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TEACHERS' RESPONSES TO SCHOOL CHANGE: AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE VIEWS AND PRACTICES OF TEACHERS AT FOUR NATIONAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

A Thesis submitted by

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Abstract

National Secondary Schools in the Solomon Islands are faced with ongoing multifaceted change arising from both external sources and from within-school improvement initiatives. It is assumed that teachers respond to these various changes. While some research has been conducted in relation to different aspects of education in the national secondary schools of Solomon Islands, little is known about how teachers respond to school change or how this may be enhanced. This research seeks to address that gap in the literature. For the purposes of this study, it was important to listen to the voices of the teachers and to learn from their own accounts of how they responded to changes within their schools. Hence, this study sought to discover what can be learned from what teachers identified as change in their national secondary schools and how they responded to the changes they identified. Attention was also given to how contextual factors, particularly school ethos and school culture, influenced their responses.

A qualitative research design with case study methodology was conducted in four selected Solomon Islands national secondary schools. Two of these schools are in the remote islands in the provinces, and two are close to the national capital, Honiara. Three of the case study schools are operated by three different church denominations, and the fourth is state operated. Multiple data collection techniques and types were used, including semi-structured interviews with principals and teachers of the national secondary schools, document analysis, visual documentation such as photographs, field notes and observation. Initially each of the schools is presented as a case study in its own right. A thematic data analysis technique was used to analyse the data from the transcribed interview recordings and relevant documents from each of the schools. These themes formed the findings of each of the four case study national secondary schools. Cross-case analysis then drew a series of findings from each of the four case studies using colour coding to identify the emergent themes for discussion.

The study found that the changes the teachers identified and responded to in their schools were related to four themes. These themes are: recognition of using the Internet to improve teaching and learning; a series of changes related to students;

principal leadership styles and their effect on teacher motivation; and the impact of the school's infrastructure. This study culminated in the development of a framework that focuses on the factors influencing teachers' responses to school change. This *Teacher Response to School Change Framework* seeks to identify key factors influencing teacher response, while acknowledging and recognising the influence of school context. Capturing the answer to the overarching research question "What can be learned from how teachers respond to change in four Solomon Islands national secondary schools?" the framework also has implications for action at several levels. A number of recommendations for action are proposed for the notice of all who have responsibility for the support of teachers' work in National Secondary Schools of Solomon Islands.

Certification of Thesis

This thesis is entirely the work of John Lenga Sisiolo except where otherwise acknowledged. The work is original and has not previously been submitted for any other award, except where acknowledged.

Student and supervisors' signatures of endorsement are held at USQ.

Dr Marian Lewis
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Principal Supervisor

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Abbreviations

Acronym	Explanation
CBT	Community Base Training
CDD	Curriculum Development Division
CHS	Community High School
COM	Church of Melanesia
DPAca	Deputy Principal Academic
EA	Education Authority
EC	Early Career
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LS	Long Serving
MEHRD	Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development
NSS	National Secondary School
PSS	Provincial Secondary School
RTC	Rural Training Centre
SDA	Seventh Day Adventist
SICHE	Solomon Islands College of Higher Education
SIF3	Solomon Islands Form 3
SINU	Solomon Islands National University
SISC	Solomon Islands Secondary School Certificate
SISEE	Solomon Islands Secondary School Entrance Examination
SOE	School of Education
SSEC	South Seas Evangelical Church
USP	University of the South Pacific

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

National Secondary Schools in the Solomon Islands are faced with ongoing and complex change arising from both external sources and from within-school improvement initiatives. There is an expectation that teachers within these schools will respond positively to school change but little is known about how this occurs or how the process may be enhanced. The research reported in this thesis seeks to address that gap in knowledge by listening to the voices of the teachers in four of those schools, and learning from their accounts. Specifically, the thesis explores what can be learned from what teachers identified as change in their national secondary schools, how they responded to the changes they identified and what factors enabled them to respond positively.

From before independence in 1978, secondary education in the Solomon Islands was provided mainly by church run schools. Currently there are eight National Secondary Schools, six run by a variety of Christian denominations, and two are run by the state. In the last 20 years, 17 Provincial Secondary schools and around 223 Community Based Secondary Schools have been established. The high status, well-resourced national secondary schools, each influenced by their particular ethos, is expected to maintain high academic standards and a consistently high level of student achievement. The teachers in the national secondary schools (NSS) are generally well qualified and, it may be argued, well positioned to respond to the many changes faced by schools in the country. Furthermore, school ethos is important because it is an inner-strength driving virtue towards teachers' contributions to successful change.

My interest in carrying out this research was based on my experiences in the secondary schools. There was a need for teachers to respond positively to school change. If how teachers successfully respond to change is known, then the responsible individuals, authorities and organisations will provide ways to support them accordingly. It is also anticipated that what can be learned from the responses of teachers in the NSSs will also be have application to both Provincial and Community High Schools across the Solomon Islands.

