faith in her abilities but I feel it may be primarily due to her Aboriginality and the responsibilities she has within the social structure of the community... Georgina also has difficulty with this role. She finds it particularly difficult instructing other staff in the Preschool to carry out tasks. She told me she did not want to be seen as 'bossy' by the others.</p>	<p>MCD: Discrimination</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as substitute.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> A leader is concerned to discover barriers that restrict people's attainment or cause inequity.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who would not question their position, but accept that an Aboriginal person does not have the ability or inclination to be in a promotional position.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; "I often feel that I have been expected to be the fix-it person because I am white...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – Indigenous staff would know that the leader understands and supports their cultural differences.</p>
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Helena's story is an example of leadership with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. She attributes to leaders a concern to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people's attainment or cause inequity. She believes that Georgina is barred from the manager's position because of her Aboriginality and related cultural barriers. As she says, "She told me she did not want to be seen as 'bossy' by the other women". For Helena there is a need to question purpose and outcomes in order to demystify a direction or policy and a need to illuminate any forms of coercion hidden in actions or role.

A concern for the full development of human potential

<p><i>Helena:</i> My responsibilities as a manager are equal to my responsibilities as a learner. As I crawl into my 30's, I am just starting to find out who I am. At times, I would like to go back to the start with the knowledge I have now and fix up all the dreadful mistakes I have made. This is life however, and everyone makes them! Learning is a lifelong task. It is as long as a piece of string - you simply choose when to cut that string to limit its length. As an educational manager I am certainly not exempt from the educational process. Even with difficult experiences, I am learning to draw lesson from them.</p> <p>My time at 'X' will probably finish in December, but as with all challenging experiences, I will have learned a great deal from it. As the T.I.C. at the Preschool, I hope to leave Georgina with skills and self-confidence to take on the T.I.C. position in her next school. However, the difficulties with staffing communities appropriately, even adequately, will remain. As I outlined earlier, the lessons to be learned from Aboriginal management styles are inclusivity, being mindful of the little picture and individuals and taking time to listen, learn and share with colleagues and the community. I do not know how to share this with colleagues who are not yet ready to listen. To look at individual growth and beliefs one first needs to be able to be honest with oneself.</p>	<p>MCD: Learning Organisations</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as learner</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders must be life-long learners. Leaders have a concern for the full development of human potential. They also have a desire to ensure that leadership is not unjust, inhibiting or depersonalising.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who are not concerned with learning from Aboriginal people, nor in sharing their learning with others, rather leaders who believe that processes of administration, as researched and developed in 'white' mainstream schools should apply in all situations regardless of cultural differences.</p> <p>Authentication Reporting of affect; "...fix up all the dreadful mistakes I have made ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff have a leader who will be critically self reflective and who will be seeking to learn from them and share their knowledge as much as possible.</p>
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Helena says that leaders must be life-long learners. She is critically self-reflective, "I would like to go back to the start with the knowledge I have now and fix up all the dreadful mistakes I have made". She also says that she has learnt things about being a leader in Indigenous schools that she does not know how to share with colleagues "who are not ready to listen". She believes that leaders need to be inclusive, and take "the time to listen, learn and share with colleagues and the community". This critical reflection and the need to communicate what she has learnt of the cultural differences manifest in school leadership in Indigenous communities, is indicative of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. Further, Helena is concerned that while the Indigenous teacher, who has been working with her, Georgina, has the skills and self-confidence to take on the teacher-in-charge position, that the "difficulties with staffing communities..." will prevent it from happening. Here again, Helena's comments are indicative of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest.

Narratives of leadership: Hayden

Hayden’s background was previously noted in the extracts of his story that demonstrated a practical cognitive interest. In the following extract he illustrates an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest as well. That a school leader might operate from within different interests is demonstrated in a number of the stories of leadership discussed in Chapter 6.

A concern to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people’s attainment or cause inequity

<p><i>Hayden:</i> The fact that you are from a highly contrasting culture and have different ways and means of doing things is a point that is always apparent with Aboriginal people. If one respects and values these differences by attempting to follow meeting etiquette, that person is afforded the same valuing of difference in return. A mutual respect is built. This mutual valuing of difference in the context of my work is the first step in breaking down the communication barrier between our cultures (and between school and community) and leads to the establishment of a working relationship and involvement of the community in the running of the school.</p>	<p>MCD: Communicating</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader who are cross-culturally aware.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders value difference. Leaders strive to break down barriers between school systems and communities, by actively seeking to understand, interpret and apply cultural rules for communication.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who require that staff adhere to recognised and accepted systems of schooling, regardless of its relevance to the community.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “If one respects ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff see the leader as someone who makes an effort to ensure that schools overcome barriers caused by cultural differences, in order to facilitate shared leadership with community members.</p>
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Hayden’s story, in parts, has demonstrated leadership with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. He attributes to leaders a concern to discover cultural barriers or constraints that restrict people’s attainment in schools. He focuses on a “mutual respect” of differences that will enable open communication and in turn enable shared leadership with community members.

A concern to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people's attainment or cause inequity

<p><i>Hayden:</i> The most significant aspect of my work as a leader in valuing difference has to be in the context of understanding and communicating in a cross-cultural situation. So many features of this process reflect enormous difference from the process developed in our own culture. The one resounding 'rule of thumb' that comes to mind in talking with/to traditional Indigenous individuals or groups is to value and respect these differences. This process of valuing difference does not necessarily mean that one abandons one's own culturally appropriate means of communication, but does mean that in certain contexts such as addressing different gender groups, age groups and family groups, particular communicative etiquette should be followed. One does not (as we see fit) level eye contact with women in an audience, nor even converse directly to a stepmother relationship. It is important to use the exact appropriate tone of voice. One does not ask blatant questions, nor expect immediate decisions. One is always extremely careful not to shame or ridicule (sometimes this can be seen as the case in the most subliminal of ways).</p>	<p>MCD: Communicating</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as cross-cultural communicator.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders strive to break down communication barriers by actively seeking to understand, interpret and apply cultural rules for communication.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who require that staff adhere to recognised and accepted means of standard English communication in schools.</p> <p>Authentication Reporting of affect; "The one resounding 'rule of thumb' ...".</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff see the leader as someone who makes an effort to be able to communicate with them in culturally acceptable ways.</p>
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Hayden attributes to leaders an interest in making an effort to be able to communicate with staff in culturally appropriate ways. This may entail a departure from accepted forms of 'western' system driven communication that are found in schools (as organisations), in favour of methods more appropriate to Indigenous cultures. There is an emphasis on overcoming barriers, and recognition that there is more than one right way of communicating in schools.

Narratives of leadership: Cecily

Cecily has taught for fifteen years in Indigenous Schools and twelve years in urban city schools. At the time of this narrative she was Assistant Principal in a Community Education Centre, a large school in an isolated Indigenous community.

An examination of how social relationships are distorted and manipulated by power and privilege

<p><i>Cecily:</i> We began in Learning Together sessions to discuss the absentee ‘problem’. These Learning Together groups were made up of all staff involved in the bilingual unit, both Aboriginal and Non Aboriginal, and were led by the Teacher Linguist, in this case, myself.</p> <p>On reflection, I realise that when we began discussions on absenteeism, the reasons and possible solutions were presented mainly by the Non Aboriginal staff. We were coming from an education system which historically aimed at providing Aboriginal people with sufficient skills to take their place at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder in relatively unskilled work. The overt and covert curriculum of the school attempted to socialise Aboriginal students into accepting both their place as second-class citizens and the colonisers’ ultimate right to have power over virtually every aspect of their lives.</p>	<p>MCD: Learning organisations</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as learner</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders form ‘Learning Together’ groups of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff to discuss and deal with school problems. Leaders are concerned to examine how social relationships are distorted and manipulated by relations of power and privilege. Their intention is to change directions or policy that are judged to be unjust or that disempower.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who would not engage in “Learning Together” groups to collaboratively determine ways to deal with absenteeism. Leaders who would not reflect on the apparent injustice and disempowerment of Western schools on Indigenous students.</p> <p>Authentication Reporting of affect; “ ... As second class citizens...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership –staff know that the leader will engage them in collaborative decision making “Learning Groups”, and will struggle to remove barriers to the achievement of Indigenous children in schools.</p>
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In this narrative Cecily makes the statement that “The overt and covert curriculum of the school attempted to socialise Aboriginal students into accepting both their place as second-class citizens and the colonisers’ ultimate right to have power over virtually every aspect of their lives.” This is indicative of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. It is a concern to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people’s attainment or cause inequity.

A concern to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people's attainment or cause inequity

<p><i>Cecily:</i> Although I worked in a bilingual program I did little at first to consider the wishes and beliefs of Aboriginal parents. “This is how school is and they will have to accept it,” I thought. In developing teaching programs for the Aboriginal teachers I considered the differences in our languages, but still expected the Aboriginal teachers to follow Western pedagogy, and in spite of the production of wonderful ‘Theme Packages’ the students continued to stay away from school. The organisational structures of our Western education system and in particular the schools in which we teach “obstruct the effective democratisation of Aboriginal education” (Wearne 1986). In this way we create and maintain barriers to Aboriginal aspirations. We effectively resist their continuing desire to manage and control their own pace and style of development. What we were doing is exactly that. We were creating a situation that perpetuated the powerlessness of the community.</p>	<p>MCD: Injustice</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leaders who are critically reflective. Leaders who empower minority groups.</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders are concerned to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people’s attainment or cause inequity. There is a need to illuminate any forms of coercion hidden in actions or role.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who impose solutions for effective schools - based on ‘western’ research – on Indigenous communities without interpretation or cultural understanding.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “What we were doing is exactly that ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – Indigenous staff are able to develop their own learning pedagogies (often rejecting Western strategies developed through schools research) and manage and control their own pace and style of development.</p>
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In this narrative Cecily is critically reflective. She says that like many she initially came into Indigenous schools with the belief that “This is how school is and they will have to accept it”. Since then, she has come to acknowledge what she sees as the injustices of the Western education system in dealing with Indigenous people. She says that it creates and maintains “barriers to Aboriginal aspirations.” Cecily attributes to leaders the need to illuminate – through critical self-reflection – any forms of coercion hidden in actions or role. She says, “What we were doing is exactly that. We were creating a situation which perpetuated the powerlessness of the community”. In this extract it can be inferred that Cecily has an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest.

A need to question purpose and outcomes in order to demystify a direction or policy

<p><i>Cecily:</i> One afternoon in one of our Learning Together sessions, when again discussing absenteeism, one of the Aboriginal teachers suggested that we “take school to the camps”. In this way we could involve the parents in developing an understanding of what happens at school and give them the opportunity to meet the teachers in an outside setting. They could also participate in the education of their children in a non-threatening environment</p> <p>We decided to give the lessons an Assembly type structure in which the entire Unit would take songs, stories, posters or charts to each camp to perform and display. The Principal gave his approval and the Aboriginal teachers decided on the setting. The response from parents to these camp visits was overwhelming. People came from every direction to watch and listen to the students and they seemed very comfortable with their families around them. This idea of camp school continued and expanded to include the teaching of lessons and the involvement of Aboriginal parents. Parents were now much more involved in the daily activities of the school. They attended excursions and came along to Open Nights, which were now happening on a regular basis.</p> <p>Taking school to the camps later expanded when we received requests from elders to set up school at ceremony camps so that learning could continue through the long periods when the clans were attending ceremonies.</p>	<p>MCD: Appropriate education</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as problem-solver</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders are concerned to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people’s attainment or cause inequity. They act to change directions or policy that are judged to be unjust or that disempower.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who would not “take school to the camps”, but continue to enforce ineffective laws that force Aboriginal people to send their children to school.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “I am told ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – staff are able to be involved in problem solving in culturally meaningful ways. Alternatives to ‘Western’ traditions of schooling can be tried in order to provide more appropriate education to Indigenous people.</p>
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In this narrative Cecily describes leadership with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. In order to remove educational barriers created by the ‘structures’ of schooling, the ‘school’ is taken to the camps. As she notes they “received requests from elders to set up school at ceremony camps so that learning could continue through the long periods when the clans were attending ceremonies”. Cecily is attributing to leaders a need to question purpose – What is a school’s role? In this case the answer is; making learning culturally appropriate.

Narratives of leadership: Zoe

Zoe’s background was described previously (p. 210-211) where her practical interest and concurrent emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest was illuminated.

Zoe’s emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest can also be inferred from the following extracts taken from her narrative.

A need to consult and an emphasis on authentic collaboration

<p><i>Zoe:</i> [He] had been working at the school for the previous three years and when he began he had a vision of a beautiful school which encouraged pride, attendance, high achievement and ownership of the school by the community. He termed this vision - Conducive Learning Environments and was able to communicate and facilitate the implementation of that project. By the time I arrived at the school the Conducive Learning Environment (CLE) had been created and the sense of pride and ownership of the school was overwhelming. As the project was a working success we continued to expand on the theme, by further developing the school grounds to incorporate an orchard, a chicken run, a playground and a mini football oval. Each one of these projects further encouraged community people to feel part of the school and to make it the centre of the community. Now that I have moved on from that position I have heard that the community has taken the CLE philosophy into their homes. With the support of the Council most of the houses in the community have put up fences and are beginning to create gardens of their own around their homes. The success of the CLE project has inspired me as a leader to believe that success in an Aboriginal community has to firstly, be established as a common goal, it then has to be modeled and worked towards (often as an individual to begin with) while at the same time training and empowering those working with you with the ability to create independently so that eventually they feel ownership and pride of the final product.</p>	<p>MCD: Vision</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leaders who empower people</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders who actively involve members of the community in establishing common goals. Leaders who empower staff to “create independently so that eventually they feel ownership and pride of the final product”.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who do not involve community members in establishing mutual goals, but are ‘visionary leaders’ directing staff to follow their vision.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “By the time I arrived ...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – there is an emphasis on collaboration and working together to create common goals. Staff and community members have ownership they expand on these mutual goals to suit their own purposes.</p>
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It may be argued that the act of getting Indigenous Australians in isolated communities to “put up fences” and “create gardens of their own around their homes”, is not in keeping with an emancipatory cognitive interest. It is suggested, however, that the “CLE philosophy” (elaborated fully in Zoe’s narrative) was intended to be emancipatory for the people of the community. This philosophy was about empowering Indigenous people to throw off the ‘shackles’ of habit, custom, and the economic rationalism that tends to dictate a dependency culture in Indigenous communities. It was about empowering the Indigenous people of these isolated communities, to enable them to understand that they have a role to play in joining

knowledge and power, a role that they in turn can use to develop critical and active citizens.

Narratives of leadership: Jennifer

Jennifer’s background was described previously when her practical interest was illuminated.

A concern to discover barriers that restrict people’s attainment

<p><i>Jennifer:</i> Our school enrolled a profoundly deaf student called John. He was placed in a class that was considered by the senior staff to have an excellent program. ... Her classroom was highly organised, student’s art work was immaculately displayed and teacher directed, and students were seen and not heard. The classroom was very predictable, highly structured; a program that brought back hospital memories (if you follow procedures all would be fine)...Despite preliminary meetings to assist John into his new school he didn’t settle into the class. His parents were not welcome in the class and when John’s daily tantrums and nightmares intensified, parental pressure forced senior staff to critically examine the teaching learning situation.... The teacher refused to modify the class program to meet John's needs. John was seen as a hindrance and the teacher was unwilling to change the program for one individual. ...A number of teachers felt John should attend the Stuart Park School (signing program); the parents were adamant that he should attend an oral (not signing) school. Integration beliefs were polarised. Yet the final guiding light became the overriding system, the system that employs all teachers. This paradox, the system guiding the system decreed that John’s individual differences and special needs were not being addressed. John has a right to an equal and equitable education...the Principal asked me to take John. Initially I was surprised as my program was quite the opposite of the ‘chosen program’. I believed my program was very child centred, offering periods of free activities, hands on learning, children tended to display their own work (not always neatly) warm, friendly, parents welcomed with open arms, teacher modelling learning (community of learners) and a noisy room at times. ...Within a week John's negative behaviours regressed and he became a valued class member.</p>	<p>MCD: Integration / inclusion</p> <p>Category named in the talk Leader as problem-solver</p> <p>Attributes <u>Category-bound activity.</u> Leaders are concerned to discover barriers or constraints that restrict student’s attainment. Teachers (as classroom leaders) who are willing to change programs to suit the individual.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “Her classroom was ...”.</p> <p>SRP (not of this category) Leaders who enforce barriers to ‘deaf’ children restricting them from schooling opportunities. Teachers who are unwilling to change classroom practices to suit individuals.</p> <p>Authentication Personal experience; “Much to my surprise the Principal asked me to take John...”.</p> <p>Cause – Effect With this category of leadership – teachers understand that the needs of the individual are important, and critically reflect on ‘barriers’ that their programs may place in the way of student’s achievement.</p>
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In this extract from Jennifer’s narrative, she describes a school leader who worked with her in her second year of teaching (sixteen years ago). This event was

clearly influential in the development of her leadership interest. In this story, Jennifer describes how a deaf child was treated and her belief that “John has a right to an equal and equitable education.” Critical school leaders value and build from the unique voices and strengths of teachers, they recognise teachers’ agency, voice, and sense of meaning matter greatly to them as they work with each other and their students. Equally they are concerned to discover and remove barriers – such as classroom practices – that restrict attainment or cause inequity.

Conclusion

Sixteen school leaders, ranging from Senior Teachers to Principals provided narratives of leadership. Some narratives were accounts of their views about leadership, while others were stories of events that had occurred. All the narratives were very readable and highly engaging and many provided quite inspirational accounts of the day-to-day work of educational practitioners. The narratives were analysed using the discourse analysis device of Membership Categorisation Analysis (Chapter 3) and each story provided evidence of cognitive interests.

The results have illustrated that Habermas’ theory does provide a useful and workable set of frames by which to discuss and describe school leadership as described in narratives.