1.2. The Researcher and the Understanding I Bring to This Study

I am from Choiseul. Choiseul is one of the nine remote Melanesian provinces in the Solomon Islands. As part of a Melanesian country, the traditional style of leadership that is still accepted and practised in Choiseul province is a patrilineal system in which we believe and respect that men are born leaders. We believe that men are effective leaders and have skills and abilities to make changes in our society. These cultural beliefs and practices have significant influence in the schools.

I started my teaching career as a primary and secondary school teacher in remote schools in the Solomon Islands before joining the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE), which became the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) in April 2013. My experience in teaching across primary, secondary and tertiary levels and working with secondary schools in the Solomon Islands informed me of teachers' responses to various types of school change. As a former primary school class teacher and head teacher, and head of department in a secondary school, I realised that teachers knew their schools well and were more aware of what was going on in the school than anyone else.

In 2004, I taught in one of the community high schools (CHSs) in the Solomon Islands. The newly graduated teachers from overseas institutions, who had some basic knowledge of computer use, formally asked the principal to use the school computers for lesson preparation, teaching and learning and other school work. They recognised the potential of using a computer for teaching and learning. However, the long-serving principal, who was about to retire from teaching, locked the ten donated desktop computers in a safe room. At that time, I had very basic computer skills I had learned when I studied at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji. I was new to the school and had taught at secondary level for the first time for only three months. Therefore, I did not have the courage to contribute to the discussion on the decision of the long-serving principal. The principal's negative response to the teachers who recognised the importance of using computers to improve teaching and learning triggered my interest and led me to decide that if I had the opportunity to conduct research, I would study the leadership style of school principals.

Later, I joined the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE). In 2008, I had the opportunity to undertake a Postgraduate Diploma and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership at the University of Waikato in New Zealand. These training opportunities fulfilled my aspiration to research the leadership of the principals of the community high schools (CHSs) in Choiseul province. Importantly, this Master's degree study broadened my knowledge about principals and teachers in the secondary schools, and gave me the research skills and experience that I brought to this study. Also my previous study was a stepping stone to broader research, particularly the present study. For instance, I found in my previous study that the principals and their styles of leadership had significant influence on how teachers responded to change in the school. In the case of CHSs in Choiseul province, where many qualified primary school teachers are promoted to teach in secondary schools due to a lack of qualified secondary teachers, they depend on the principal's vision for school improvement. An interesting finding was that class teachers who advocated for change, were cooperative and responded positively to school infrastructure improvements were often recommended to the Choiseul province education authority by their communities for promotion to principal's positions. In Choiseul province, many recognised community leaders had some influence on teacher appointments in the CHSs.

As a lecturer at SINU, I was part of a team that was involved in professional learning development programs in the schools in some selected provinces in the Solomon Islands. This gave me the opportunity to visit and work with some of the NSSs. During the school visits, my interest in conducting this study in the NSSs was like a seed that germinated, growing and taking shape. Reflecting on my secondary school teaching experience and my master's research with the CHS principals, I realised that the style of leadership of the NSS principals was different. The principals in the NSSs generally encouraged their teachers to use computers and to access the Internet. In one of the NSSs, all the teachers, including the principal and deputy principal, used one second-hand donated desktop computer. With curiosity and a desire to take advantage of change, the teachers patiently waited for their turn to use the computer. This shows how eager teachers are to use technology. They have aspirations, zeal and an intrinsic desire to accept and implement positive change once it is introduced to their schools. The NSS principals and teachers

responded to improve teaching and learning by sharing the available resources they had in the school. This NSS experience, other similar experiences and my previous master's research were my stepping-stones for pursuing this study.

Some notable changes in the NSSs include the introduction of information and communication technology (ICT) as a teaching-learning tool around 2004. Since then some schools and teachers have used computers for lesson preparation and planning purposes. The recent ability to access the Internet via smartphones in the NSSs has had positive impacts on teaching, learning and communication.

Another change relates to school assessment. Previously, it appeared that teachers usually assessed students through end-of-unit tests, mid-semester tests and final semester examinations. Now teachers are encouraged to also assess students on paired work, group work, class presentations, projects and research. Moreover, the teaching approach has shifted from the traditional teacher-centred style to more student-centred, which involves more interactive styles of lesson presentation.

Changes related to students with special needs have been long overdue in the Solomon Islands education system. In June 2014, a Special Learning Needs Policy was formulated for inclusive education. Teachers in NSSs are now expecting some changes in lesson preparations, teaching and learning approaches. They also need to reconsider school facilities to ensure greater inclusion.

This study was focused on change that had an impact across the whole school. This means it did not specifically focus on one particular change in each of the case study NSSs. School change can include aspects of pedagogy, curriculum, assessment, ICT, leadership and school infrastructure. Although there can be a range of changes across the school, this study focused only on what the teachers identified as change, based on their personal views and practices in their secondary schools.

For this study, 'change' refers to how the NSS teachers perceived the introduced initiatives for school improvements and acted upon them. The initiatives could be either mandated or voluntary in nature and have direct or ripple impacts across the school. The mandated changes from the Ministry of Education may be related to curriculum and assessment, inclusive education and pedagogy. The education authorities mandate changes to the NSSs on school enrolments, teachers'

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recruitment, meeting and reporting systems, and major changes to senior leadership positions. The voluntary change referred to in this study is change that occurs across the school through the NSS's own initiatives. These changes include reorganising of classes and school programs, creating teaching teams, introducing ICT, in-house professional development, improving student behaviour and organising school infrastructure.

1.3. Physical Geography

The Solomon Islands is one of the developing countries in the South Pacific (see Figure 1.1), with a population of 515,780 in the 2009 census (Solomon Islands Government, 2009). The first people who settled in the Solomon Islands were the Melanesians. Therefore, the majority of the population in the Solomon Islands is Melanesian. There are also Polynesian and Micronesian populations. The Solomon Islands are a thickly forested and mountainous country lying 1, 860km northwest of Australia, between Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. With its land mass of 27, 556 square km, it is the second largest country in the South Pacific after Papua New Guinea.

Figure 1.1 Map: The location of the Solomon Islands in the South Pacific

Source: World Through News (2014)

The Solomon Islands are made up of many islands. However, the six main islands are Malaita, Guadalcanal, Santa Isabel, Santa Cristobal, Choiseul and New Georgia (see Figure 1.2). Together with other small islands, there are political boundaries that divide the country into ten provinces. The capital of the Solomon Islands is Honiara in Guadalcanal province. In addition to these main Islands, there are 20 medium size islands and numerous smaller reef islets which give a total of 922, of which 347 are inhabited (South Pacific Organizer, 2014). The Solomon Islands stretch 1,800 km from Ghaomai in the western province to Tikopia in Temotu province.

Figure 1.2 Map**:** The physical geography of the Solomon Islands

Source: OLPC Solomon Islands (2008)

1.4. Social and Cultural Context

The geographical and physical features of the Solomon Islands make communication and the provision of education services difficult. It is costly to reach many schools in the scattered islands in the provinces. Because of remoteness and isolation, some islands have shipping services only once a month. As a developing

country, there are many areas that need change and improvement in the schools. The Solomon Islands has about 60 indigenous languages. Because of the multilingual population, many Solomon Islanders communicate in Melanesian Pidgin as their lingua franca (Solomon Islands Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination, 2011). English is the official language and teachers are encouraged to use it as the principal language of instruction in the classroom.

The Solomon Islands is a Christian country that encourages freedom of worship and evangelism even in public places and streets. The major denominations in the Solomon Islands are Anglican (also called the Church of Melanesia), the Roman Catholic Church, the South Sea Evangelistic Church (SSEC), Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) and the United Church. Christian denominations play important roles in the Solomon Islands education system. They established and have operated schools since the time of the early missionaries.

1.5. Education During the Missionary Period

Formal education was first introduced by the missionaries of Christian churches who came and established schools (see Table 1.1). The Catholic Church was the first Christian church that introduced formal education in the Solomon Islands, followed by the Anglican Church, SSEC, Methodist, which is now the United Church, and SDA. Missionary teachers not only trained indigenous teachers in their local communities; some of the Christian churches sent local teachers to train in New Zealand, Australia and Fiji with a plan to return to the Solomon Islands and convert more indigenous people to Christianity. However, most of the pioneer teachers were untrained and learned through hands-on experience with the help of the expatriates who mentored them.

In about 1927, the British Solomon Islands Protectorate recognised Church-operated schools by providing school grant funds to foster mission education programs, mainly for technical education (Moore, 2013). This arrangement had positive impacts on the improvement of schools and the education system in the Solomon Islands.

Table 1.1

Establishment of Schools: First Church-Operated Schools and the Secondary Schools

No	Christian Church/ Education Authority	Year first school started	Year first secondary started	Number of secondary schools in 2014
1	Catholic	1890- 1899	1921-1925	6
2	Church of Melanesia	1893-1896	1917- 1922	5
3	South Sea Evangelical Church	1905 -1906	1926-1930	2
4	Methodist	1902-1910	1913- 1920	1
5	Seventh Day Adventist	1915	1960-1968	14
6	Ministry of Education	1950	1958	2

Source: Moore (2013) and J. Lilo, (personal communication, November 9, 2015)