While the narratives of some of the sixteen school leaders indicated only one cognitive interest, for example Jill whose narrative indicted only a technical cognitive interest, from the language of others it can be inferred that they cross between two different cognitive interests. Zoe serves as an example her narrative indicated both a practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest in different contexts.

A brief summary of the results of the analysis of narrative data is provided in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Summary of narrative results

Name	Background	Statement of indicated cognitive interest
Jill	Principal of an urban primary school.	Technical
Pam	Assistant Principal of an urban primary school.	Technical
Raylene	Assistant Principal of an urban primary school.	Technical
Steven	Principal of a large Indigenous community school	Technical
Ben	Principal of a large urban primary school	Technical/practical
Patricia	Project Manager, Gender and Violence in Schools	Technical/practical
Miriam	Assistant Principal of a large urban school.	Technical/practical
Colleen	Senior Teacher urban primary school	Practical
Felicity	Teacher of Exemplary Practice 2 and Senior Teacher	Practical
Bernie	Faculty Leader large urban primary school.	Practical/emancipatory
Derek	Group School Principal	Practical/ emancipatory
Jennifer	Assistant Principal large urban primary school.	Practical/emancipatory
Zoe	School Adviser and Principal of an indigenous school.	Emancipatory/practical
Hayden	Group School Principal (principal of a number of small Indigenous schools).	Emancipatory/practical
Helena	Head Teacher Pre-school in an Indigenous community	Emancipatory
Cecily	Assistant Principal large Indigenous community school.	Emancipatory

Chapter conclusion

This chapter has reported on the results of the three key research activities of this study: the two-day workshop leadership workshop; the collection and analysis of interview data; and the collection and analysis of narratives of leadership. Of these, the analysis of discourse from interviews and narratives of leadership, have provided the most significant results in response to the research questions.

The evaluation of the two-day workshop suggested that the school practitioners in this workshop accepted the way in which Habermas' cognitive interest framework was presented in the leadership activities. They endorsed both the framework and its relevance to interpreting leadership acts. It was apparent from the evaluation results that the eighteen school practitioners in this workshop were able to perceive the value of applying the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests to understanding and informing such day-to-day tasks as 'dealing with conflict' and 'performance management'.

The two-day workshop was significant in that it was the first time that the research involved exposing the framework to school practitioners. Their positive response in accepting the cognitive interests framework justified the continuation of the investigation. Moreover, the process of explaining the cognitive interests to school leaders during the workshop, and the resulting discussions, provided an opportunity to critically reflect on the definitions of the three interests.

The two-day workshop did not, however, provide strong evidence of how the three cognitive interests are manifest in school leadership. Such evidence did emerge from the analysis of interview and narrative data.

The MCA process enabled the transcripts of the interviews with school leaders to be broken down into segments. In each segment the use of member categories indicates that the technical, practical and critical interests are manifest in school leadership (at least in the discourse of school leaders as revealed at interview). This analysis has provided examples of discourse that can be interpreted as demonstrating the technical, practical and to a lesser extent, emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests.

Similarly the MCA process enabled the narratives of school leaders to be analysed, and from this analysis evidence has been provided that the three cognitive interests are inherent in school leadership. There was greater evidence in the narratives (seemingly from school leaders in schools outside urban centres) of the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest than there was in the interview data.

Taken together, the results from the analysis of interview data and narratives make it possible to conclude that Habermas' theory is manifest in the discourse of school leaders (given the assumption that the participants to this study are typical of other school leaders). It has also been possible to draw from this data propositions about how the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests are manifest in school leadership.

A detailed discussion of these results is provided in the following chapter.

Chapter 6: DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Introduction

In this chapter the results are discussed. The research questions are recalled:

1. In what ways are the cognitive interests evident in school leaders' descriptions of their professional practice?
2. What is the potential of Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests to enhance school leadership practice and the preparation of school leaders?

And,

3. How did the experience of researching school leaders' practice, influence the researcher's personal growth as an educational leader?

The most significant result arising from this research has been ratification that Habermas' technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests are manifest in the discourse of the school leaders who participated in this study. Given this confirmation propositions can be made about the potential of Habermas' theory to enhancing leadership practice. These propositions are based on extrapolations from the data and from insights into the application of the theory to school leadership that have been formed over the six years of research and extensive literature review.

In what ways are the cognitive interests evident in school leaders' descriptions of their professional practice?

The technical cognitive interest

It is evident from the analysis of interview and narrative data, that the technical cognitive interest is manifest in the discourse of practising school leaders.

Chapter 5 has described the evidence found in support of each of the following technical indicators:

- The importance of finding solutions or the ‘right solution’.
- A need for control.
- A search for causality.
- A reliance on evidence, facts, or other ‘scientific’ data.
- A concern for values-free decisions (putting personal values aside in leadership).
- An emphasis on rational and objective, not subjective, leadership.

The technical mode is “based on empirical knowledge and is governed by technical rules” (Mezirow, 1981, p. 14). This mode is the one used in the natural sciences, and is also the mode on which much of the “process-product” (Shulman, 1987) research on teaching and on leadership has been based. The technical cognitive interest is concerned with predictable, observable events, which can be explained or described by general rules. In school leadership the technical cognitive interest would seem to be manifest in different ways.

In regards to school administration it is characterised in school leadership by a concern with the efficiency and effectiveness of the means schools use to attain their goals.

In regards to school improvement, it can be generally characterised as the school leader who leads and implements change with a strong interest in control. This defines a leader who believes that logic (drawn from logical positivism) and the application of evidence and rational objective thinking is the best approach to leadership. This has been described as a ‘modernist approach’ to leadership (Blackmore, 1996), in which school leadership is strongly hierarchical, where the curriculum is fairly rigid and expectations are clear. Sergiovanni (1995) describes the schools of such leaders as being governed by ‘linear conditions’ where simplicity, clarity, order and predictability are perceived as essential to effective leadership. School leaders with a technical cognitive interest would seem to favour educational initiatives and programs that focus on logical empiricism and system thinking. While the evidence of a technical cognitive interest has been detailed in Chapter 5, five examples are recalled here to reiterate the language that illustrates this cognitive interest:

I get paid good money to make the hard decisions. If someone screws up down below and I have my hand on the wheel so to speak, ultimately it comes back to me. And I expect that as part of my role. (Maureen)

It's a style where I like to involve as many people as possible while still retaining the final decision, which as principal is what you have to do. I would put it as collaborative, but within certain frameworks. You let me know what you think about it, weigh it all up and say right what you've come up with is fine. But if they come up with something I don't consider fine well I reserve the right to say no. (Paul)

It's very important to get all the right information to do all the research. If someone comes to me and they want to try something new or, if I go to the teachers and want to try out something new or change something with Council. I've got to do my research. I've got to have my facts. (Helen)

My other concern was to ensure that our solution to the issue wasn't limited by the extent of our own knowledge and that we weren't trapped into returning to old solutions for new problems. I knew then that part of my role, as an educational leader was to look at assessment tools and practices and be sure that staff were aware of a range of effective assessment devices. (Pam)

I am sorry you CAN and you WILL! You are looking for efficiencies here. If you do not go through these particular procedures and it is important here not to have incredibly demanding or numerous expectations like that. You want the job of teaching to be done and done efficiently so you trim to the bone those external demands on the teacher. You want them to do their job but there ARE some absolute bottom lines. Expectations - the place can't function without them. (Kym)

With regards to curriculum and pedagogy, the technical interest is likely to be characterised by a concern for facts and knowledge informed from research (including reliance on experts), and a concern for causality (cause and effect) as well as technical control. The following examples are recalled from Chapter 5, to emphasise this aspect of the technical cognitive interest:

So after talking to the Star Team, I decided to trial moving the student to another older class, with the sole male classroom teacher, Sam could be grouped with some academically slow learners. (Jill)

Recent reading had introduced me to the work of H. Woodward and M. Drummond and they emphasised the need for careful, focussed observation of students' work, at the content and metacognitive levels, by co-researching. I could see how this would be helpful to staff in assessing students' work for the profiling and it was a methodology that would also aid teacher's evaluation of students' work for placement on the First Steps Continua. I could see the potential for this but was uncertain as to the best way to get staff to implement these strategies. (Pam)

As the project is ongoing I am still working to achieve the aims of the project. But whole school change is a huge task. To understand what it involves I have done considerable research, and have provided resources and models for the Key teams to work with in their schools. Team members are given time during the professional development to work together to formulate action plans for the next phase of the project within their schools. (Patricia)

The practical cognitive interest

It was evident from the analysis of interview and narrative data, that a practical cognitive interest is manifest in the discourse of practising school leaders. Chapter 5 has described the evidence found in support of each of following indicators of a practical cognitive interest:

- A lack of concern at losing control, or allowing others to lead.
- A need for understanding and the importance of interpretation.
- A disregard for facts, evidence or qualitative data where they conflict with subjective understanding.
- A concern for values, and the recognition that personal values cannot be separated from leadership.
- A need to consult and an emphasis on authentic collaboration.
- A belief that there can always be more than one right answer, that there is no absolute 'bottom line' upon which to justify knowledge claims.

In regards to school administration, school leadership informed by a practical cognitive interest can be characterised by leadership that is shared, collaborative and focused on mutual understanding and values. While the evidence of a practical cognitive interest is detailed in Chapter 5, four examples are recalled here of the discourse that indicates a practical cognitive interest:

Oh no sometimes you can't get all the information and you just got to make decisions that are right at the time with the information available. I am trying right now to talk to the department about how many teachers we need, but I have no idea at all of how many kids we will have next year. The demographer is saying that there are 'X' number of kids, well everybody's feelings are that he is wrong. And this is what we have to work with, with good will. My schools have always been known for caring for the individual child and the needs of kids with special needs. (Chris)

It is foolish to rely on the argument that "the computer did it". It is as foolish in a leadership context as relying on "the department says" or "policy says". You have to interpret. You have to moderate, and so on. My response would be "this is an interesting initiative it's probably the way to go, but we haven't got all the bugs out of it yet and I would adopt a combination of all of those things. See what benefits it would bring. Therefore in the longer term you are talking about a trial and double feedback loop so you can improve it. People are working in a collaborative collegial manner, let's sit down talk through the problems. (Mick)

I do believe in shared decision making. My style is such that I like to involve other people, not just by collaborative decision-making but also by delegation. Delegation is giving people

responsibility to do certain things. One of the difficulties of delegating is to make sure you don't interfere you really have to have faith and if you are going to delegate you have to delegate it and not stand over someone. Be available to discuss it and hopefully, if it is possible, be a part of the collaborative group that might eventually come up with the decision. (Jo)

However there are others in the group who are still grappling with some of the issues ... this is where I, as a leader, am working continuously to find ways that I can provide further information, offer alternatives, find resources and generally support the ongoing process for each of these teachers who are all at different stages and who all have different needs, who have all felt the anxieties of uncertainty a fact that I do recognise and appreciate. (Patricia)

In regards to curriculum and pedagogical issues, school leadership from a practical cognitive interest is likely to be characterised by hermeneutics that argues there is no absolute 'bottom line' upon which to justify knowledge claims and, hence, there is no possibility of certitude. Within this approach, what school leaders come to accept as reasonable in terms of knowledge about curriculum and pedagogy is the product of a socially and historically conditioned agreement. Leaders with a practical cognitive interest are not necessarily transmitters of knowledge. They do not have the collective expertise of those around them, yet they can recognise the value of other actors' ability to select, or write, curricula and the importance of inviting teachers (and community members) to be part of this dialogue.

At one end of a spectrum of knowledge, they may have complete knowledge of certain information yet understand the importance "that coming to know has for group participants" (Lambert, 1995, p. 91). At the other end of the spectrum, they may only have limited knowledge, but have faith in another's set of knowledge, and this is acceptable to them. Leaders with a practical cognitive interest may recognise the limitations of their own knowledge as regards curriculum and pedagogy, and value that of others by facilitating dialogue in these unfamiliar arenas. The following extract from the interview data is recalled as an example of the discourse that demonstrates this aspect of a practical interest:

Because I'm not the direct hands-on teacher, therefore it's important that the staff in the section of the school, be it the whole school, have a major say in how we structure our school and therefore class teachers do it. They can think about this in a sense of overall responsibility, in value terms, you ask the teachers to take into account the good of the kids they have got, the way they need to be spread within the context of the schools resources allocation, and you ask them to take into account not only their own preferences as teachers but also the needs of the school as a whole. So you get the best possible placement of resources or maximum utilization to our students and to achieving the outcomes in a learning sense. (Henry)

The emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest

While there was evidence that an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest was manifest in the discourse of some of the practising school leaders involved in this study, it was relatively less frequent than the evidence for the technical or practical interests. An emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest was more in evidence in the narratives of leadership (particularly from school leaders in Indigenous schools outside urban areas), than in the interview data, where the case studies of Cecil and Helena demonstrated a strong emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. Evidence has been provided in Chapter 5, for the following critical indicators:

- A need to question purpose and outcomes in order to demystify a direction or policy.
- A concern to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people's attainment or cause inequity.
- An examination of how social relationships are distorted and manipulated by power and privilege.

In regards to school administration and school improvement, an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest, it would seem, focuses (at the site-based decision making level) on the social inequalities that are sustained and produced by the school as a social structure and its related ideologies. School leaders with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest are likely, for example, to build shared leadership and educative leadership, such that community members who have a greater understanding of cultural barriers, will be able to contribute to making it a better school. Evidence of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest is described in Chapter 5. A few examples are recalled here to reiterate the language that indicates this cognitive interest:

This mutual valuing of difference in the context of my work is the first step in breaking down the communication barrier between our cultures (and between school and community) and leads to the establishment of a working relationship and involvement of the community in the running of the school. (Hayden)

The organisational structures of our western education system and in particular the schools in which we teach 'obstruct the effective democratisation of Aboriginal education'. In this way we create and maintain barriers to Aboriginal aspirations. We effectively resist their

continuing desire to manage and control their own pace and style of development. What we were doing is exactly that. We were creating a situation that perpetuated the powerlessness of the community. (Cecily)

I think you have to be fairly careful of statements like - this is the way we do things around here - it may be the way we do things now but there may be a better way to do it some other time or in the future. So I think you need to question that. I think you need to question the desirability of outcomes. Is that outcome the one you really want? Maybe it's the one you are getting, and maybe you can measure your program by saying that you are getting that outcome. Maybe it's an irrelevant outcome maybe an outcome whose time is passed maybe an outcome whose desirability is not what it once was. (Steve)

School leaders with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest, are likely to promote critical consciousness in curriculum development and in the selection of content and pedagogy. A critical school leader would empower teachers, and join with them, in a critique of curricula, to expose tradition, habit, custom, and political restraints (as economic rationalism) (Starratt, 1993). Leaders with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest are likely to recognise that knowledge is always bounded by culture and historical circumstances, therefore self-reflection, dialogue and argument are to be considered essential, ongoing elements of the curriculum process of the school. School leaders with an emancipatory cognitive interest are likely to promote critique of curricula that focuses on breaking down the institutional structures and arrangements, which reproduce oppressive ideologies in school organisation, for example; streaming, inclusion policies, voucher systems of schooling, and so on.

School leadership with an emancipatory (critical) interest may be characterised by Educative Leadership (Smyth, 1989, p. 179). Such school leaders are likely to believe that effort to control the quality of teaching, through rigid centrally mandated accountability measures, can create sites of contention for teachers. Instead such school leaders would view curriculum and pedagogy as a dynamic gestalt of student input, teacher input, classroom materials, and inside-as-well-as-outside classroom contexts. This open notion of content calls into question authoritarian views of what is of most worth in the classroom (Sawyer, 2001, p. 17). One example is recalled from Chapter 5 to reiterate this aspect of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest:

In my second year of teaching our school enrolled a profoundly deaf student called John. He was placed in a class that was considered by the senior staff to have an excellent program. The teacher had a very black and white view on every educational issue. Her classroom was highly organised, student's artwork was immaculately displayed, teacher directed and students were seen and not heard. The classroom was very predictable, highly structured; a program that

brought back hospital memories he didn't settle into the class. His parents were not welcome into the class and when John's daily tantrums and nightmares intensified, parental pressure forced senior staff to critically examine the teaching learning situation. Initially I was surprised as my program was quite the opposite of the 'chosen program'. I believed my program was very child centred, offering periods of free activities, hands on learning, children tended to display their own work (not always neatly) warm, friendly, parents welcomed with open arms, teacher modelling learning (community of learners) and a noisy room at times. Within a week John's negative behaviours regressed and he became a valued class member. His parent's frequently assisted in the classroom program as guest speakers, resource makers and small group leaders. John was indeed valued and was able to make meaningful contributions to the class program. John has a right to an equal and equitable education. (Jenny)

In summary, clear evidence has been found in the interview and narrative data of the technical, practical and to a lesser extent, the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests.

Evidence that one cognitive interest may be preferred to another

It was also evident in the data, particularly the interview data, that the technical and practical interests are more frequently encountered than the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. The relative lack of interview data that is consistent with this interest may be a result of the type of questions posed during the interview (although a number of questions in the interview schedule were designed to allow for an emancipatory interest to emerge).

It might also be that there are simply fewer principals with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. It is recalled from Chapter 2 that Palmer and Dunford (1996, p. 8), have stated that the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest would be hard to detect in practising school principals. Their paper argues that it is difficult in organisations for people to rise above the existing organisational and other embedded power relations and attain 'liberating' sets of actions through reflective action. This may be true in Northern Territory public schools where school principals are required under the terms of their employment contracts to be strategic leaders. That is, they are required to set strategic plans, develop and implement financial plans and to quantify their students' educational attainment against defined outcomes. Such performance criteria might tend to act against leaders with an emancipatory (critical) interest.

The evidence is not conclusive, but it is also suggested by the differences between the interview and narrative data that the emancipatory (critical) cognitive

interest is possibly more apparent in the discourse of those school leaders from Indigenous community schools than from principals of schools in urban centres. The interview data only drew upon school principals and superintendents in the city of Darwin, whereas the narratives were collected from school leaders in communities outside the urban setting. In the interview data, it seemed apparent that none of the fifteen school leaders held a dominant emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. From the narrative data, however, of the sixteen school leaders the emancipatory cognitive interest was strongly evident in four of them - Zoe, Hayden, Helena, and Cecily - all of whom are school leaders in Indigenous communities.