The introduced education was Western-oriented, in which the children left their parents, homes and traditional ways of learning to sit together in a special room to listen to foreign teachers (Beuka, 2008; Moore, 2013). The main subjects taught were reading, writing, arithmetic and singing. Despite different church beliefs and education authorities, the objectives were similar and twofold. Firstly, local and overseas students learned how to read and understand the Bible so they could convert their own people to Christianity, and influence others to uphold and spread the church doctrine (Beuka, 2008). In addition, education also included learning proper behaviour, mutual respect, maintaining harmony in the community, avoiding inappropriate behaviour, practising healthy habits and learning how to live in a healthy environment (Moore, 2013). However, boys were prioritised over girls to attend school.
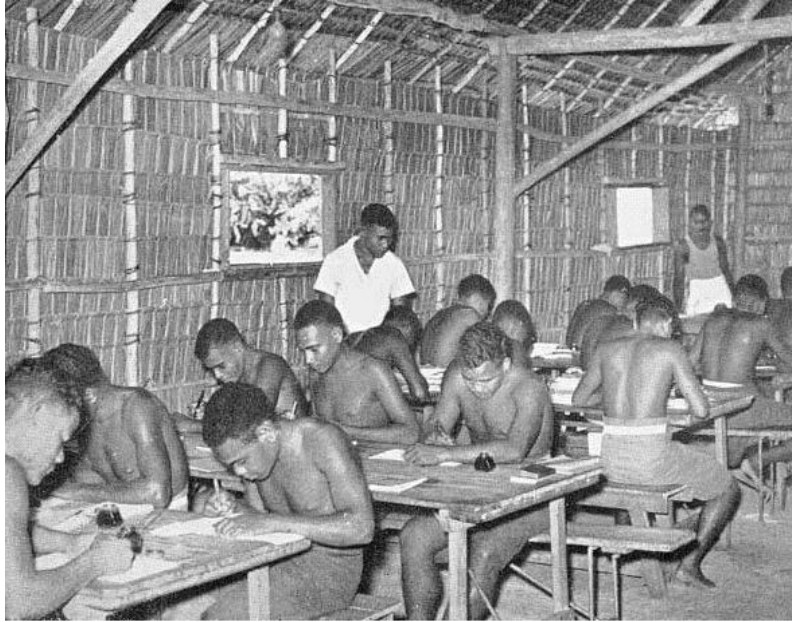
Figure 1.3 Classroom: A typical classroom of the 1950s and 1960s

Source Moore (2013)

1.6.   The Present Education System

1.6.1. Overview

The education system of the Solomon Islands is governed by the Education Act of Solomon Islands 1978 (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007). The Federal Constitution of the Solomon Islands, which also included some changes in the Education Act, was under review in 2016 (Solomon Islands Government, 2016). However, there were some amendments to relevant sections of the Education Act to address the rapid education changes that are occurring and to address the education needs of the Solomon Islands. The changing educational needs and pressure of educational demands pose several challenges for the Solomon Islands government and the schools. Although the Act has long been overdue for review, it still provides the legal basis for the structure of the education system and matters connected with the decentralisation of the education administration to the provincial education boards, Honiara City Council and other registered education authorities (Malasa, 2007).

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) is responsible for national education and training while the education authorities of the

schools are responsible for establishing and running the schools. Currently, there are 30 approved education authorities in the Solomon Islands. Although having their own philosophy, each EA must ensure that the requirements of the Education Act are met by their schools. According to Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (2007), School Boards for secondary and School Committees for primary schools operate at the school level and they are the governing bodies of the schools. Education authorities employ teachers and operate the schools. However, most of the major decisions with regard to the functions of the schools, payment of teachers' salaries and allowances for special responsibilities, national curriculum, teacher training and essential teaching and learning resources are still centralised with the MEHRD (Beuka, 2008; Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007) .

The average annual population growth rate of the Solomon Islands is 2.3 percent. With this growth rate, the school enrolment rate for 6–12 year olds students is 83.3%, the proportion of the population aged 12 and older in primary education is 56.8%, in secondary education 18.9%, tertiary education 4.4% and vocational/professional qualification is only 1.0% (Solomon Islands Government, 2011). This alarming rate has forced the expansion of the education system of the Solomon Islands. One of the reasons students are forced to leave school at the primary level in standard six, and at secondary and tertiary levels, is a lack of space. The academic progress of students in the Solomon Islands from Early Childhood Education to Tertiary level is like the structure of a pyramid as very few manage to get to tertiary levels (Figure 1.4).

Structure of the formal and informal Education System in the Solomon Islands

Formal education option
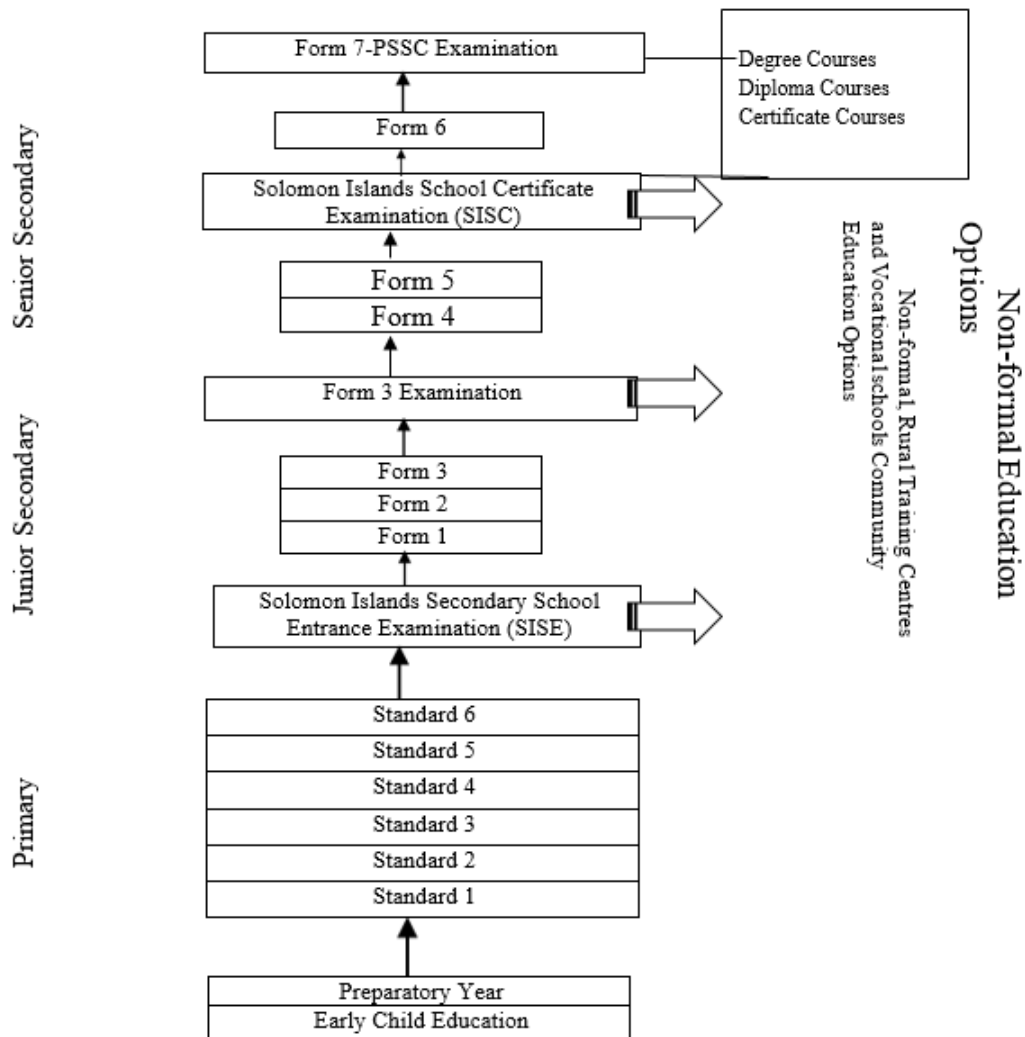
Figure 1.4 Structure of Education system: Formal education in the Solomon Islands

Source: Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (2013).

The current education system consists of five educational stages: early childhood, preparatory, primary, secondary, tertiary and non-formal education. The two levels of secondary education are junior secondary and senior secondary and the three types of secondary schools are Community High School (CHS), Provincial Secondary School (PSS) and National Secondary School (NSS) with a total of 248 secondary schools. These different levels and types of secondary school sometimes affect school change. Of the eight NSSs, two were established and are run by the

state while six are run by five different Christian denomination Education Authorities. Four of these eight NSSs were selected as the focus of this study.

Terms that are used interchangeably within various levels in the education systems are class, standard, year and form. In the primary education levels, different education authorities and schools use class, grade, standard or year. Similarly in the secondary education levels, form and year are used. For the purpose of this study, both form and year are used depending on the term the participants of each of the four selected NSSs used in their schools.

1.6.2. Early Childhood Education and Preparatory Level

Before teachers attended formal training in early childhood education at the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education (SICHE) now known as the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), early childhood education (ECE) was commonly provided by the unemployed wives of missionary workers and retired teachers. The curriculum was primarily focused on Christian education and the learning centres were commonly found in the urban centres, mission stations, with a few in the bigger rural communities. In some ways, the enrolment criteria were discriminatory in nature as only highly paid parents could afford to enrol their children.

The concept of ECE was first formally introduced in late 1980 (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007). Prior to the 1990 ECE school-based training program, almost all the early childhood teachers were untrained, but parents' demand and intakes for ECE increased rapidly. With the growing pressure, an ECE program was first offered at the Solomon Islands teachers' training institution in 1998.

1.6.3. Primary Level

Solomon Islands primary education starts with the preparatory level then moves to years one to six, which is the highest primary level. In the Solomon Islands, formal education at primary level is not compulsory. This is one of the reasons why only 60% of primary-age children attend school (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007).

Normally, students' transition between standards (in standard one to standard six) is based on their academic performance in the final examination in term four. This is a national examination which is prepared by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD). This means that a student who fails to meet the minimum progression requirement cannot move to the next level. This means that students can spend more than one year in a level if they do not perform well in the term four school examination. Sometimes students voluntarily leave school for a few years then enrol again. This contributes to big age differences when students enrol in Form 1 at secondary school.