Such a finding is only a tentative proposition, as the data is limited. A further comparative study of differences between the cognitive interests of principals in urban and Indigenous communities might, however, be able to offer valuable insight to scholars examining educational delivery in these settings.

A balance of cognitive interests?

From the analysis of interview and narrative data, evidence has emerged that suggests that while some of the participants had a dominant cognitive interest others did not. In their interviews Neil and Mick, for example, indicated a dominant practical cognitive interest, while Maureen and Paul's discourse demonstrated a technical cognitive interest. Others like Jo and Sharon, however, indicated a mixture of different cognitive interests. In the narratives Cecily's discourse indicated a strong critical cognitive interest, while Pam's discourse seemed to indicate that she crossed between different interests.

Dunne (1993) says that in his later writings Habermas realised that technical reason, practical reason, and critique cannot be strictly compartmentalised, rather that they keep 'criss-crossing' each other. The evidence in this study suggests that school leaders can switch between different knowledge interests. That, for example, a school leader might prefer a technical cognitive interest in dealing with one problem, but a practical cognitive interest in dealing with another. This is illustrated by the interviews with Jo and Ray who both could be inferred to switch between the technical and practical interests. Such a finding is not unique to this framework study but is in line with the belief of Bolman and Deal (1991; 1997) that a leader should operate from different frames.

During the two-day workshop program, the concept of ‘criss-crossing’ between cognitive interests caused a misunderstanding for participants. The participants struggled with the notion of ‘balance’ that Habermas’ theory seemed to them to promote between the three forms of knowledge.

Habermas argued that knowledge is a social act that is grounded in human needs and their cognitive responses. Habermas theory proposes three different kinds of knowledge constitutive interests, which, together, create a unified whole. Each knowledge interest spawns a certain ‘way of knowing’. These knowledge interests inform social organisation through “work, language, and power” (Habermas, 1971, p. 313). For the school leader, each leadership situation involves all ways of knowing because each moment in the social act of leading involves work, language and power.

In trying to understand Habermas’ framework the participants to the workshop wanted to be able to say that ‘good’ leadership was a matter of ‘finding a balance’ between work, language and power. This could be seen as a balance between a technical, a practical and an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest.

The concept of ‘balance’, however, does not seem to be appropriate. Rather, as Geelan et al. (1998) argued, it is like having test tubes and measuring tape on one side of a set of scales and beliefs and feelings on the other. Things, which are different in kind, cannot be said to ‘balance’ one another. Geelan et al. (1998) have suggested that a better metaphor than ‘balance’ for thinking about the cognitive interest framework “is as a ‘dialectical tension’ between the three interests, in which each restrains the excesses and ‘questions the answers’ of the others. This seems to offer a richer and more powerful scheme for understanding and transforming educative relationships amongst teachers in schools” (p. 110). A school leader should not seek to ‘balance’ their technical cognitive interest in one situation, by adopting a practical cognitive interest (or emancipatory) in another.

From the analysis of data it seems apparent that in order to adequately describe what cognitive interest a school leader has adopted, whether it is a technical, practical or critical cognitive interest, two factors are important. These are the factors of context and professional insight (or intuition).

Context

A school leader might hold a different cognitive interest in different contexts. The underlying question shifts from; “What is a school leader’s cognitive interest?” to, “What is their cognitive interest in respect of a given context?”

Teaching is a social activity and because of this no single reality exists in schools. Teaching and learning is exercised within multiple realities, in different contexts. Accordingly school leadership may be exercised within different contexts, and this shapes a school leader’s cognitive interest. There was evidence in the discourse collected in this study, that school leaders may have a different cognitive interest in different contexts. This is not contradictory but is in line with the belief, supported by Bolman and Deal (1991; 1997), that a leader should operate from within different frames.

Contexts in this discussion, does not refer to the ‘big picture’ of working in different environments (for example a school principal who might transfer from an urban school to an Indigenous community school and the different contexts thus implied). It refers to the ‘micro’ context of dealing with different sets of human actors during tenure within one school environment.

In the following example, Jo demonstrates a practical cognitive interest in the context of dealing with a teacher who says she or he cannot operate within the school’s rules or policy. For Jo the best response is a matter of negotiation, of interpretation and understanding.

I'd listen and try to work out how honest and sincere they were and if they had a valid point I would talk to the AP or who ever, I would act as a kind of go-between I suppose. I wouldn't see it as my role to overrule it. I would see myself as a negotiator I suppose. I might not negotiate I might say, “look this is a part of what we really do expect”. It would be situation by situation. If it did require negotiation I would listen I would ask some questions and I would say OK leave it with me. I would say “look I have had a bit of a chat with so and so”.
(Jo)

On the other hand, in the same school, but in the context of implementing an innovation, Jo declares a more technical cognitive interest. Here her discourse indicates a concern for control “I would want to have a look at it myself ...” and putting in place a logical sequence of testing and gathering evidence for or against the innovation. She says:

I would be looking for more information, not necessarily all the bits. I would want to have a look at it myself, and then I would, if I thought it had promise or merit or could make things happen more efficiently, I would suggest that a small group of the staff had a look at it and see

what they thought. And if it seemed to have promise we might decide to try it out for a trial period. It wouldn't necessarily have been tried in other places I mean this could be the place where it is trialed (Jo).

Evidence of how a school leader can apparently hold a different cognitive interest in different contexts was apparent in many of interviews and narratives of school leaders who participated in this study. Another example is taken from the interview with Sharon. Sharon's practical cognitive interest is evident in the following response in the context of administrative leadership:

The hero today is the person that provides leadership. They don't necessarily provide the answers, they provide leadership to ways of obtaining answers, by the democratic process, throwing up an issue, having it thought about, how you would solve it, is it worthwhile for our community, should we take this on board. A leader is a person who makes an organisation think about things, consider things and if they want to take them on board he or she will help them steer towards that and try to make things less difficult for them. (Sharon)

Sharon's technical cognitive interest, on the other hand, was evident in comments that she made in the context of instructional leadership. In the following statement Sharon has demonstrated her belief in 'scientific' knowledge, the value of research data and facts in persuading people that her views are correct. She says:

This year I have pushed vertical classes, it's an initiative of this school, and when I'm talking to parents I use the argument 'research says', research informs our ideas and therefore we should use it, if people ask us why we are doing something. You are saying that it is not just what you think, but that there is a strong foundation of beliefs and practices that are concerning your action - or it might steer them off wanting to argue, you have to say that that's fair too and important. (Sharon)

Professional Insight (Intuition)

A second factor that appears to be important in describing a person's cognitive interest is professional insight or intuition. The school leaders in all of the interviews, and many of the narratives, alluded to the importance of intuition in determining what they accepted as valid ways of reflecting on their practice. Professional insight acknowledges that principals have something important to say based on their intuitive sense. Hunt (1996) likens intuition to a teacher's 'gut feeling'. Intuition is a gut reaction or subjectively informed action. It implies that the leader does not consciously seek knowledge, but makes decisions based on his or her immediate response. It is possibly a form of unconscious knowledge. From the data

obtained from these interviews, it seems that intuition plays a large part in a leader's cognitive interest.

At times participants referred to intuition that was clearly practical, based on hermeneutic understanding and interpretation of events. In this regard intuition seems to be a subjective 'human' response based on the leader's personal history and place in time and space. Henry, for example, talks about intuition from the frame of a practical cognitive interest. For Henry intuition is based on knowing and understanding his people. He says:

I have to be aware of the ripples that might occur as they begin and again it's the sense that basically means that I have to sort of, be able to be amongst people, to see what's happening and to perceive or feel what's happening. It comes down to atmospherics I suppose at the end of the day. Call it intuition. (Henry)

At other times participants referred to intuition that seemed to be framed within a technical cognitive interest. In these cases, intuition implied that a knowable, external, value-free reality was presumed to exist, from which they are able to make predictions, determine causality and exert technical control. This 'knowledge' came from their experience and was legitimated by their positional authority. They declared that their intuition enabled them to find the 'right' solutions, in order to predict outcomes and achieve control. Tye (2000) from her American study into how principals handled the pressures of innovation on schools, suggests that school leaders have an intuitive sense for what is important (and what is not), leading them to adopt a coping strategy, a diffusion strategy, or a goal-focused strategy. In a similar way, Kym describes intuition with a technical interest. In the following extract this 'knowing' is about professional insight that is based on achieving control and manipulation. It is not based on an interpretative understanding, but on being able to predict situations. Kym states that:

Basically sometimes you can make the right decision even if you are not across all the information. It is prescience it is not innate or anything like that, prescience is a developed consciousness sometimes unconscious consciousness where sometimes you know a situation or you know a person, and you may not have all the information but you are pretty damn close to knowing exactly what happened. You weren't in the room, you didn't see what happened but you are pretty sure you know. You can fly by the seat of your pants often, and if you don't trust your arm then you shouldn't be in the job, you shouldn't do it. Often enough you haven't got the time to investigate something, you've got to make a judgement or a decision, just like that. Particularly when you are dealing with people but also in other areas. (Kym)

Other examples of professional insight (intuition) can be found throughout the interviews and narratives. Maureen, for example, suggests that her intuition is

something to be trusted when supported by the right research thus indicating a technical cognitive interest. Jo, on the other hand, seems to indicate a practical interest when she says, “Values come into it quite a lot. In some cases you place a kid with a teacher that you think can do the right thing. A bit of intuition, based on what you know.”

In addition to the factors of context and professional insight (or intuition), a number of influences on cognitive interest emerged from the data. These ‘influences’ may have had an impact on the formation of a school leader’s cognitive interest, and were explored through the question “What influences act upon leaders, determining what they will accept as knowledge?”

The influences on a school leader’s cognitive interest

There are many possible influences that affect the development of a school leader’s cognitive interest and it is believed that this research has not exposed all of them. This data can, however, be interpreted to suggest that a leader’s cognitive interest is influenced by:

- Previous leadership experiences.
- Length of their leadership and the need for acceptance.
- Organisational structures and the expectations that are embedded in them of how things should be done.

Leadership is exercised within multiple realities. For example, what is ‘real’ about the leading experience for one principal approaching retirement may be different to what is ‘real’ for a new principal in his or her early development stages. Sarros (1989) says that the influences on the former principal will be different to the influences on the latter. Day and Bakioglu (1996) in their study of disenchantment amongst senior principals, suggest that ‘senior’ principals are very much influenced by the way they construct an understanding of their role and develop an ability to frame problems based on their role, that does not impact on ‘new’ principals.

Take, as an example, the following extract from Paul’s interview. Paul has been a principal for twenty years. A large part of the influence on his cognitive interest derives from this great depth of experience. His comments about the

changes that he sees taking place in schools and education around him suggest that he is uncomfortable with the issues of empowerment and accountability, and that he has a technical cognitive interest. With regard to the principal's role, Paul argues that:

fifteen years ago there was one tenth of what you do now. I started off in 1980 as a principal. Now there's more accountability, devolution, the perception in the community of what teachers do, the expectations, the kids can't read it's the bloody teacher's fault... Yeah I think it's giving them the opportunity. Empower is another big word that when we seem to be running with these days you know, I think for years if you value your staff's contribution if you believe they've got something to contribute if it turns out that, things will work better with a whole staff thing. Well yeah fine and I think most principals do. The days are gone when we could say, "right this is what we are going to do", Bang! (Paul)

Compare Paul's account with that of Sharon. Sharon has only been a principal for six months and a major influence on her leadership at this early stage of her career would seem to be what others think of her, their perceptions of her as a principal. She says:

It's important for me. It's important for my credibility and how teachers perceive me, to get it right more times than I don't. I think they can be quite unfair and I think it can be quite distorted, but who's in charge of other people's perceptions of you? I think they see you getting it right as credible, and getting it wrong questions it. It's about knowledge and experience and the full picture and talking to the right people. (Sharon)

A person new to the principalship (such as Sharon) or a person with a depth of experience (for example Paul) may react differently to a directive from the Department to implement a new teaching methodology. The neophyte principal may operate on the basis of a technical cognitive interest, with the principal seeking solutions (technical knowledge) about ways to carry out the Department's directive most effectively. On the other hand, the more experienced principal may base action, or inaction, on a practical cognitive interest, seeking to interpret the directive and to make sense or meaning of the proposal in the context of their school. An example of this comes from the interview with Mick below. Like Paul, Mick is a principal with extensive experience.

It would appear that the Superintendent has not mediated the revised approach through the principals so straight away there's a leadership failure by the superintendent in not gaining the input of the principals. Secondly to impose something like this on schools without garnering the opinions of the people who have to implement it. And what the superintendent is obviously missing is that no initiative in a school will get past the classroom door if the teachers are not prepared to try it. It is a simple and well known fact. We all know that. So really the superintendent's leadership is failing in a number of ways. (Mick)

Besides experience and length of leadership, other influences can be inferred from the data. One of which is the structure, or structures, that the principal believes are important in their school. Structures are the rules and resources that they consciously or sub-consciously apply (see note on Giddens (1984) on p. 15) in everyday interaction. An example of which are the expectations placed on principals about what they can and cannot do, if they are to be accepted as 'good' leaders by the staff and School Council. In a sense, school leaders have a duality of roles here. As part of the school they are instrumental in establishing the rules and resources as well as being influenced by them. Organisational members (principals and teachers), in these terms, are the organisation because they create and reproduce these rules and resources (Watkins, 1985, p. 71). In other words, the school principal is likely to be a strong influence on the cognitive interest of his or her staff. What the principal accepts, as knowledge, will permeate the thinking and possibly underscores the actions of others. An example of this is again drawn from the interview with Mick:

We had a very good example in this school this year, a very tough decision that I insisted that the staff make. And I felt 6 weeks of strong resistance because the decision was so tough that they wanted me to make it, now I avoided making the decision for a long time, not that I couldn't make it I had my own view point, but because it was so essential that it be a group decision. This was so essential. And people came to me saying please make a decision, when what they were really saying was please take the stress off us. My response all the time was "No we will make the decision including me as part of the group not me as the leader".
(Mick)

In summary, it was apparent from the analysis of data in this study that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests are manifest in the discourse of school leaders. It was also apparent that to describe a school leader's cognitive interest in terms of a single technical, practical or emancipatory cognitive interest is overly simplistic. It can be summarised that some of the practising school leaders who were involved in this study had a dominant cognitive interest. It was, however, also apparent that many of the school leaders cross between different cognitive interests. A full description of a school leader's cognitive interest requires acknowledgment of contexts and professional insight or intuition. Equally a school leader's cognitive interest is influenced by a number of factors, such as length of experience and organisational structure.

What is the potential of Habermas' theory to enhance school leadership practice?

The potential of Habermas' theory to enhance school leadership practice lies in the underlying premise of all framework-reframing models, that a critical competency for school leaders is the ability to make their frameworks explicit. This is the belief that leaders, who are able to widen their repertoire of frameworks and engage in dialogue with others about shared frameworks, will improve their practice (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Carlson, 1996; Fairhurst & Sarr, 1996).

The claim is made in this study that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests have the potential to be used successfully as “frameworks for action” (Morgan, 1986, p.343) in school leadership preparation. The cognitive interests framework is about knowledge and ways of knowing, and can be used in leadership preparation because “Every [school leader] uses a personal frame or image of organisations to gather information, make judgments, and determine how best to get things done” (Bolman & Deal, 1991, p. 11).

The use of frames, and the process of reframing, is important in leadership development programs because as Palmer and Dunford (1996) suggest:

- Reframing seeks to disrupt established ways of thinking, to identify conduct, which is habitual or traditional, and establish the efficacy of such conduct to organisational situations. At the same time it seeks not just to question this conduct but also to identify new or alternative ways of “acting” to habitual or traditional ones.
- Reframing can be applied retrospectively rather than prospectively, where it is used to reflect on past events, not future actions.

In school leadership the process of reframing, and using ‘frameworks for action’, are important factors in informing ‘action-on-reflection’. Action-on-reflection according to Hart’s (1993), consists of three processes: (1) returning to experience; (2) attending to feelings; and (3) re-evaluating the experience. These processes can be directly linked to cognitive interests. In school leader preparation programs this means facilitating ways in which participants can make their interests transparent (with regards to an experience), that enable them to share their interests, and promote a willingness to operate from within different interests in different contexts.

As a theory about what school leaders accept as knowledge, it can be argued that Habermas' theory of cognitive interests has the potential to illuminate all facets of educational leadership. In order to illustrate this potential, three dimensions of leadership are described in this section, with links given to the research evidence. The dimensions are:

1. planning and administration (strategic leadership);
2. deciding what and how to teach (curriculum leadership);
3. personal and interpersonal relationships (leading people).

Applying the framework to illuminating strategic leadership

As noted by Crowther (1997, p. 10), Caldwell (1992) advocated a leadership function that is dominantly strategic as the most appropriate approach for principals in self-managing schools. He described strategic leadership in the following way:

The principal must be able to develop and implement a cyclical process of goal-setting, need identification, priority setting, policy making, planning, budgeting, implementing and evaluating in a manner which provides for the appropriate involvement of staff and community, including parents and students as relevant (Caldwell, 1992, p. 160).

Habermas' theory has the potential to enhance strategic leadership in a number of ways. Two examples are used in this section to illustrate how the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework can be used to inform strategic leadership.

First, the framework might be used to overcome the belief that strategic leadership can only be successful if the leader has a technical cognitive interest. Habermas (1984, p. 20) warns of the "crisis of rationality". This is the crisis that can occur if the sheer overriding power of the scientific paradigm means that no other way of thinking is entertained by 'rational' people. Strategic leadership focuses on planning and administrative processes (need identification, budgeting, staffing projections, etc) in which there is an overpowering concern for what Lyytinen and Klein (1985) described as "technical purposive knowledge, empirical-explanation, scientific rational analytic prediction, and control verification" (p. 224).