The transition between standard 6 in the primary level and Form 1 in the secondary level is determined by the Solomon Islands Secondary School Entrance Examination (SISEE) results. Due to limited spaces at secondary level, the majority of the students are forced to leave school at the end of their primary education. To address these primary school dropouts, the community high school (CHS) was introduced.

1.6.4. Secondary Schools: Levels and Types

The two levels of secondary schools are junior secondary school, which is commonly known as Community High School (CHS) and senior secondary school. The main intention of establishing CHSs was to provide secondary education for Forms 1, 2 and 3 based on the existing category of secondary schools which emphasised technical subjects (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007). Provincial Secondary Schools (PSSs) and National Secondary Schools (NSSs), the two senior levels of secondary schools, provide secondary education for Forms 1 to 7 and select students across the Solomon Islands who are more academically capable. Within the level of Junior secondary school and senior secondary school are the three categories of secondary schools: the CHSs, PSSs and NSSs. Teachers who have higher teaching qualifications can teach across all three types of secondary schools.

Different countries use different terms and levels for school education in secondary school. Two common terms and levels used in many countries are Form and Year. The Solomon Islands education system is currently using Form but slowly

converting to Year. Table 1.2 shows the difference between the use of Form levels in the Solomon Islands and Year levels in Australia.

Table 1.2

Secondary School Education Level: Level of the Solomon Islands Secondary Schools and Australia Secondary Schools

Solomon Islands Secondary school levels	Australia Secondary school levels
Form 1	Year 7
Form 2	Year 8
Form 3	Year 9
Form 4	Year 10
Form 5	Year 11
Form 6	Year 12
Form 7 - University of the South Pacific Foundation Program	Tertiary

1.6.4.1. Community high school.

The Community High Schools (CHSs) emerged from some of the selected existing primary schools. CHSs were introduced in the Solomon Islands in the mid-1990s. They were established and supported by their local communities in terms of funding, building materials and labour, with the help of education authorities and the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD). Although the communities established the CHSs, for administrative purposes the schools were registered by provincial education authorities, Church authorities or private organisations.

Enrolment catchment areas and contributing schools include the local primary schools and nearby communities. Students from different communities who enrol at CHSs are usually accommodated in home-stay arrangements with their relatives. Similarly, teachers in the locality of the CHSs are given priority to teach in the CHSs. CHSs should only enrol students from forms 1 to 3 but due to pressure from parents and demand for higher forms, many CHSs offer secondary education from Forms 1 to 5.

1.6.4.2. Provincial secondary school.

Provincial Secondary Schools (PSSs) are run by provincial education authorities with a strict selection of students from within the respective province. Initially, the PSS curriculum focused on vocational skills, aiming at creating self-employment in the job market (Sikua, 2002). With this aim, PSSs offered education in Forms 1, 2 and 3 only. However, pressure from parents and aspirations for more academically-oriented secondary school curriculums had created a shift to adopt the NSS curriculum, which is more academic (Sikua, 2002). Priority in student selection for PSSs is given to the hosting province, after the NSSs select the students with the high scores in the national examinations.

The infrastructure in the PSSs favours male students since there are more male students' dormitories than female students' dormitories (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007). Female students were normally excluded from the formal education system because of the Melanesian cultural attitudes towards girls and weak support from parents. However, the 50 percent gender equality enrolment policy of the Ministry of Education was introduced in 2005. This policy has provided more opportunity for more female students to attend secondary school. Initially when the gender equality policy was introduced, girls were selected to attend school with lower national examination results than boys just to maintain the 50:50 ratio.

1.6.4.3. National secondary schools.

The National Secondary Schools (NSSs), which are the focus of this study, often select more academically capable students from the Solomon Islands Secondary Entrance Examination (SISEE) results in standard 6, Solomon Islands Form 3 (SIF3) results in form 3 and the Solomon Islands Secondary Certificate (SISC) examination results in form 5. In 2014, Solomon Islands had only eight NSSs and they are all boarding schools.

One of the difficulties faced in the secondary levels is that "it is difficult to separate junior secondary from national secondary since most secondary teachers in a school will teach classes at both junior and senior form levels" (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007, p. 67). However, NSSs

certainly attract well qualified and experienced teachers because of good school facilities, the locality of the schools, the status of the schools, and the high academic capabilities of the students. Almost all the teachers and principals are highly qualified compared to the staff in PSSs and CHSs. The education authorities also prioritise the posting of highly qualified teachers to NSSs because of their national status. Often expatriate teachers were posted to the NSSs (Beuka, 2008). According to the Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (2013), all three categories of secondary schools still experience a shortage of qualified teachers.