Habermas' theory has the potential of enabling school leaders to understand that the technical cognitive interest is not the only possible way to frame strategic

leadership. The framework could be used to demonstrate that it is both feasible, and at times preferable, to operate from the practical or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests in strategic leadership.

Watkins (1988, p. 468) illustrated this with the example of how school leaders deal with the strategic leadership question of how to provide for adequate school staffing. In his article he argues that for many school leaders with a technical cognitive interest, staffing becomes 'rationally' a question of how shall we staff schools within the existing institutional rules and the limits imposed by the prevailing economic climate. Such thinking makes it impossible for school leaders to see that they can question the basic assumptions that underlie the current staffing limits and even question the legitimacy of the need for economic rationalisation, in order to find other ways of ensuring adequate staffing levels. This is illustrated in the following extract from Steven's narrative:

Absenteeism was sometimes the result of illness, family commitments or cultural commitments but usually from alcohol related problems.... I felt that I was wasting my time by constantly checking time books and completing leave forms with indigenous staff. I was frustrated with a system that through its insistence on full time work instead of permanent part time or casual work allowed this frustration to continue within our school.... My negotiations with the human resources section resulted in them allowing us to change all assistant teacher positions to permanent part time positions instead of full time positions. This meant that instead of the three people that were presently doing the jobs, I was able to have five people working three day weeks.... At the individual meetings we looked at the patterns of individuals attendance and decided which was the best work roster for them. Two of the assistant teachers chose three day a week contracts, while the third chose a four day a week contract. This left us with five days to be worked so we advertised and filled a three day and two day contract. All the teacher aides agreed to go onto casual and it was agreed that while it was expected that each would work on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, they could also attend work and be paid for Thursday and Friday. (Steven)

In addition to internal school planning and administrative requirements, strategic school leadership is also about strategically responding to pressures from the wider external environment (Quong et al. 1999; Goldring, 1997). As Dimmock (1999) described, self-management has:

led to greater parental involvement in decision making, new conceptions of teaching and learning, increased accountability for performance and outcomes, and systemic redesign of the school curriculum that depend fundamentally on school leaders for their success. This is because principals are positioned strategically both at the head of school organisations, which are assuming more responsibility, and at the linkage points between their schools, the community and system, with which they are expected to interface (p. 442).

The alignment of internal school priorities with the mandates and pressures imposed upon the school from outside can cause tensions. Sergiovanni (1999)

described the need to balance democratic and professional authority, stressing the need for schools as communities to avoid the negative consequences of legislated learning on the quality of teaching and learning and on the profession of teaching that might ultimately lead to the bureaucratisation of the classroom. As Ben says of his role as a principal:

Recently I have found my role in the school to be more of a bureaucratic exercise. Pressure from supervisors to implement programs such as profiles and performance management in the short time frame allowed, and the difficulties in finding and retaining suitable staff have created this. The move to establish a Departmental Plan and an Operation's South Strategic Plan is clearly an indication of the accountability pressure that we are under. On one hand we are saying you (council and school community) can control your own destiny / direction through local decision making but on the other we are saying as long as it includes what the department say it should. I do not have a major issue with this in that we cannot allow groups to go off in all different directions and must control what educational program is delivered to all. The protracted EBA [Enterprise Bargaining Agreement] debate left a huge time frame where little went on. As soon as it was settled we seem to have huge NTDE dump truck of visions, ideas, initiatives and directions place in our lap. I have no problem with the directions but we already had established priorities within the school for the year and these have had to move aside. (Ben)

In this extract, Ben was describing the tensions that he has to deal with as a strategic leader in balancing school initiatives with the directives of the Department and wider environment issues (such as union action). Kemmis (1995; 1998) discussed issues of strategic leadership in the context of tensions. He claimed that the tension between system and lifeworld is one of the key tensions of late modernity. Kemmis (1995) applied Habermas' concepts of system and lifeworld to education, in order to describe how tensions and conflicts can develop between the two in such a way that curriculum and pedagogic processes are undermined. Habermas' (1987) concept of lifeworld refers to the inter-subjective social action that individuals engage in, in order to interpret their social worlds for themselves and to relate to other individuals. This social integration enables the building of shared understandings, cultures, traditions, norms, values, and personal identities. According to Kemmis (1998), "education is increasingly being functionally integrated into the imperatives of the economy and occupational system and to the political and legal administrative systems, under the influence of the steering media of money and administrative power" (p. 22).

An example of this in the Northern Territory is the Northern Territory Department of Education's use of legislated power, to move all schools to outcomes-based education (Killen, 2000). It can be argued that outcomes-based education requires rational-purposive action in setting learning outcomes, and that it is an

attempt to specify, predict and control the learning process. Outcomes-based education requires leadership informed by a technical cognitive interest, if systemic coherence and articulation via common outcomes, levels, and student profiles, is to be established and if the state is to use student achievement against national standards as a form of quality control.

The following extract from Chris' narrative raises issues about outcomes-based education and the tensions he faces as a strategic leader. Chris says that an example:

is Outcomes Profiling. Prior to going onto contracts [principal employment contracts] outcomes profiling would have been introduced to us at a Regional Council of Principals and there would have been a big sell there would have been colour pictures and overheads to sell us on the idea so we would go back to our schools to implement it...since we went on contracts they simply wheeled in SJ and we were told outright that we would implement this and that and this is the timetable ... bang! So my way of dealing with this is to go back to my staff and talk to them about outcomes profiling and say; "look this is a non-negotiable item. We can fight this until we are blue in the face or we can accept it. Lets make it work and work out together how to make it work best for our kids." Get everyone together on it; you can't fight it. That is the role of the principal and the strength of the leader. (Chris)

Chris' statement can be interpreted to suggest that he is finding a way of coping with a strategic direction that is underpinned by a technical cognitive interest, while still trying to operate in a way that is true to his practical cognitive interest. Such a situation – where a school principal is 'forced' to act on the basis of a cognitive interest that is not how he or she would prefer to function – can create leadership tension. Kemmis argues that systems function when we 'get on with the job', by using 'functional reason' for 'rational-purposive action' (Kemmis, 1998). He says that systems tend to drive leaders to act in instrumental ways to achieve pre-specified outcomes or institutionally defined goals.

Equally, a school principal's actions might create the same tension in their teachers. The implementation of system directions in schools can be taken down to the classroom level. Compare Chris' statement with that of Maureen below. Maureen says:

There is a common understanding that a written program is intrinsic to your operation and what you do. If you find programming difficult - How can I help you do it this time? But the reality is that it WILL be done but we are prepared to give you some support to make it happen this time around. Where do you have the problem? How can we help? Not; "No you don't have to do it." I would have no hesitation in pointing out that it is a prerequisite or a requirement of the position. ... For instance we have a way of reporting here that some staff find difficult. You don't want to do it? There is NO choice. If you really don't want me to help you do it you just got a mental block set that you are not going to do it, then you need to review whether you are in the right place. (Maureen)

Maureen demonstrated a technical interest in her role as principal in enforcing her requirement that teachers hand in written programs and student reports. In this statement it is possible that a teacher whose cognitive interest is underpinned by a practical or emancipatory cognitive interest, may wish to report in different ways to that 'required' by Maureen. The teacher may be required to act within a technical cognitive interest (programming and reporting based on logical empiricism) but this might conflict with his or her own cognitive interests. It is possible that such tensions may escalate into conflict if unattended.

Evidence emerged from this study that supports Kemmis (1998) view, that systems tend to drive leaders to act in instrumental ways – with a technical interest – to achieve pre-specified outcomes or institutionally defined goals.

There is also evidence that emerged from the study that some school leaders would prefer not to operate from within a technical interest. Rather, when faced with system-imposed change, that they would operate from a practical or emancipatory cognitive interest. It must be reiterated that these findings are based on hypothetical accounts and on discourse and are not based on observation of behaviour in real situations. Nevertheless, as Henry says about a system imposed change on his school:

This is nonsense but it happens all the time. Look what we have with curriculum profiles. Core cards back ten years ago are a classic example. We were all directed to fill in core cards and keep them on all students. I told the curriculum committee at the time that they should do as they thought fit, which I knew and they knew meant that core cards were put into teachers' drawers and forgotten. Not once did the Superintendent ever ask to see them. Look people are not going to do things just because they are told to; it's just not that simple. And I will support my staff to the hilt every time. (Henry)

The following extract from Jo provides further evidence for this tension. Jo hints that she would support 'passive resistance' to imposed system change.

I would be really cross. I would be siding with the staff to a certain extent and would want to talk to the superintendent. However, as we all know in the end if there is an instruction that comes down you don't have a lot of choice. Mind you principals and schools have shown the power of passive resistance. (Jo)

Steve is also indirect. He says in the following extract that even if he, as principal, has to support the system-imposed directive, that it will make no difference unless teachers are fully supportive:

I think that in all fairness that it is the Superintendent's job to be able to see that there is something that will work across the system and try to implement it. But I think that each school has its own client group needs and different values that would make it very difficult for the one solution to work in all schools. ... It would appear that the Superintendent has not mediated the revised approach through the principals so straight away there's a leadership failure by the superintendent in not gaining the input of the principals. Secondly to impose something like this on schools without garnering the opinions of the people who have to implement it. And what the superintendent is obviously missing is that no initiative in a school will get past the classroom door if the teachers are not prepared to try it. It is a simple and well-known fact. We all know that. (Steve)

Sharon says that implementing system strategic outcomes within the school context is a matter of negotiation, and of clear and open communication with staff. She argued in this extract, that such communicative action is best achieved through committee structures:

it was damned from the beginning for the lack of negotiation, and – which doesn't help your school – so you would have to open negotiations first within your school to how you are going to deal with that, and at the same time with the Super. I would first do it on a one-to-one. "My school sees it like this, I think it is reasonable, can you see that point of view". If it were a direction you would have to ride with it, but open negotiations if possible. First of all you would have to analyse why your staff are so angry. I mean the staff can be angry just as we have discussed simply because of the way it has been done. If it was the intrinsic beliefs and values of the system as a whole, you would as the leader, investigate the system, you might use a committee and through that committee report back. (Sharon)

These extracts from statements made by school practitioners, provide evidence that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework can be used to illuminate how strategic leaders deal with the tensions that arise in balancing system driven requirements with local school needs. These are the tensions that arise when the functioning of the system starts to over-ride the logic of what makes sense to individuals in their local contexts. Habermas' theory would have it that the functioning of system is realised through lifeworld settings in which people must maintain structures of culture, society and personality (Kemmis, 1995, p. 14), and not through instrumental approaches or technical cognitive interests.

The two examples provided here illustrate how the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework has the potential to enhance school leadership preparation through an examination of strategic leadership. Further illustration of the framework's potential can be described from the perspective of curriculum leadership.

Applying the framework to curriculum leadership

It has been argued by many that the core purpose of school leadership is the creation of an environment that is conducive to high levels of student learning and achievement (e.g. The National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2001). Implicit in this purpose is a set of beliefs about what constitutes effective curriculum. Curriculum leadership in schools is focussed on making these beliefs explicit in the school environment. This incorporates curriculum selection and planning, curriculum policy development and the delivery of learning and teaching programs that enable students to develop as fully functioning and responsible future citizens. Most importantly the curriculum dimension of leadership has to do with knowledge claims as made explicit through choices of curriculum and its related pedagogy.

It is recalled that Habermas' theory argues that knowledge is grounded in human interests, in deep-seated needs. Scientific interests in particular seek to master nature through labour and technical control, but out of a human need to communicate has arisen a second type of inquiry, that of the historical and hermeneutic disciplines such as history, social anthropology, cultural and literary studies. A third type of interest is emancipatory. It underpins inquiries with a critical orientation, such as philosophy, psychoanalysis, social theory and its aim is to idealise human freedom and responsibility.

One of the most immediate implications of the framework for enhancing curriculum leadership is that school leaders have to become aware that 'logic' (as in logical positivism) is not the only way to think intelligently or solve problems. In this, Habermas' view is not inconsistent with Gardner's (1983) view of multiple intelligences, a construct that has gained wide acceptance amongst many teachers (although Habermas is more concerned with the social and ethical dimensions of justice and ethics than with cognitive psychology).

The technical cognitive interest develops knowledge to control nature. It generates instrumental knowledge usually in the form of causal explanation, e.g. the empirical-analytical sciences. Within this paradigm, curriculum knowledge is often viewed as a body of knowledge 'out there' to be reproduced in the classroom. This means that the curriculum is understood as a product, as teaching inputs or as learning outcomes. The curriculum is often understood as a plan or a document that serves to prescribe educational practice. Within this interest, the purpose of education is viewed instrumentally as the equipping of learners with the knowledge and skills

required for the workplace and the education system is judged in terms of its efficiency and effectiveness in doing so.

Goodson (1994) has criticised this understanding of ‘curriculum as prescription’, because it fosters a division of labour between curriculum designers and curriculum implementers. That is, it allows control of the curriculum to be placed in the hands of central governments or educational bureaucracies, which denies teacher and pupil agency in the daily educational process. In the following extract, Chris argues that school-based educators must control curriculum matters. He says that he would not be happy if a school board (comprising in some instances non-educators) were involved in curriculum design – at least in the design of curriculum that he was required to implement. Chris’ technical cognitive interest is focused on the loss of control that he would experience in such a situation.

I wouldn’t fit in with that at all. You might have accountants and architects making decisions for you. I am happy for senior educators to direct me as far as education decisions go, but I would not be happy for non-educators to direct me. I am happy to work with a school council and for them to give me advice on community needs and expectations and in things like developing school policy and curriculum implementation ... but in an advisory capacity not a decision-making one. There may be valid educational reasons for not accepting the council’s advice on matters. An example is the swimming program. The council expected us to provide swimming for all children in the primary school from preschool to Grade 7. We negotiated with the council that because of the over crowded curriculum we should concentrate on teaching children to Level 2 *AusSwim* only. Over and above this was the parent’s responsibility. (Chris)

The following extract from Jo illustrates the division of labour in curriculum development. Jo is referring to the request of the Department that she implements Multi-age Classes into her school. The ‘right information’ referred to in her comment is the knowledge held by those curriculum developers within the agency who have developed – and committed the Department to – the Multi-age Class program.

The ‘right information’ is subject to interpretation. It is probably what you consider to be, important to, salient to, the case. Facts, details, more subjective understandings ... all of that I suppose. For example, making a decision about whether to introduce multi-age you need to have a lot of information about multi-age classes how they operate you need to know your staff, you need to know your parent body what they will think about it. I guess you need the right information, but it isn’t necessary to have all. You can never know everything. It wouldn’t just be me needing information certainly people who are involved in what ever, would also need to be well informed. (Jo)

The practical, hermeneutic paradigm of curriculum, on the other hand, develops knowledge to understand human social action. Knowledge is used to build mutual understanding and wise action within a framework of values. Education in

this paradigm is not vocationally directed, but rather considered to be intrinsically worthwhile for the individuals involved. The curriculum is understood as practice, which is based on the teacher-learner interaction - the teacher's professional judgment and the learner's understanding. If there are learning outcomes, these serve only as a guide to be re-interpreted contextually by both teachers and learners. It is the process of the curriculum that is the focus, i.e. what actions will provide opportunities for learning. Educational practice is thus understood as individual intentional action, which is socially shaped by values, discourses, cultures and tradition. In the following extract, Jo talks of the work of teachers as heroic. For Jo educational practice is clearly individual intentional action and is congruent with a practical cognitive interest. Jo says that teaching:

requires a lot of knowledge and skills but really it comes down to personal qualities and I reckon the heroic aspects come out of the personal qualities that make them just try that little bit harder with 30 kids. To relate well, to understand them, to work at their level, perhaps with unusual children, unusual parents, unusual people. (Jo)

Henry, in the following extract, says that as principal he steps outside the curriculum development/implementation process. In his school, curriculum matters by-pass him and are given to his eight curriculum committees. While he likes to be informed, he believes that curriculum must be dealt with at the teachers' level.

Well I need to know what's going on within the context of the Department. I need to know where we're going, and anything central or focusing on directions within the department's domain is channelled down through me and I'll feed it out. But there's lots of things that relate to curriculum matters that belong to the curriculum committee and other information that relates to sub committees that are set up in the frame of our school that really can hit the school and skive off and goes straight into the committees concerned and they deal with those issues and feed back, and reporting wise and through staff meetings. And that's the way it goes. We've got eight curriculum area committees. (Henry)

The critical cognitive interest paradigm extends the hermeneutic paradigm to include critical reflection on the social and historical shaping of our ideas, actions and institutions (ideology critique) with a view to emancipating ourselves from past irrationality and injustice. In this paradigm, education is understood to transform not only the individual (as in the hermeneutic) but also to result in social action for the improvement or transformation of society. The curriculum is understood as praxis, an integration of critical reflection and social action, while curriculum knowledge is socially constructed. Educational practice is viewed dialectically as socially and discursively constituted by both human agency and social structure. In the following

extract, Chris provides an example of how educational practice can be shaped by leaders with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest:

We have to try to especially when we have such a multicultural society. There are some values beliefs that I won't put to one side. We had an incident which I felt was about child abuse with inappropriate homosexual behaviour in a Thursday Island family and the report came back that it was culturally appropriate but it wasn't. I could not accept an adult taking advantage of a child. But in most cases I am quite happy to support differing beliefs and not let my values intervene. For example, the Jehovah Witness people at X School they felt they wanted to keep their kids out of school for home schooling. We talked about it and made up a system where the mum did home school but the kids came in for Indonesian, library, swimming carnival and other things they did not have at home. (Chris)

Neil provides another example of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest in his description of his own self-awareness of his personal barriers, which may be impacting on his curriculum leadership:

I came from an English Lit background, actually a Special Ed background, and I have actually tried to overcome that if you like, by being fair to all kinds while there is still perceptions in the Territory that I am still literacy based, and I am still involved in the Literacy Educators Association, I've actually become an advocate for a whole range of other things just to move myself away. The other thing, if I took the example of Environmental Education that I don't have a lot of understanding of, but I value as being important, social justice area. That's a really difficult one to maintain because senior members of our Dept don't share the same level of valuing of it. So I have taken on board the role of pushing it or supporting other people who lobby for it. So obviously values impact. You just have to be careful that they don't overtake to the exclusion of something else that is equally as valuable to teachers. (Neil).