There is gender discrimination against female teachers and female students in the secondary schools (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007). Akao (2008) found that the "*marginalization of women continues in the Solomon Islands through discriminatory actions and attitudes towards women in leadership positions in secondary schools*" (p.137). This discriminatory practice is based on the Melanesian cultural beliefs meaning that males are regarded as more important than females in leadership and formal education.

In the absence of more recent information on the statistics for secondary school teachers in the Solomon Islands, (see Table 1.3) gives a picture of the situation in 2005.

Table 1.3

Secondary school teachers: Number of secondary school teachers according to provinces

No	Province	Number of all secondary school teacher		
		Male	Female	Total
1	Central	31	7	38
2	Choiseul	15	11	26
3	Guadalcanal	100	34	134
4	Honiara	109	51	160
5	Isabel	59	5	64
6	Makira & Ulawa	51	18	69
7	Malaita	188	58	246
8	Rennell & Bellona	6	1	7
9	Temotu	26	8	34
10	Western	113	47	160

Source: Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development. (2007.

In the NSSs, principals and deputy principals are the school leaders. Thus, they should spend 50-75% of their time on teaching and 25-50% on management and administration tasks (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2011). The normal workload for the Registrar, Heads of Department, Heads of subjects and classroom teachers is 40 hours per week. This workload includes 30 teaching periods of 40 minutes. All NSS teachers are expected to spend two hours a day performing other school-related duties (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2011).

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources has proposed that in the future, NSSs and PSSs should enrol students in Forms 4,5,6 and 7 only (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007). The NSSs and PSSs have indicated that they find it quite challenging to enrol students in Forms 1, 2 and 3 due to the high demand and pressure for enrolment in Forms 4, 5, 6 and 7 (Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2013). The desired change to enrol students in Forms 4, 5, 6 and 7 only requires careful policy analysis based on relevant data.

The Ministry of Public Service in the national government is responsible for advertising vacant teaching posts, recruiting and appointing staff for the state-operated NSSs. Therefore, the principals, teachers and ancillary staff of the two state-operated NSSs are Solomon Islands Government employees (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2011). Teachers who teach in the provincial and church-operated schools are not government employees, but the national government pays their salary and other entitlements. The average number of teachers in the NSSs is 24 while the average number of student enrolment for Forms 1 to 7 is 560. The student and teacher ratio is set by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development

1.6.5. Tertiary Education

The prominent providers of tertiary education in the Solomon Islands are the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), the University of the South Pacific (USP), the University of Goroka, the Pacific Adventist University (PAU) and a few other overseas universities and colleges. Some of the tertiary education providers

include universities and colleges that have affiliations with churches and private education authorities in the Solomon Islands. For example, John Coleridge Patterson University offers teacher training under the Church of Melanesia while Fulton College acts similarly for the Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA). No student accommodation is provided by any of the universities except SINU. Therefore, many courses are offered either via distance and flexible learning modes or as Summer schools.

The Solomon Islands National University (SINU) is a state institution with five schools. It provides tertiary education, technical and vocational training with qualifications ranging from certificates and diplomas to degrees. Currently, it is the only state institution in the country that provides teacher training. The school of education and humanities provides teacher training for early childhood teachers, primary school teachers, and secondary school teachers. In addition, church-funded or private education providers offer courses in Rural Training Centres (RTC) and Community Based Training (CBT) (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007).

1.7. Research Intention

With my experience teaching the teacher trainees at the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), I came to realise the importance of conducting this study to explore how teachers perceive change and how they respond to it. To learn how teachers respond to identified change, this study seeks to answer the overarching question:

What can be learned from how teachers respond to change in four Solomon Islands national secondary schools?

Four sub-questions have also been developed to assist in answering this overarching question. These sub-questions are also used as the basis of the structure of the chapters on the findings in each school and the discussion of the overall cross-case comparisons.

Sub-questions

1. What do teachers identify as change in their secondary school?
2. How do teachers respond to the identified change?
3. How do the school culture and the school ethos influence teachers' responses?
4. What are the teachers' contributions to successful school change?

1.8.   Outcomes and Significance

The intension of this study was to develop a framework for enabling teachers to respond positively to school change in NSSs in the Solomon Islands. The findings of this study may be generalised as a model for other national secondary schools in the Solomon Islands. For teachers and school leaders, it aims to provide an approach to help them to respond more positively and adopt new and more productive ways of implementing successful change. For the Ministry of Education, Education Authorities and other funding agencies for the schools, it is anticipated that this study can provide guiding principles and establish sets of important targets for short, medium- and long-term change for schools, on which they can base their funding policies and resource commitments. As the Solomon Islands is a developing country with little local educational research, this study is intended to provide a foundation and baseline information for policies and practices for future teachers, school leaders, and education authorities. Another aim of this study is to contribute to the existing course content of the education program offered at the only teacher training institution in the Solomon Islands. Finally, it may also provide a framework for schools in other Melanesian countries in the region to prepare for school change challenges in the twenty-first century.