In the following extract, Cecily describes a third example of how educational practice can be shaped by an emancipatory cognitive interest. In this extract Cecily describes her critical self-reflection and self-criticism:

Although I worked in a bilingual program I did little at first to consider the wishes and beliefs of Aboriginal parents. 'This is how school is and they will have to accept it' I thought. In developing teaching programs for the Aboriginal teachers I considered the differences in our languages, but still expected the Aboriginal teachers to follow Western pedagogy, and in spite of the production of wonderful Theme Packages the students continued to stay away from school. (Cecily)

The technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework has the potential to enhance curriculum leadership, by enabling school leaders to reflect on the different facets of curriculum and by facilitating dialogue with staff over what constitutes an appropriate curriculum. Knowledge of the framework has the potential of allowing school principals and other school leaders responsible for curriculum concerns (including School Councils in some systems), to

realise that the curriculum has been seen traditionally as no more than a technical phenomenon (in a positivistic sense). In this view the curriculum is a product, a rationally determined package of learning to be reproduced in the classroom. The framework argues instead that curriculum leadership has wider social ramifications. Therefore, the information that is produced by curriculum experts cannot be viewed as value-free or neutral.

As previously discussed, however, within many educational systems – such as the Northern Territory public school system – an outcomes-based education has been mandated. Within this construct curriculum (as learning outcomes), and assessment and measurement standards (such as national profiles) are determined outside the school. It can therefore be suggested that within the educational dimension there is pressure on public school leaders to operate from within a technical cognitive interest, and that this in turn can create tensions.

The third way in which the potential of Habermas' theory to enhance school leadership can be demonstrated, is in terms of how it can be used to inform school leaders about working with people. How it can be used in their personal and interpersonal relations.

Applying the framework to personal and interpersonal relationships

As described by Fink (2001), in an information society people carry their intellectual capital between their ears. In past times the construct of human capital might have meant sacrificing one's humanity to become part of a larger machine-like organisation. Humans were often seen as but another replaceable part of the larger mechanism. Scientific management methods based on predicability and control were applied to get people to conform to the dictates of management and to perform routine and repetitive jobs. In an information-based society, however, instrumental images of people are not only dehumanising and ethically reprehensible (Starratt 1991, 1993), but also unproductive and wasteful. Keogh and Tobin (2001, p. 92) have noted that the compulsion to adopt generic leadership solutions underscored the failure of critical self-reflection and inadequate attention to interpretive understanding of organisational circumstances. Leaders in labour-intensive places like schools need to relate to colleagues on a personal and cognitive level and thus set in place the conditions that will nourish and nurture professional learning. School leaders need to

shift from system-centred leadership to people-centred leadership. As an extract from Henry, one of the principals interviewed, describes:

Management is about doing things right. Leadership is about doing the right thing and I like to do the right thing by my people. Now to me, the people within our organisation are the most important. I teach, I teach class and I'll teach class every week and I always will. I don't just say it, I do it and I know my people and leadership is being there with them. Knowing what they are doing and encouraging them, making them feel good about the organisation, not owning them. But being with them and being a part of them and understanding them even if they don't understand your management contexts. As a leader you need to understand their educational domain and what there're required to do. And I mean that from the viewpoint of teachers and I mean it from the viewpoint of students.
(Henry)

People-centred leadership is concerned with gaining the respect and cooperation of diverse individuals and groups in the community, and building effective and purposeful relations between them. In this dimension, leadership is focused on the development of self and others in an environment where individuals are valued and cared for. Building constructive and purposeful relationships between people is essential for effective schooling. As Kym says:

One of the most important things is interpersonal relationship in which one builds up as far as one can, a relationship of trust and confidence and expectations. That is, that you work to do the best for an individual, and *ipso facto* the whole institution. To a range of other factors, you develop confidence with that person and you are able to operate honestly and frankly and refreshingly with them. You have to apply; you have to apply such things as listening, basic human courtesy and relationships, friendliness, openness. Honesty is the key word. If you say something you must mean it, if you say you are going to do something you must do it.
(Kym)

It is with respect to guiding school leaders to be better people-centred leaders, that the potential of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework can be realised.

The cognitive interests framework can be used as the basis for analysing, and possibly in reframing, a school leader's approach to working with people. It could be argued during a leadership preparation program, that a technical cognitive interest, which manifests as scientific management methodologies, might be inappropriate in professional learning organisations (such as schools) in an information age.

If school members – administrators, teachers and learners – are to truly communicate, to create collaboratively new meanings, ideas and understandings, then relationships of trust and mutual respect must be built. This involves the avoidance of such negative behaviours as coercion, sarcasm and destructive criticism, and is

most fully embodied where all members of a teaching/learning group are committed to the development of caring educative relationships. It may well be that critical voices have their greatest impact when these conditions flourish. Neil provides the following example:

Reflection groups. We set them up about three years ago, just initially with volunteer groups for people to ... An opportunity for people to get together in small groups to reflect on their work, in X people are out and about all the time they don't often get the time to sit down and work together in a reflective sense. To reflect on what they've done and what they could do ... as a support group. Two years ago we did a complete rethink, but all people decided they wanted to be involved, we now have about six Reflection Groups and everyone is in, teachers, admin staff, manager, so on. (Neil)

The importance of leaders building relationships of trust and mutual respect to provide for the conditions that allow critical voices to emerge, is also reiterated in this comment from Mick:

I would be grateful that a staff member could raise such a matter in such an honest and open collegial way. My approach would be let's explore the issue together. Here is the policy, here's why we have it, here's what I believe, now can you tell me what your concerns are and lets see if we can have an intermeshing of those concerns. If there's a real problem and it is causing you certain concerns lets see if we can come up with alternatives I am quite happy to go back to our staff and say. "Hey guys we are having a problem with this, is it interfering with what you are trying to do? Lets come up with a better approach let's work with this collegially". My experience is that people will respond to that situation very, very well. They believe they are being listened to, they believe they are being treated as a professional; they believe there concerns are carried for. (Mick)

The proposition is made that a practical cognitive interest is in keeping with the emphasis in many Australian schools on collaborative management practices. Instrumental actions, reflecting strong technical cognitive interests, in control and manipulation of the environment (including staff) are not conducive to achieving effective school outcomes in an information age.

In the next section, examples are provided of other ways in which the technical, practical and critical cognitive interests framework can be applied in school leadership preparation programs.

Five examples of how the framework can be used in 'reflection-in-action' during leadership preparation

In the previous section three dimensions of school leadership were examined in detail (cross linked to the research evidence), to illustrate the potential of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) framework to understanding school leadership.

In this section five brief examples are provided in order to further illustrate the potential of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) framework to enhance school leadership preparation. These examples are not dimensions of leadership (such as curriculum leadership described in the previous section), but provide brief descriptions of how the cognitive interests could be used to inform “reflection-in-action” (Schön, 1983) during leadership preparation programs. By reflection-in-action, Schön (1983) claims that individuals and communities acquire knowledge, skills and concepts that empower them to remake, and if necessary reorder, the world in which they live. It takes the form of "...on-the-spot surfacing, criticising, restructuring and testing of intuitive understandings of experienced phenomena" (Schön, 1983, p. 42).

The five examples are based on propositions about how the framework would apply to a school leader's:

1. view of schools as organisations;
2. understanding of strategic planning;
3. approach to problem solving;
4. role in assessment;
5. involvement in professional development.

The framework and a leader's view of schools as organisations.

The technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests have the potential to enable school leaders to reframe their view of schools as organisations. During leadership preparation programs this would enable a school leader to reconstruct what a school is, and their role in the school as an organisation. This has broad implications for enhancing their leadership practice.

<p>Technical The technical leader views organisations as systems. School leaders favoring this perspective favor regulation (control of their environment), and approach knowledge from an objectivist perspective. This perspective tends to assume "that the social world is composed of relatively concrete empirical artifacts and relationships which can be identified, studied, and measured through approaches derived from the natural sciences" (Burrell & Morgan, 1982, p. 26). Technical leaders recognise the legitimacy of the organisation as currently existing and view remedies to perceived social injustices within the organisation as organisational adjustments that will leave the organisation systems intact.</p>	<p>Practical The practical leader views schools as socially constructed and existing in the perceptions of people. Interpretivist approaches to organisations focus on social interactions and their meaning as perceived by the individual actors, as opposed to interpretation on the basis of objective reality. Interpretivists share with structural functionalists the concern that there be social order in the organisation. Structural functionalists voice their concern from an organisational viewpoint, and interpretivists voice the same concern from the viewpoint of the individual and how the individual experiences the organisation. Terms such as interpretations of reality, reflection on events, and collaboration signal the interpretivist's perspective.</p>	<p>Emancipatory The emancipatory (critical) leader views schools from the historical, political, economic and social context. Emancipatory leaders examine the nature of the relationship between power and leadership. They look for opportunities for people in the organisation to develop their voice and be heard. They focus on moral practices concerned with the preservation of freedom, equality, and the principles of a democratic society. The emancipatory (critical) leader's perspective of organisations plays itself out in administration through attention to social justice issues in the school.</p>
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The framework and strategic planning

Traditionally strategic planning has been dominated by a technical cognitive interest in empirical analytic processes, and/or top-down visionary leadership. The cognitive interests framework enables school leaders to come to understand that other interests (practical or emancipatory) can drive their strategic thinking.

Technical	Practical	Emancipatory
<p>A strategic plan is a management instrument that enables the organisation to achieve its purpose. The manager of the work place needs to exercise leadership by writing down his or her personal vision about where he or she sees the organisation as heading. This plan would provide information that would allow the leader to maximise the use of their staff to ensure that the organisation was able to achieve its goals effectively and efficiently</p>	<p>A strategic plan is not a management instrument but a process that enables understanding of the organisation, the way the people in the organisation work, and what they value. It is based on how the staff of the school interpret the purpose of the organisation, what it exists to achieve and how best to achieve it. To that end the plan would involve all staff in a process that would enable them to understand and interpret the values, meaning and purposes of the group as an organisation. To be successful, strategic planning requires the embedding of shared concepts and mutual understandings by all staff.</p>	<p>The emancipatory (critical) leader should recognise that a strategic plan can be a management instrument that disempower and dominates staff. Yet a strategic plan should remove barriers and limits to what people can do, it should not impose them. A strategic plan should be a <i>process</i> of self reflection and dialogue. It is an opportunity to question where the organisation is going and whose purpose it is serving. A leader would begin by seeking to answer such questions as: Why was the school established?</p>

The framework and problem-solving

Cognitive interests are revealed in the way that school leaders approach problem solving. In school leadership preparation programs, three approaches can be identified based on different understandings of what a school leader sees as knowledge and how knowledge can be gained.

Technical	Practical	Emancipatory (critical)
<p>In this domain leaders learn about cause and effect, and solve problems by commonplace logic. Measurement, evidence and empirical analytic approaches are favoured. In problem solving. School leaders seek help in acquiring skills and information to deal with practical (day-to-day) matters and to use material structures and systems (including systems thinking) to resist or bring about change.</p> <p>In technical leadership, the concern is with the efficiency and effectiveness of the means used to attain ends which themselves can remain unchallenged.</p>	<p>A practical interest focuses on what people are and how they relate, on symbolic interaction and the social construction of meaning. In this domain leaders solve problems through discourse, through reflection and insight, and by seeking mutual interpretation (perhaps through forms of consensus). School leaders understand that the way people construct institutions, and how they communicate and give meaning to their social lives, is important in problem solving.</p>	<p>An emancipatory (critical) interest incorporates moral and ethical criteria into the discourse about practical action. Here the major concern is with whether educational goals, activities and experiences lead toward forms of life that are characterised by justice, equity, caring and compassion. In this domain school leaders address problems by adopting a form of critical self-reflection which may transform ways of thinking, feeling and acting. Critical problem solving is a political act. It helps separate out ‘truth’ from ‘ideology’, and enables understanding of how social, cultural and political contexts have shaped thinking.</p>

The framework and assessment

In instructional leadership, the school leader has a role to play in framing assessment policy and implementation. Traditionally, assessment has been regarded as an instrumental (technical) activity underscored by a technical cognitive interest. The cognitive interests framework, however, has the potential of expanding this limited view of assessment, and enhancing school leadership practice.

Technical	Practical	Emancipatory
For school leaders with a technical cognitive interest, assessment is seen as an instrumental process that must involve empirical analytical approaches. Assessment is used in an attempt to specify, predict and control the learning process (teaching is controlled by the outcome of assessment). For these leaders a technical interest in leadership is essential if systemic coherence and articulation via common outcomes, levels, and student profiles, is to be established. Strict adherence to scientific rationality is necessary if the state is to be able compare achievement against national standards.	For school leaders with a practical interest, assessment is not perceived as an instrumental activity of passing or failing students (against statistical benchmarks), but a process for informing understanding. There is a concern for authentic assessment and contextualised assessment. There is not a concern for empirically tested assessment validity. Within the interpretative, hermeneutic paradigm learning and assessment is understood to be situated and context-dependent (Luckett & Webbstock, 2000).	Critical leaders would resist the traditional view that assessment is no more than a technical phenomenon (in a positivistic sense). It is argued instead that assessment has wider social ramifications. It also is argued that the information that is produced by assessment cannot be viewed as value-free or neutral. Leaders with an emancipatory interest would examine assessment practices to reveal where the assessments are used to disempower and disenfranchise minority groups in society.

The framework and professional development

Beliefs about knowledge are revealed in the way that professional development is organised. In professional development three different educational paradigms can be identified, based on different understandings about training and development.

Technical	Practical	Emancipatory
For school leaders with a technical cognitive interest, PD is essential in ensuring that the organisation is kept up to date with the latest research and 'Best Practices' in the field. Effective PD provides the 'solutions' based on clear research evidence that can be instrumental in achieving the strategic plan of the organisation. The outcomes of PD can be measured and accounted for as an investment or cost. There is a system approach that sees PD as an 'input' that is important to achieving an effective 'outcome'.	For school leaders with a practical cognitive interest PD is not about 'solutions' but about building knowledge and understanding. PD allows staff to make informed choices, not to be 'sold' on a new instrument, but to weigh up alternatives about how they interpret their own situation and in regard to what they value. PD may not involve attending in-services or lectures, but may also be based on 'student-free' days where staff are able to come together collaboratively to engage in action learning to improve on their performance and purposes	For school leaders with an emancipatory cognitive interest PD allows teachers to reflect on and critique their practice and that of the school. PD must free staff from restricting practices and domination. Self-reflection, dialogue and argument are to be considered essential ongoing elements of professional development. Increasing knowledge and skills through PD should be emancipatory, it should enable teachers to question their current practices and to question the hegemonic forces that seek to control them.

In conclusion, a school leader's thinking and practice is constructed, constituted, contested and conducted in a field of competing discourses of human relationships, power relations, cultural, historical, political, social, and ideological terrain (Allen, 2000). Given the range of these influences on school leadership, it would be overly ambitious to claim that the cognitive interests' framework has applicability to illuminating all aspects of school leadership development. It is proposed, however, that using the cognitive interests framework in reflection-on-action, when added to the existing body of knowledge currently employed in leadership preparation, has the potential to greatly enhance school leadership preparation programs.

Implications for school leadership preparation programs

The propositions made in this section about a methodology of school leadership preparation are based in part on the results of the trial two-day workshop program and on extrapolations from the analysis of interview and narrative data. Mostly, however, they represent my critical reflections on the possibilities and implications inherent in the cognitive interests framework for leadership preparation. These reflections have been formulated over the six years of this research and an extensive literature review.

The purpose of school leadership preparation

A school leadership preparation program based on the cognitive interests framework might serve either a technical, practical, or possibly emancipatory purpose.

An example of a program that serves a technical purpose was the *Educational Leadership for Classroom Teachers* workshop. This was designed to teach school leaders about the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest framework, and how to use knowledge of this framework to influence and control the situations they encounter in schools. This workshop had a strongly instrumental

purpose and was developed from within a technical cognitive interest. It was designed as a training program to teach school leaders how to apply the interests to manipulate or predict the behaviour of their staff.

A school leadership program might also be developed for a practical purpose. Prestine (1993) makes a strong case for the reconceptualisation of administrative training programs to use a phenomenological or interpretivist approach as a guiding paradigm for educational administration and education in general. Such an interpretive approach to leadership would include the use of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests frame, to help orient school leaders to leading, so that all perspectives, or frames, are voiced clearly and are heard. Greater emphasis would be placed on using the cognitive interests framework to develop shared understandings, or intersubjectively produced understandings, of organisational situations. This could involve, for example, an action learning program, where groups of school leaders get together to arrive at collective understandings of a problematic school situation and for ways of dealing with it. In these programs for leadership development, the emphasis on meaning, interpretation and the importance of collective language places the knowledge produced through this process on what Habermas (1971) characterises as a historical-hermeneutic level.

As well as a technical and practical purpose, a school leadership preparation program might attempt to achieve an emancipatory purpose. Such a program might, for instance, enable a standard of self-reflection that is emancipatory. It could be designed to free “consciousness from its dependence on hypostatized powers” (Habermas, 1971, p. 313). Advocates of reframing envisage the possible attainment of emancipatory knowledge. For example, Bolman and Deal (1991) argue that the knowledge produced through reframing can provide leaders with “a liberating sense of choice and power” (Bolman & Deal, 1991, p. 17). Morgan (1993) also maintains “humans have the potential to make and transform themselves and their world through individual and collective enactments that can ‘realise’ new images, ideas, and world views” (Morgan, 1993, p. 274). For both writers, the end point of reframing can therefore potentially include emancipation from current constraints and power relations.

The format of a school leadership preparation program

The *Educational Leadership for Classroom Teachers* workshop was a two-day intensive inservice. This model of delivery was based on the view of the time, that short term intensive training was the most effective format for working with school practitioners (a view underscored by pragmatic factors such as cost and time away from school). It is the proposition of this study, that school leadership preparation programs that focus on cognitive interests are most likely to be more effective, if conducted over longer periods and in different formats. For example, Prestine (1993) focuses on the usefulness of the cognitive apprenticeship model that is based on programs that involve modelling, coaching, and scaffolding. To suggest that these methods can be achieved in a two-day workshop is problematic. A key to the process of developing cognitive interest – like cognitive apprenticeship – is articulation and reflection, through which the learner gains conscious access to and control of his or her own knowledge structures and cognitive interests. Such articulation and reflection can only be begun in a two-day workshop but needs to be achieved over time.

An ongoing learning program, which might involve a series of professional development sessions, mentoring and collaborative learning teams, offers the best possibility for school leadership preparation based on the cognitive interests framework. School sited 'action learning' or 'action research' programs (Kemmis 2000) are also proposed as ways in which the cognitive interests framework can be incorporated into school leadership preparation.

A second proposition about the format of a school leadership preparation program is that it should be structured around a problem-based learning approach. In the two-day workshop, there was a focus on presenting 'problems' that the participants addressed from the perspective of the three cognitive interests (for example, case studies of conflict). This does not constitute a problem-based learning methodology *per se* (as described for example by Hallinger et al. 1993), but it was successful and indicated that a problem-based approach would most likely be the best methodology for applying the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest frame to leadership preparation. The program would involve problem-based stimulus materials, professional coaches, theoretical and empirical resources, action plans, and a panel of school leaders to provide feedback to the learners. It would also involve the use of case studies as a springboard for discussion, for case study “encourages students to articulate their own practice-based knowledge

and problem-solving efforts to generate a dialogue between theory and practice” (Hallinger et al.1993, p. 203).

The limitations of Habermas’ theory

It would be inappropriate to end a discussion of the potential of applying technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests to school leadership preparation, without consideration of the possible limitations of Habermas’ theory of knowledge-constitutive interests.

Habermas’ three knowledge-constitutive interests theory has attracted its share of criticism most of which centre on his philosophical argument (Keat, 1981; Lyotard, 1986; McCarthy, 1978; White, 1988; Willmott, 2002). Also, as noted in Chapter 2, Habermas in his later writings starting with *Legitimation Crisis* (1988), moved away from his early theoretical emphasis and the knowledge-constitutive interests (Roderick, 1986). Despite these criticisms, and the shift in Habermas’ own thinking, there has been a wide acceptance of Habermas’ theory of three knowledge-constitutive interests. It has been used to ground many studies in various fields of endeavour. Many scholars and researchers have used his theory as the basis of their work.

Beyond logical-positivism in science

A criticism that is, however, possibly a limiting factor in the application of Habermas’ theory in a post-industrial age, is his possible misrepresentation of scientific practice (Hesse, 1982). The objection is, as Willmott (2002) has stated, that in our post-industrial society, “Not all empirical-analytical scientists are unreflective empiricists in the way that his representation of their work may suggest” (p. 27). The existence of post-empiricist philosophies of science (especially in the social sciences) is a case in point. If in Habermas’ theory, a technical cognitive interest is meant to portray only those persons who adhere strictly to logical positivism, then outside of theory it might not exist. Trochim (2000) argued that science has moved from a period when it was dominated by logical positivism “that science has moved on in its thinking into an era of post-positivism where many of those stereotypes of the

scientist no longer hold up” (p. 6). He argued that scientist are more likely to be considered as post-positivists and:

Most post-positivists are constructivists who believe that we each construct our view of the world based on our perceptions of it. Because perception and observation is fallible, our constructions must be imperfect. So what is meant by objectivity in a post-positivist world? Positivists believed that objectivity was a characteristic that resided in the individual scientist. Scientists are responsible for putting aside their biases and beliefs and seeing the world as it ‘really’ is. Post-positivists reject the idea that any individual can see the world perfectly as it really is. We are all biased and all of our observations are affected (theory-laden) (p. 42).

The results of this study offer some support to this position. The school leaders in this study, whose discourse indicated a technical cognitive interest, did not seem to be governed by logical positivism. They were school leaders whose discourse indicated a concern for control and prediction and decisions based on the gathering of facts, information, and research, but not on strictly objective scientific method. Equally, they were school practitioners who held strong opinions about what their worlds are and should be, but they also seemed to be reflective practitioners who recognised that their views are value laden. This is illustrated in the following extract from the interview with Maureen:

I am told, and I don’t necessarily want to believe, but I am told that I can be quite forceful and therefore I try to back off. Put up an idea and try to back off long enough to allow people to think about it. I am very much the sort of person, who likes to win the war, so I am happy to lose the odd skirmish or two. But if I put up an idea I have probably already made a decision as to whether I am happy to lose that or not happy to lose it. (Maureen)

The possible limitation therefore, is that Habermas’ theory is perhaps based on a set of beliefs about scientific rationality that has changed over time. Lakomski and Evers (1995, p. 16) argued that the emergence of post-positivist science reduces the importance of Habermas’ thinking in education today. They held that the impact of the ‘crisis of rationality’ is waning. In his thinking Habermas directly related science with positivism, and more importantly, science with the logical empiricism that existed up to the 1960s. Lakomski and Evers (1995, p. 16) argued that educational leaders are able to apply practical and critical rationality to their work and abandon the constraints of scientific thinking.

A criticism of framework models

Another possible limitation that should be considered in applying Habermas theory to school leadership, relates to a criticism that is levelled at all framework and reframing theories. As recalled from Chapter 2, Fay (1987, p. 24) criticised reframing theory for three reasons: First, there is the ideal that social behaviour is caused by the ideas held by social actors. Second, that people are able to change conditions with which they are not satisfied by changing their ideas as to who they are and what they are doing. Third, that people are willing to listen to rational analyses of their actions and the context in which they act, and to act on these analyses.

Fay (1987) has warned us that awareness and appreciation of the existence of the three cognitive interests (or any other framework) may not have any affect on a school leader's practice. For example, knowing about the practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest may not change the leadership of a school leader who holds a technical cognitive interest.

There are reasons why a school leader, regardless of his or her cognitive interest (and it may be practical or emancipator), might be pressured to operate from within a technical cognitive interests frame. Arising from discussions held during the two-day workshop came affirmation that school leaders (in self-managing schools) are under pressure to maintain a technical cognitive interest. One reason given, for example, is that school principals are required to be strategic leaders. As strategic leaders, Caldwell (1992) stated, the principal must be able to develop and implement a cyclical process of goal setting, need identification, priority setting, planning, budgeting, etc. These are all tasks typically informed by a technical cognitive interest.

Another reason why school leaders may possibly be pressured to hold a technical cognitive interest is because of accountability and the focus in schools on outcomes based education and national standards. The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP, 2001) has published a guide for school principals that illustrates this. The guide contains "six standards that redefine instructional leadership for today's principals" (NAESP, 2001, p. 2). Amongst these standards are two that potentially require a technical cognitive interest:

- Creating and demanding rigorous content and instruction that ensures student progress toward agreed-upon academic standards;

- Using multiple sources of data as a diagnostic tool to assess, identify, and apply instructional improvement.

One of the motives of Habermas' critical theory is to combat 'scientism' or the identification of science as ultimate knowledge rather than as one form of possible knowledge amongst others. This is the belief that knowledge of the practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests will enable the domination of a scientific rationality to be countered. It is possible, however, that this may not occur for there are new and continuing pressures on school leaders to maintain a technical cognitive interest in their leadership and these pressures limit Habermas' theory.

A post-modernist rejection of Habermas' theory

A third possible limitation relates to the postmodernist critique of Habermas' theory (e.g. Lyotard, 1986). In proposing the framework of three interests, Habermas attempts to posit a theory that explains the 'truth' of our social world. In doing this Habermas was writing as a modernist. The postmodernist, however, reject all such theories. Lyotard (1986) says:

I define *postmodern* as incredulity toward metanarratives. This incredulity is undoubtedly a product of progress in the sciences...the society of the future falls less within the province of a Newtonian anthropology (such as structuralism or systems theory) than a pragmatics of language particles (p. 4).

The anti-metanarrative theme within postmodern literature is essentially the rejection of social, moral, political, or psychological theories, as well as any metaphysical or epistemological views that posit a synthetic or natural/historical understanding of our world. For postmodernists there is no 'grand scheme' of the natural or social world that is unfolding or capable of being enacted (Beyer & Liston, 1992).

The limitation implied in this criticism of Habermas' theory is that the theory is simply not acceptable or plausible. This may be manifest in school leaders who completely reject Habermas' theory. They may hold that people simply do not 'think' like that. They might maintain that at no point in time could a school leader be said to hold a technical, practical or emancipatory interest. Rather they make decisions and they take action based on their interaction with their social

environment. They may decide (like the postmodernist) that all human understanding is interpretation, and no interpretation is ever final or reducible to a three frame structure. Postmodernism emphasises that human actors engage in reality, which they create themselves through interpretation.

Another way of approaching this is to accept Habermas' theory is plausible, but to offer up a fourth frame. Lather extends Habermas' framework in her discussion of research methodologies by suggesting a fourth position that is based in post-structuralism (cited in Dunne & Johnston, 1994, p. 223).

Regardless of if they are or are not aware of the postmodernist debate, a school leader may simply choose to reject Habermas' cognitive interest theory on the grounds that to their way of thinking, and in their experience, leaders do not have different cognitive interests. They may believe in cognitive interests but not interests that can be separated into technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) frames.

In conclusion, due consideration of these possible limitations has been taken into account in this study, and it is proposed that they do not distract from the overall usefulness of applying Habermas' theory to leadership preparation.

How did the experience of researching school leaders' practice influence the researcher's personal growth as an educational consultant?

This research has been, at least in part, about what I do as a school leadership consultant. Alongside the investigation of Habermas' trichotomous framework in school leadership, is a story of how my own cognitive interests have changed over time.

In sharing this story here, I have sought to provide the reader with a full account of the results of this investigation. This reason for doing this is based on two qualitative research principles. First, that research is a human science that strives to "interpret and understand" rather than to "observe and explain" (Morse 1994, p. 56). Second, that a key component in any qualitative inquiry is the capacity for self-reflection to effect rational change and this necessitates a reflexive relationship between the data and the researcher (Hammersley 1992).

A technical interest in training and development

At the beginning of this research (1996), I had a technical interest in training and development. At least that is what I would call it now, although I did not use this language at the time. In looking back at my work as an educational consultant I was clearly immersed in the delivery of training that was based on an empirical-analytic paradigm. The empirical-analytic paradigm provides the positivist view of the social world and human behaviour. Human behaviour is regarded as measurable, causally derived, and thus both predictable and controllable (Smith 1989). I was using leadership training programs that were founded in theories of best practice, and steeped in scientific management research findings. Examples of the scientific research that I was using included: Covey's (1990) *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*; Hersey and Blanchard's (1991) *Situational Leadership Theory*; Magerison and McCanns (1992) *Team Management Index*; and Belbin's (1993) *Team Role Inventory*. I was also using Duignan and Macpherson's (1991; 1987) *Educative Leadership Program* (ELP), which promotes a practical and sometimes critical interest, but I had not selected it for this reason. I had selected it as a 'packaged' solution to school leadership training (complete with black-line masters, overhead transparencies, videos and teaching notes). I had also selected it because it was a leadership program that had been strongly based in sound research evidence, research that had been carried out by two well recognised scholars.

My view of leadership at the time was that it was predictable and comprised of observable events, which could be explained or described by general rules (as provided by various scholars from their research into management and leadership).

Because of this interest – dominated by a scientific rationality – I began this study by seeking to develop a technical instrument that would serve to identify the cognitive interest of school leaders. My goal at that point was the development of an inventory, based on profile indicators, that I named the TPC Frame (I had dropped the term 'emancipatory' for 'critical' a term I thought of as more acceptable to principals). Ernest (1994), citing the work of Habermas, suggested that the motive, which underlies the quest for knowledge, defines the interest behind the educational research paradigm. In this regard I had a strong technical interest in 1996 / 1997.

The process of profile indicator development – the development of a set of twenty multiple-choice inventory items – was an interesting and insightful activity. It

had involved me in insightful self-reflection and long discussions with my critical colleague about the role of school leaders and their cognitive interest. More than anything else these discussions were instrumental in clarifying my early understanding of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests. Moreover, this process forced me to reflect on my own beliefs about Habermas' theory.

I came to believe that the task of developing a set of twenty profile indicators was problematic. The question that came to me at this point was, "Does the development of a set of twenty profile indicators – a technical instrument for quantifying cognitive interest – contradict Habermas' emancipatory purpose?" After all, Habermas had developed his theory to argue against the domination of positivist science.

My response at the time (1997) was that yes, the use of a technical questionnaire-type instrument in leadership preparation would be in contradiction to Habermas' emancipatory intention, but only if it dominated the preparation program. Put another way, if a school leadership preparation process was anchored in and revolved entirely around the use of such an inventory, than it would be solely instrumental. Such a preparation program would be representative of the domination of the sciences that Habermas had committed his work to opposing. One example of such an instrumental leadership program that was being used in the preparation of school principals in the Northern Territory at the time was the aforementioned Magerison and McCann *Team Management Wheel*. This program was based entirely on the categorisations embedded in the 'type inventory', the *Team Management Index* (TMI) (Magerison & McCann, 1992; McCann, 2002).

My second argument (or self-justification), in response to this question, was that the development of an instrument that could be used as an adjunct to other strategies, was in keeping with Habermas' own belief that it was entirely feasible to hold a technical cognitive interest. I held that Habermas (1970, p. 90) provided support for this argument when he had not agreed with Marcuse's calls to restructure the sciences, but instead had proposed that there is a place for a technical cognitive interest to exist, alongside the practical and emancipatory cognitive interests.

Reassurance was also found in Fischer (1985) (supported more recently by Willmott (2002)) whose pragmatic contention was that it is appropriate to apply understanding taken from critical theory in non-critical ways, if it results in critical theory being introduced to a wider audience.

At the time I held that my proposed instrument could serve to introduce school leaders to the existence of the practical and emancipatory interest and as such had the potential to begin the process of enabling school leaders to abandon their commitment to the positivist sciences.

Tensions in the use of Habermas' framework in a non-critical study

From the work of Fischer (1985) and Mezirow (1981), it had become apparent to me in 1997 that there were two underlying tensions in the uncritical adoption of Habermas' theory to research. The first tension arose from the adoption of the work of a critical theorist to ground a study that is more interpretive than emancipatory. As Fischer (1985) suggested, some will see this as a violation of the basic objectives of the critical paradigm. Like Fischer, I had at the same time accepted this criticism and disregard it, for I took Fischer's position, that while engaging with Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interest as the basis for informing this investigation into leadership, it was not necessary for the study to adopt a critical methodology.

I reasoned that to suggest that only a critical analysis is acceptable when applying Habermas to research is to deny the very substance of Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests, that all three human interests in the forms of knowledge are legitimate. Further, as Burrell (1994) argued, "the question of how this trichotomous schema of knowledge-constitutive interests can be verified is largely unanswered. It has to be understood that Habermas has written both as a philosopher and a social scientist. Thus his 'three interests' can be validated by philosophical argumentation or within empirically based claims derived from possible scientific research" (p. 5).

The second tension arose, as it did as a criticism of Mezirow's work (Connelly, 1996), from the fact that Habermas' theory of three knowledge-constitutive interests is itself seen to be philosophically problematic and that Habermas did move on from this work to other theories (such as Communicative Action). Like Mezirow (1981), I held that "we need not concern ourselves with the philosophical question of whether Habermas has succeeded in establishing the epistemological status of the primary knowledge-constitutive interests" (p. 17). There is sufficient force in his analysis to warrant serious examination of his theory as a hypothesis for investigation of a conceptual model for understanding the thinking

and praxis of leaders. This is a view more recently supported by Willmott (2002). As described in Chapter 3, the very nature of the wide acceptance and popularity of Habermas' theory provided me with evidence of its interrelatedness to everyday organisational life.

A shift in beliefs and the adoption of an interpretive position

Having dealt with these tensions, by 1998 my interest had shifted from my original technical interest to become more interpretive, reflecting a practical cognitive interest. The development of a set of twenty profile indicators had been put aside, and my purpose had become to form an understanding, a framework, based in Habermas' theory that could be used to generally inform school leadership. What had emerged was the need to see if Habermas' theory could be interpreted to exist in the practice of other school leaders (not just my own views). This was not intended as a process of gathering quantitative evidence in support of a hypothesis, but an attempt to illuminate what the cognitive interests would be like (if they existed) in the human relationships and communications of school leaders. To see if the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests had meaning in the light of school leader's discourse. Mezirow (1981) description of the practical interest mode of inquiry is pertinent to my evolved research design of the time.

This understanding and mode of inquiry has as its aim not technical control and manipulation but rather the clarification of conditions for communication and intersubjectivity. It is not the methods of the empirical-analytical sciences, which are appropriate to this task, but systematic inquiry, which seeks the understanding of meaning rather than to establish causality (p. 14).

To this end data were collected from school leaders through interviews and the collection of narratives. The interview data was first analysed using a grounded theory approach and Giorgi's (1985) steps for phenomenological analysis, and later with the MCA process.

In late 1998 I applied Habermas' theory to the development of a series of activities that were grouped into a two-day workshop for school leaders. The response to this program and its evaluation was very positive. In reflecting on my research journal of the time, it is clear that this program acted to reaffirm my belief in the purpose of my research, but it also had another effect, which was to shift my

interest from the practical to a greater acceptance of the emancipatory cognitive interest.

Changing perspectives and beliefs about the school leadership workshop

Reading back over the evaluation journal (of the two day school leadership workshop) I now believe that many of the activities that seemed successful at the time, I would not repeat in future school leadership workshops. This changed response, to what I initially saw as a highly successful program, is indicative of my own personal shifts as an educational leader and of my own evolving acceptance of the importance of the emancipatory cognitive interest. If such a thing can be mapped, then this change in my beliefs possibly occurred in 1999.

A case in point is the memo and report writing session. While my evaluation journal suggests that this was a valuable activity, and it enabled the participants to come to grips with the cognitive interests, in retrospect it now seems to me to have been a very instrumental and strongly technical activity.

I had designed this activity with the purpose of ‘training’ leaders to write effective memos and reports. Effective, in this context, meant the memos could be used to control staff. I would have considered myself very successful if the participants had emerged from this session, able to influence their supervisor or staff through clever use of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework.

This is a position that I now find untenable. I now believe that the only reason for justifying the inclusion of a session on memo and report writing would be to expose, for example, the processes of manipulation that can exist through control of text and agenda (as described by Watkins (1990) in his article *Agenda, Power and Text*).

As noted, a shift in my thinking had occurred. Certainly future workshops would be structured differently (for example, with a focus on problem based learning as described earlier in this chapter). At the time I had started to see how the use of the TPC Frame was serving the purpose of exposing school practitioners to the emancipatory interest. I recorded in my research journal of the time (November 1999) finding a reference from Geelan et al. (1998) that expressed my emerging beliefs very clearly:

We now feel that, rather than being the ideal state, the emancipatory interest is most powerful when it serves the practical interest. Its critical focus on the removal of barriers and distortions to effective communication is a means toward Habermas' 'ideal speech situation' (Habermas, 1987) - the more complete development of the practical interest in caring, moral, and open communication. If teachers and learners are to truly communicate, to create collaboratively new meanings, ideas and understandings, then relationships of trust and mutual respect must be built. This involves the avoidance of such negative behaviours as coercion, sarcasm and destructive criticism, but is most fully embodied where all members of a teaching/learning group are committed to the development of caring educative relationships. It may well be that critical voices have their greatest impact when these conditions flourish. (p. 7)

Like Geelan et al. (1998), I was coming to believe that the purpose of a school leadership preparation program based on Habermas' theory, was not to present the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest as the 'ideal' state. Rather, that a school leadership program should promote the importance of school leaders engaging with an emancipatory interest because through the removal of barriers and distortions, the teachers will be better able to collaboratively work together. Emancipation would enable staff to openly communicate, and through mutual understanding, to construct effective learning.

In 1999/2000 I discarded my results and reanalysed all fifteen interview transcripts and sixteen narratives by the application of a derivation of Sacks (1972) Membership Categorisation Analysis. The MCA process was chosen, as it is a highly structured and widely accepted system of discourse analysis. By 2001 I had completed the re-analysis of data and it was abundantly clear (at least to me) that Habermas' theory was manifest in school leadership.

Through this investigation I have come to believe that to accept Habermas' frame is to engage in the struggle against the alienation of human actors in an information age (Rowan, 1981). Rowan (1981) described the alienating process that can occur in research, when research treats people as subjects or objects. Such alienation is also discernible in the information age, where people can be alienated from information. As Nunberg (1997) says in describing the difference between information and knowledge:

It is the objectivity of information and its detachment from individual speech acts, too, that establishes information as a metaphysically objective quantity, something which can be stored in a neutral medium and can exist in the absence of a subject. This is one of the important ways in which information differs from knowledge, which always requires a knowing subject - an individual, a collectivity, or at the limit a text, which serves as a proxy for its author (p. 14).

In an information age, school leadership can also cause alienation when it views society as real, and information as objective and only to be discovered through positivist methodologies. As noted by Walker and Quong (2000):

In simple terms, leadership has been driven by beliefs such as: Society is real and guided by a consistent core value structure; information is objective and amenable to discovery only through positivist methodologies and trained supervisors stand above and beyond the data they observe. Such beliefs have guided thinking and practice in areas such as planning, teamwork, school image as well as in informal ways of working (p. 78).

Through this research journey I have come to believe that the epistemology of Habermas and acceptance of the cognitive interests framework can expose such situations of alienation. In doing so it can enable leadership guided by such beliefs (those who hold that better school practices can only be discovered by a search for impersonal and measurable facts) towards a more interpretative and emancipatory interest in the role of schools in an information age.

The process of developing and conducting this study has been instrumental in the development of my own understanding of Habermas' theory. Looking back at this early leadership program, especially through the evaluation journal, has enabled me to reflect on the fact that I too had changed over the years. In particular, my understanding and acceptance of Habermas' emancipatory intention had been re-shaped along with my evolving research methodology.

Chapter conclusion

The most important outcome of this research has been the demonstration that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests are manifest in the discourse of the school leaders who participated in this study.

Based on this outcome, definitions have been developed for the three cognitive interests, and propositions have been made about the potential of Habermas' theory to enhance school leadership practice and preparation.

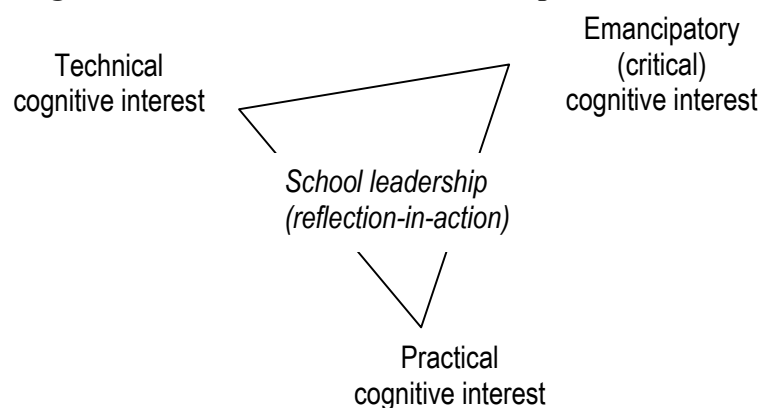
At one level, the potential of the framework can be realised when it is used in instrumental ways. It could, for example, be used in leadership preparation as a model for making predictions about a person's actions in order to be able to control or manipulate them. When describing the cognitive interests framework there would be a desire, felt by some, to be able to say that 'this person' has a technical cognitive

interest, ‘that person’ has a practical cognitive interest, and ‘the other’ has an emancipatory cognitive interest. And based on this categorisation, to be able to predict certain actions for each of them. Such an approach to the application of Habermas’ theory can be described as conforming to a technical rationality. A rationality that is based on causality, where there is a desire to use the framework to predict leadership behaviour and build leadership control. In such an approach there is a need to objectify the leadership process, making it reducible to a set of skills or principles over which technical control is possible.

At another level the potential of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) framework for enhancing school leadership, can be realised when it is used as an interpretive or emancipatory model that enables self-reflection and open dialogue about the leadership phenomenon. In this approach to leadership preparation it is a framework that provides the shared ‘member categories’ that enables school leaders to discursively analyse their practice and the tensions inherent in school leadership. It is a framework that has the potential to inform ‘reflection-on-action’ and in this way provide the basis for effective and exciting school leadership programs.

The claim made in this thesis is that the cognitive interests’ framework should not be used to prescribe how a school leader should think or act. That it should not be used for instrumental purposes. Rather that the optimal use of the cognitive interests framework in school leadership preparation, is to provide a ‘language’ for examining and speaking about the everyday practices of their working lives. This is illustrated in the following Diagram 6.1 where, for the purposes of illustration only, the complex cognitive analysis of reflection-in-action is reduced to a three frame model of ‘dialectical tension’ between three interests, in which each restrains the excesses and ‘questions the answers’ of the others.

Diagram 6.1. Cognitive interests and school leadership



Three possible limitations have been described in regard to the application of Habermas' theory to school leadership preparation. First that Habermas' theory proposes a definition of the technical cognitive interest that is based on a logical positivist scientific rationality that may no longer exist. The second is a general limitation that applies to all framework theories: that the claim that knowledge of the three frames will actually make a difference is problematic for in reality human actors are arguably not free to make such choice. Third, the limitation that school practitioners may reject the plausibility of Habermas' theory based on the postmodernist paradigm that it is not possible or useful to attempt to create theories that 'structure' or explain the 'real' world.

While recognising these limitations it is the claim made in this study, that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests are manifest in school leadership and as a framework construct, when added to the existing body of knowledge, it has the potential to greatly enhance school leadership preparation.

Chapter 7: CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter provides a synopsis of the study and of the findings in regard to the research purpose, problem and questions. Implications of the study for school leadership and school leadership preparation are delineated and some suggestions are made about further study.

Synopsis of the study

This study began because of an identified need to find better ways of preparing school leaders. In 2002 calls for school leadership preparation have intensified and the reasons for this study are as strong now as they were at the beginning of this investigation.

The overall purpose of this study has been to explore if, and how, Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests could be used as a framework for illuminating school leadership practice and for enhancing the preparation of school leaders. More specifically the purpose of this study has been to examine whether the three cognitive interests exist within the discourse on leadership provided by practising school leaders. Further, if this could be shown to be the case, to develop insight into how the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework could be used in school leadership preparation.

This has been an evolving qualitative study that has, in the main, drawn its findings from the analysis of verbal discourse collected through semi-structured interviews and from the analysis of written discourse collected as narratives of leadership.

The significance of this study has been in its exploration of leadership from the perspective of how school leaders bring multiple interests to bear in their leadership practice. By analysing the discourse of practising school leaders, this study has enabled insight to be gained into school leaders' reflections-on-actions in given leadership situations. Moreover, the significance of this study derives from its success in illuminating differences between how school leaders frame their practice.

Synopsis of the findings

The most significant result of this research has been to demonstrate that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests, proposed by Habermas in his theory of knowledge-constitutive interests (1971), are manifest in school leadership in Northern Territory schools

This result, it is acknowledged, is dependent on the validity of the two underlying premise of this investigation: First that cognitive interests can be inferred from discourse analysis; and second, that the school leaders who participated in this study are typical of other Northern Territory school leaders at the end of the 20th Century. This result is also claimed with due regard for the limitations arising from the critique of Habermas theory of knowledge-constitutive interests, as discussed in Chapter 6.

On the basis of the analysis of discourse it is concluded in this study that school-based leadership can be enhanced when illuminated through a cognitive perspective that has three frames. These three perspectives, or frames, are leadership from within:

- the technical cognitive interest,
- the practical cognitive interest,
- the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest.

Given that the theory is relevant to school leadership, it is then possible to extrapolate from the evidence in order to provide an answer to the central problem guiding this research. This was stated as: “What are the implications of Habermas’ theory of knowledge-constitutive interests for an enhanced understanding of school leadership practice?”

Implications

Implication 1: Cognitive interest and school leadership

By demonstrating that Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests (1971) is manifest in the discourse of school leaders, this study has constructed a relationship between cognitive interest and school leadership.

As a social activity, school leadership should entail responsible deliberation and decision-making in which school leaders are involved in the business of judging and deciding what ought to be done. Whether they are determining ends or means, each decision made by a school leader is based upon a cognitive appraisal of information and the social and political context in which she or he is located. In this sense leadership practice is linked to cognitive interest, where cognitive interest is defined as what school leaders accept as knowledge and how knowledge is gained.

From the evidence in this study, the claim can be made that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework illuminates cognitive interest, and therefore has the potential to be used as "frameworks for action" (Morgan, 1986, p. 343) in enhancing school leadership practice.

Implication 2: Defining the cognitive interests.

Derived from this research are clear implications for a definition of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests in regard to school leadership.

The technical cognitive interest is manifest as hierarchical, linear, school leadership, focused on prediction and control. The school leader's interest is in the production of knowledge that improves the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the means of fulfilling the schools current goals. Finding solutions to problems based on empirical-analytic knowledge, and strategic leadership that focuses on planning, budgeting, goal setting, etc, is commonly linked to a technical interest. In school leadership a technical cognitive interest is characterised by:

- An emphasis on rational and objective, not subjective, leadership.
- The importance of finding solutions or the 'right solution' to school problems.
- A need for control and a search for causality.

- A reliance on evidence, facts, or other measurable data.
- A concern for values-free decisions (putting personal values aside in leadership).

The practical cognitive interest is manifest as collaborative school leadership focused not on prediction and control but on building mutual understanding amongst the people in the school. School leaders with a practical interest do not believe that there can be any one 'right' solution to a problem. Hermeneutics poses a model of practical rationality that focuses on imagination, interpretation, the weighing of alternatives, and the application of criteria that are practical matters determined by dialogue and discussion. In school leadership a practical cognitive interest is characterised by factors such as:

- A need for understanding and the importance of interpretation.
- A disregard for facts, evidence or qualitative data where they conflict with subjective understanding.
- A concern for values, and the recognition that personal values cannot be separated from leadership.
- A belief that there can always be more than one right answer, that there is no absolute 'bottom line' upon which to justify knowledge claims.

The emancipatory cognitive interest is manifest in school leadership that is concerned to reveal how patterns of behaviour and meaning are embedded in oppressive structures of domination that, potentially, are open to challenge and change. Emancipatory school leaders, through self-reflection and critique, transcend any interest in control and mutual understanding respectively and incorporate them within an interest in emancipation. A critical school leader, it is suggested, would empower teachers and join with them in a critique of curricula, to expose power relations, tradition, habit, custom, and political restraints. In school leadership the emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest is characterised by:

- Critical-self reflective and educative leadership.
- A need to question purpose and outcomes in order to demystify a direction or policy.
- A concern to discover barriers or constraints that restrict people's attainment or cause inequity.

- An examination of how social relationships are distorted and manipulated by power and privilege.

Implication 3: The cognitive interest/s of school leaders

An implication can be drawn from the data about the cognitive interest or interests of school leaders.

While a school leader might operate from a single, dominant cognitive interest, it is also possible that they will cross between different cognitive interests (for example, a technical cognitive interest in one context, but a practical cognitive interest or emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest in another).

It is tempting to say that there is a need to ‘balance’ the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests, but the metaphor of ‘balance’ is not appropriate. An implication of this study, has been to provide support for Geelan et al. (1998) who suggest that a better construct than ‘balance’ for thinking about the cognitive interests of a school leader, is as a ‘dialectical tension’ between the three interests, in which each restrains the excesses and ‘questions the answers’ of the others.

Implication 4: Three forms of leadership learning

An implication arising from this study and the literature is that the preparation of school leaders can involve three forms of learning. This includes technical (instrumental) learning, practical (interpretative) learning, and emancipatory (critical) learning.

Technical, instrumental learning focuses on training school leaders to control their environment, to use empirical-analytic methods to do a job, and to manage people when they think of them as functions and part of the physical world. In this domain they learn about cause and effect, and solve problems by use of commonplace logic. There is an emphasis in this domain, on helping leaders to acquire the management strategies and ‘leadership skills’ (identified by research) that are needed to deal with practical matters of achieving effective and efficient school administration.

Practical, interpretive learning focuses on enabling school leaders to understand the human condition. It is the learning that focuses on what people are and how they relate, on symbolic interaction and the social construction of meaning. In this domain school leaders solve problems through discourse, through reflection and insight, and by seeking mutual interpretation. There is an emphasis in this domain on helping school leaders to understand the way people construct institutions, and how they communicate and give meaning to their social lives.

Emancipatory, critical learning enables school leaders to identify the assumptions and values that constrain the way they (and their staff) think, feel and act. In this domain school leaders address problem-solving by adopting a form of critical self reflection which may transform their ways of thinking, feeling and acting. Emancipatory learning is a political act. It helps school leaders to separate out ‘truth’ from ‘ideology’, and understand how power in social, cultural and political contexts have shaped their thinking. It helps them to understand how others may try to shape their thinking for them, and reveals hidden domination, restrictions and barriers in schools.

Implication 5: Using the cognitive interests in leadership preparation.

An implication of this study is that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework can be used to ground “reflection-in-action” (Schön, 1983) during leadership preparation programs. In this regard, the cognitive interests framework can be used in leadership preparation because “Every [school leader] uses a personal frame or image of organisations to gather information, make judgments, and determine how best to get things done” (Bolman & Deal, 1991, p. 11). This study provides support for the frame and reframing belief, that a critical competency for school leaders is the ability to make their cognitive interest explicit, to be able to widen their repertoire of cognitive interests, and to engage in dialogue with others about their cognitive interests.

The cognitive interests’ framework is not intended to prescribe how a school leader should think or act. Nor does this study propose the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests’ framework as a pre-defined solution, or ‘one best way’. Rather this study seeks to encourage school leaders to adopt the framework as a means of interpreting leadership that enables self-reflection and leads

to a proactive development of their leadership practice in accordance with their own cognitive interests.

As a process of reflection-in-action, the technical, practical and emancipatory cognitive interests framework can be used to illuminate various aspects of school leadership. Examples provided in this study have included how the cognitive interests framework can illuminate:

- strategic leadership;
- curriculum leadership;
- personal and interpersonal relationships;
- schools as organisations;
- strategic planning;
- problem solving;
- the leader's role in assessment;
- professional development.

Implication 6: The structure of school leadership preparation programs

An implication arising from this study for the structure of preparation programs is that the short intensive workshop format, while potentially useful in the application of the cognitive interests framework for instrumental reasons, is not the most suitable or preferred way of using cognitive interests in school leadership preparation.

A key to the preparation of effective school leaders is articulation of, and reflection on, cognitive interests. Through these processes the learner gains conscious access to and control of his or her knowledge structures and how these relate to practice. Such articulation and reflection can only be begun in a short term workshop style program (such as the *Educational Leadership for Classroom Teachers* two-day workshop conducted in this study) but needs to be achieved over time.

An ongoing learning program that is structured around a series of professional development sessions, involving mentoring and collaborative learning teams, offers the best possibility for school leadership preparation based on the cognitive interests framework. Problem-based learning (Bridges, 1992) grounded in the cognitive interests framework, also offers exciting possibilities for enhanced leadership practice.

In preparation programs, school leaders must learn to challenge positivist interests through recognising, exposing, valuing and learning from the diverse values positions that comprise their school contexts. In this view school leaders are called on to challenge their own ingrained assumptions about school life and what constitutes knowledge, and to engage in processes that stem from the practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests. Those responsible for the preparation of school leaders, are called on to engage their clients in joint experimentation, simultaneously trusting and mistrusting experience, breaking stereotypes and critiquing external methods and solutions (Walker & Quong, 2000). Such a process is best grounded in the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework, and achieved through extended and continuous professional learning programs.

Ideas for further research

As described in Chapter 4, Rowan (1981) describes the ‘cycles of research’ that occur in investigations. He says that research passes through a series of cycles, and that each is comprised of the four stages of “being, project, encounter and communication” (p. 98). Underlying the concept of ‘cycles’ is the belief that research rarely finishes; rather that one cycle leads to another. In Rowan’s terms, the ‘communication’ of the outcomes of one cycle of research leads to a new cycle beginning with ‘being’. In this stage the researcher becomes pre-occupied with some kind of internal disturbance, an ‘itch’, that causes the researcher to think purposefully and to search for more information.

My research into the technical, practical and emancipatory frames followed this pattern. Arising from the outcomes of this investigation are ideas for further research, ideas based on a series of arising disturbances in ‘being’, or ‘itches’, that need further investigation.

The first of these disturbances in ‘being’ relates to the scope of this study. This study has focused on collecting data from *individual* school leaders. As such it has mostly overlooked the shared leadership that occurs in schools (Crowther et al. 2001). Therefore a suggestion for further investigation is to focus on how the technical,

practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests are manifest in shared leadership, such as collaborative leadership and parallel leadership.

A second ‘itch’ arises from the evidence of this study that supports the view that the emancipatory interest is less apparent in school leadership than the technical or practical interests. Therefore an investigation that might add to the full understanding of cognitive interest and school leadership would be research into the factors that limit the emergence in school leaders of an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest. In such an investigation there could also be an emphasis on exploring if the emancipatory interest is more prevalent in Indigenous community schools than urban settings, as tentatively indicated in the outcomes of this study.

Finally, in drawing this study to a conclusion, I must admit to an ‘itch’ that I have developed, with regards to wondering if the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework applies to leadership outside schools. A follow up-study that applies the same research methodology to exploring the application of Habermas’ framework to leaders in other organisations would be exciting.

A final word

For the past three decades ‘leadership as influence’ has dominated the literature (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999). Accordingly, as discussed in Chapter 2, a leader has been defined in this study as someone who is recognised by an observer to exert influence. This thesis has advocated adding the lens of cognitive interest to the existing knowledge base of what determines leadership influence, in order to widen the spectrum of our understanding, and create new possibilities for successful leadership in schools.

Cognitive interests are foundational to the way people experience their individual realities in all organisations including schools. This thesis has argued that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework provides a reference point from which those seeking to develop leadership potential can interpret their own cognitive interest and the cognitive interests of others.

This study has not offered a complete account of all the epistemological, ethical or therapeutic variables that constitute human cognitive interest and its

interplay with leadership action. Nor has it presupposed to provide a full response to Burrell's (1994) question of how Habermas' trichotomous schema of knowledge-constitutive interests can be verified within "empirically based claims derived from possible scientific research" (p. 5). What it has done, however, is to provide a detailed account of the nature of the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests, as they exist in the discourse of school leaders in Northern Territory schools. This adds substantially to the understanding, if not the verification, of both cognitive interests in school leadership and Habermas' theory of knowledge-constitutive interests.

The technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) framework has no particular power to emancipate people from irrationality, injustice or even leadership dissatisfaction. To be emancipatory it has to be accepted with shared critical intent and it has to be alert to the dangers of self-deception. The framework provides a structure for mediation that enables school leaders to be better positioned to develop strategies for leadership that seek positivist, interpretivist and critical knowledge in the pursuit of improved outcomes for the students in their care.

If school members – administrators, teachers and learners – are to truly communicate, to create collaboratively new meanings, ideas and understandings, then relationships of trust and mutual respect must be built. This involves the avoidance of such negative behaviours as coercion, sarcasm and destructive criticism, and is most fully embodied where all members of a teaching/learning group are committed to the development of caring educative relationships. It may well be that critical voices have their greatest impact when these conditions flourish.

To accept Habermas' framework, as I have come to through my experiences in this research journey, is to accept an interpretative and critical purpose. The framework highlights the fact that the positivist interest is not the only or the most important perspective for school leaders. Through the frame, school leaders can become aware that logical empiricism is important but by itself not sufficient to inform good leadership. Those involved with leadership preparation will be guided to involve their participants in an exploration of the practical and emancipatory cognitive interests in real and purposeful ways. The role of the facilitator of leadership preparation programs is to create the learning environment needed for their clients to have positive and rewarding experiences in their engagements with all three of the cognitive interests in the context of school leadership. If this was to occur, then in itself it would be a worthy departure from what currently exists, where so

many programs are simply based on generic organisational leadership and management theories founded in positivist endeavour.

This study began with my desire, as an educational consultant, to provide a more relevant and meaningful school leadership preparation program to the school practitioners who were participants to my inservice programs. Through the course of this research, my own beliefs and cognitive interests changed, but I believe that I fulfilled this purpose. This study has demonstrated that the technical, practical and emancipatory (critical) cognitive interests framework, as a derivation of Habermas' theory, is manifest in the discourse of school leadership and has the potential to greatly enhance the preparation of school leaders.

Appendix 1: Interview Questions

- Q.1 How would you describe your leadership style?
- Q.2 Do you agree with the following statements? What do you think the following statements mean, begin with a yes or no then comment please.
- “If its not broken don't fix it!”
“Research says...”
“Just in time, continuous improvement”
“Leaders are today's version of ritualised heroes”
“At any time leaders can become followers and followers can become leaders”
“Leaders are made not born”
“The buck stops here”
“Someone has to be the boss”
“The right decisions can only be made if you have all the information”
“As a professional I can put my personal beliefs to one side and make value free decisions”
“True leaders empower their staff”
“Let the managers manage and the leaders lead”
“Leaders recognise that their job is to lead people not organisations”
- Q.3 In your leadership what role do values play? By values I refer to the importance of personal beliefs. For example in making a decision, whether it is about who teaches what classes or the allocation of resources to faculties, can you divorce your personal views and beliefs from the decision?
- Q.4 As a leader, how important is it to you for your people to get the ‘right answer every time’. That is, to find the right solution for the problem? For example, to get the timetable right, to establish the right discipline policy, to implement the right teaching programs for your school, etc.
Do you believe that there can be more than one right answer to each problem? How important is research and scientific method?
- Q.5 Consider the following situation:

One of the people who works with you who you would see as under your leadership, comes to you to ask you what they should do about the unfair way your established workplace rules have blocked their chance of achieving their goals. For example, you have a rule that says that all staff must submit their programs / monthly report to you for your examination, but the staff member says that this reporting process is interfering with their ability to implement collaborative planning.
Do you believe that leaders have a role to play in promoting staff to examine their work and free themselves from unjust barriers. Do you believe that organisations have rules (written and unwritten) that cannot be broken.
How would you handle this situation?
- Q.6 When advertising for new principals, the Victorian Department of Education stress that they want a principal who will be one of a team who will participate in and abide by the curricula and administrative decisions arrived at collaboratively by the school community (Victorian Education Gazette and Teachers Aid. 1984, p. 446)
What do you understand by this advertisement? Do you fit this ad?

- Q.7 Can you describe a situation in which you would be happy to support and recommend that one of your subordinates be promoted to a position where they become your superior?
- Q.8 An Assistant Principal in a school has developed an exciting and effective program that enables a computer to put together the school timetable. This program has worked really well for the AP, particularly as it has meant that although some staff are not happy with their classes at least they can no longer complain about personal bias in class allocations. Would you recommend to that school principal that;
- A. It sounds like an excellent program but you would want some more details on its trial and long term effectiveness before adopting it.
 - B. It sounds like another possible alternative to current programming, but you would like to see how individual staff needs are met by the program.
 - C. It sounds like an interesting program, but you would like more information about its purpose. Why would a school administration want to use a computer to write their timetable?
- Q.9 Of all the different types of work you do in your job, which sort of work do you prefer and find the most enjoyable. Do you prefer:
- A. work in which you have to make rational management decisions based on clear evidence, and logical reasoning and are able to leave all personal issues and values out of the equation?
 - B. work in which you deal with solid data and sound statistics where there is clearly only one right solution?
 - C. work in which you are constantly challenged by having to overcome barriers to communication and to getting things done?
 - D. work in which you are able to seek many other people's input because there are always many different solutions and ways of proceeding?
 - E. work in which you explore and question the basic structures that govern the 'way things are done' and that enable you to invent new and more open ways of proceeding. Sometimes you even question the desirability of the outcome?
 - F. work in which other people's experiences and beliefs play an important part, collaborative activities that involve first understanding other's perspectives?
- Q.10. Please read the following story.

"A Superintendent attends a national meeting where Madeleine Hunter gives a speech. He comes back convinced that she can solve the region's instructional problems and promptly arranges for everyone to be trained in the Hunter method of teaching. When teachers learn more about Hunter's 'scientific' methods and want to dispute her philosophic or pedagogical assumptions, the innovators and administrators in charge of improvement dismiss these concerns as 'unscientific'. The thoughtful teachers who raised questions are labeled as 'resisters' and their attitude as 'uncooperative'. Instead of a dialogue in the school on the prospects of improved teaching, the Hunter plan for improvement becomes the occasion to fragment teachers into at least three groups: the believers, the resisters, and those who are still unsure. The Superintendent does not seem to worry about minor problems of faculty fragmentation. He is pleased by his efforts to provide a concrete plan that the school board can understand." (Fullan 1993, p 52 *Change Forces* The Falmer Press London)

What do you think of the Superintendent's actions? What do you think about the notion of Hunter's method?

Appendix 2: Evaluation comments, leadership preparation workshop

The following comments were collected as part of the endpoint evaluation of the Educational Leadership for Classroom Teachers workshop conducted in November 1998. The comments indicate a positive response and acceptance of the workshop and the use of the cognitive interests frame (refer chapter 5).

- *I think the application of the TPC model to leadership issues is an interesting and useful approach. I believe we intuitively shift our ways of operating with various people and in various situations and have learned from the outcomes of these. For future events, my practice will be more informed from the experience of these past two days. As a result I may experience less personal internal conflict. Thanks for your efforts Terry. It was great to meet new people.*
- *Being able to communicate effectively with staff is an important aspect of leadership. The TPC model was definitely a useful tool to tackle this issue.*
- *Clear concerted program. Easy to listen to tutorial style. Very relevant to real life situations. Well done Terry.*
- *Interesting and invaluable tool in understanding personalities and reasons for opinions and ideals and getting them to work together.*
- *I believe TPC as a model for learning is very useful in terms of leadership in the sense that knowing who your audiences are the better communication you can make or do and the result if the efforts you made would be successful, most highly. And don't use technical words to a non-technical audience/people.*
- *I found this extremely useful as a tool to help me understand how I would like to be as a leader. It has also been great to help me understand how other people come with their "baggage" (points of views).*
- *I think this was a really good model to look at leadership. It makes you aware of personality types and how best to deal with them as a leader. It is good to look at yourself and see how you approach others. A very useful enlightening course.*
- *I found TPC most valuable, it's funny how you can feel responses from people are all wrong only to realise there were two different thought process happening. I will be more aware of this in approaching people differently and hopefully will be more successful.*
- *I found it a very useful tool to understand how people operate. This seminar needs to be addressed to leaders, so they understand us.*
- *Worth thinking about as a model. Need to emphasise possibility of people operating in different modes on different occasions.*
- *The opportunity to learn about different TPC was something I was unaware of and will try to utilise in my job role now. Thank you for 2 interesting and very useful days of PD.*

- *TPC is a useful model to know and use. It is also very important for leaders to know procedure and policy.*
- *Useful. Makes it very easy to think about why/why not some situations work. Makes leadership a lot more complex process than I thought.*
- *I have learnt a lot on leadership in the classroom, TPC, Performance Management, Memo Writing, Decision Making and Dealing with Conflict were very valuable and useful information every leader should obtain. Thank you!*
- *Terry you've done a great and interesting 2 day workshop.*
- *Excellent, very practical fantastic presentation. Will be going home and using all these new ideas/concepts not just at school but in other areas.*
- *Thank you. Will be coming to other inservices along the same lines.*

Appendix 3 : Sample of an entry from the Evaluation Journal of the trial *Educational Leadership for Classroom Teachers* workshop.

Session 1.b: Tuesday 3 November 98, 11.00 am-1 pm.

The three leadership cognitive interests defined (90 mins).

I began this session with the page handout describing the Australian Rules football coaches of three different interests (Terry, Patricia and Cecil). All participants found this example of cognitive interests very believable. One participant commented that he knew that all of the major clubs did indeed employ people of the three types to plan their games. A brief discussion arose as to the 'best' interest for the head coach. The participants determined that it would be the practical interest, with the technical interest being found in the back room 'boys' who kept the statistics, and the critical being the 'brain's trust' who came up with the new plays and strategies.

I was not entirely happy with this oversimplification of the interests, but made the choice not to dispel this view of interests at this time. Rather to wait until they had developed for themselves a more in-depth appreciation of the intricacies of the interests. Particularly the inaccurate idea that technical interest is only concerned with statistics and the wrong view that people with an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest are the only one who can come up with new ideas.

The three individual case studies, Casey, Georgette, and Anna were very successful. Clearly the participants were able to 'identify' with these three examples of cognitive interests, that is, they all claimed to know at least one person whom I might have based the case studies on. In the case of one participant, he was so sure that Casey was someone at his school that he approached me later to discuss what I thought should be done about the teacher's behaviour. He said *"you know X well he told me yesterday that he has taken a contract to work on oil rigs as a training officer, can you believe it? Well anyway that starts next year but what should I be doing with him for the rest of this year, did you know we have had another complaint last week from a parent?"*

From the discussions that emerged it was clearly important that the three case studies reflected people who were experiencing 'difficulties' in teaching. It seemed that the participants were easily able to relate to these case studies and were quickly able to explain their teaching difficulties in line with their cognitive interests. Casey was the case study that seemed to 'ring bells' for most participants. They all seemed to know of a 'Casey' in their recent experience. At one point I felt concern when one participant suggested that one of the case studies, Anna, was she to a 'tee'.

The three school case studies Situation 1, Situation 2, Situation 3, were a great success. All participants were readily able to identify the technical, practical and critical situations, and all were able to distinguish the differences between the schools. Only one person thought that the practical was the critical and vice versa. Most importantly, all participants were clearly able to identify or accept that the situations described were 'real' schools. In fact a number of participants suggested that they 'knew' which schools the situations were written about. Two teachers suggested that one of the situations described their own school.

If anything, these three case studies 'cemented' the understanding of the three TPE interests in the minds of the participants. In particular the clarification of what 'critical' interest would be

like. I believe that until this case study, many participants may have thought that an emancipatory (critical) cognitive interest could not exist in school leaders.

This exercise brought on an interesting discussion of what sorts of school were the most common in the NT. It was determined by the group, in the end, that there were in fact very few schools dominated by a technical interest. They believed that while most schools were structured on a traditional top down 'coat hanger' arrangement, in fact most followed a collaborative decision making structure usually involving many different committees. The participants claimed that that most school principals would be either practical or critical and that few were technical in their interest.

This brought on a discussion of the importance of strong leadership. One participant commented *"you often hear things like, Joe Bog's school is one of the best in the Territory, you don't hear things like Sanderson is a great school, does anyone know who the principal is?"* From here I introduced the Lao Tzu statement on leadership:

A leader is best when people barely know he exists
Not so good when people obey and acclaim him
Worse when they despise him
But of a good leader, who talks little
When his work is done, his aim fulfilled they will say
We did it ourselves

This prompted a lively discussion on the nature of collaborative leadership and the work of leaders. It occurred to me that at least three of the participants were a little concerned with the implications of this Lao Tzu saying and that they believed in the importance of school principals who earned the right to say "this is my school and don't you forget it". Most of the others found the discussion of collaborative leadership very much to their liking.

Participants' Comments (Session 2 End Day 1)

- TPC - interesting to realise the dynamics existing within these cognitive interest groupings. Have already identified staff members who may fit into these groupings - and have pick up some hints on how to approach Performance Management with them. Helpful advice - thank you.
- I found your presentation informative, interesting and presented in a way we will remember it.
- It's not repetitive - the TPC 'lectures' have been sequential so we can learn how to use it in real 'settings'.
- Tomorrow - how to deal with people when 'we' have taken the course on TPC but they know nothing on TPC/communication/dealing with conflict/ can make what you know difficult to put into practice.
- Session so far: informative, interesting, I've found something I'd never have thought of before - the TPC concept.
- The notion of the TPC has been valuable from the point of view that it gives a base starting point on understanding and dealing with colleagues etc. It would be good to have the opportunity to discuss how a leader could approach a difficult staff member who has little/no ability to accept "leadership".
- TPC is interesting - certainly making me think about my style and those around me at school.
- Very practical ideas to assist with dealing with staff and superiors creates a win/win situation.
- How do we assist others in seeing what they are in TPC and to explore this in assisting the school to run more effectively?

- TPC makes sense - have seen a number of these types.
- Tomorrow - more practice analysing types/language etc (no touchy feelie role plays though).
- TPC so far is very informative session for me as to I might be able to get the ET2 job next year.
- More on leadership and performance management stuff and most importantly dealing with difficult conflict around and in the school.
- Very interesting and informative. Good to know about performance management and how to reflect these to 3 different kinds of teachers (TPC).
- TPC. Useful to think about. Not thought about dealing with others in this light before.
- I think using the TPC model for interpersonal relationships is valid. I've met this before in looking at curriculum design so have found the concept quite interesting.
- Course structure is very relevant to any leadership situation, it is practical and useful.
- Given scenarios were realistic.
- The delivery was excellent and relevant.
- Case studies enormously beneficial in understanding the 'dynamics' of TPC 'types'.
- Clear review of points to ensure understanding of quite complex situations.
- Multi faceted examination of points i.e. different points of perception.
- Helps the individual identify their 'potentials'.
- The TPC so far has made me realise that I tend to forget not everyone thinks the same way as I do. Now I know what my problem is. I just thought I was intolerant. Tell me how to recognise the three different types please?

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