1.9.   Structure of the Thesis

This thesis has nine chapters, which systematically explore how teachers responded to change in four Solomon Islands national secondary schools (NSSs).

Chapter 1 presents a brief background to the study. It outlines the organisation of this thesis and describes the researcher and the understanding I bring to this study,

presents an overview of the Solomon Islands and its education system and states the research intention. An overview of the structure of the thesis is also presented

Chapter 2 reviews of the relevant literature related to this study.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology used for this study. This includes the research problem, research paradigm, and definitions of qualitative research and the interpretive approach to qualitative research. The research design covers case studies, research strategies, the research process, and data analysis. This chapter further outlines the trustworthiness of qualitative research and the ethical considerations and limitations of this study.

Chapters 4-7 present the case study findings. Chapter 4 presents case study one at Mountainway NSS; Chapter 5 presents case study two, Valleyway NSS; Chapter 6 deals with case study three, Hillway NSS; and Chapter 7 presents case study four, Highway NSS. All four case studies have similar structures. In each case, section one describes the setting of the schools, the education authority, the principal and the style of leadership. Section two addresses research sub-questions one and two, section three addresses sub-question three and section four addresses sub-question four.

Chapter 8 provides a cross-case analysis of four themes that emerged from the findings in all four case studies and the influence of school ethos and school culture.

Chapter 9 presents the conclusions and implications for practice, in the form of a framework for enabling teachers' responses to school change, recommendations for improvement on teachers' responses to change, and concludes with a discussion of the limitations of this study, final remarks and personal reflections.

The next chapter provides a review of the relevant literature.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to this study. The review begins with general world views about organisational change then narrows the focus to school change in the context of the Solomon Islands secondary schools. Following the general discussion of organisational change, the literature related to creating school change is reviewed, including the relevance of a shared school vision. Next, the importance of school culture in relation to teachers' responses to change is reviewed, followed by an examination of school ethos, focusing on its definition and how it influences teachers in the school. The review of the literature on principals and whole school leadership centres on the roles of principals in school change and is followed by a discussion of studies on the involvement of teachers in school change and professional learning communities. Finally, this chapter examines some of the educational changes in schools in the Solomon Islands. Due to the unavailability of literature at the school level, these educational changes focus only on the changes the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development has mandated for schools across the country. The final section also presents a review of the literature on some of the factors affecting teachers' responses in the Solomon Islands schools in general.

2.2. Organisational Change

The literature on organisational change, including school institutions, highlights several strategies that encourage positive change (Demirttas, 2012; Lhospital & Gregory, 2009; Serrat, 2013). These strategies map the directions to be taken in order to achieve the desired goals and aims of the institutions. Lhospital and Gregory (2009) describe the activities required for change as 'change interventions'. These planned change activities are performed by principals and teachers at the school level. Demirttas (2012) explains that these interventions influence an organisation's new ways of thinking, and its actions. To advance and maintain initiatives for interventions, Serrat (2013) explains that interventions use policies, programs, approaches, training and projects to increase their effectiveness.

Organisational change is thus theorised as a measurable social change initiative that forms the basis for strategic planning, on-going decision-making and evaluation in the organisation. It requires clear achievable goals with indicators of success and develops strategies to achieve goals (Demirttas, 2012; Serrat, 2013). Thus, change is a planned type of intervention. This view is supported in a study by the Evidence Based-Intervention Work Group (2005), which states that theories about changes include informing the intended recipients of change about the proposed change before they make decisions either to accept it or not. If a change is accepted, individuals develop attitudes that can help to collaboratively implement change. To support implementation and continuity of change, constructive decisions are made in various ways during the change process.

Linking individuals with different personalities, views, behaviours and attitudes during the change process is a real challenge as change can be difficult (Bovey & Hede, 2001; Morgan, 2006). Thus, in the school setting, initiators of change and change agents have to be tactful and discerning when involving teachers. A great motivator for a team is to have a sense of ownership and satisfaction (Morgan, 2006; Schein, 2004). Similarly, Meier, Pardue, and London (2012) found that one effective way to maximise collaborative involvement of stakeholders for change, is by building "positive relationships, two way interactions, and effective communication" (p. 14).

2.2.1. School Vision for Creating Change

A school vision for change provides direction and a driving force that can get the school to achieve positive change despite the challenges it encounters. A large and growing number of studies have investigated the connections and relationships between positive school change and the presence of effective principals and qualified teachers in the school (Sarafidou & Nikolaids, 2009; Wagner & Kegan, 2006). Together, these studies indicated that the success of the school's intended change depends on the vision of the principal that is shared with the teachers, and how the teachers respond to it. Brinson and Steiners (2012) suggest that because of the importance of vision for change to a school, it must be shared and cleared with the school community and, if possible, other supportive communities. The principal and

teachers need to organise regular meetings to share and reiterate the school's vision and discuss the changes that are being introduced both from within the school and from external influences and decide how they collectively want to respond to it.

Principals and teachers must be consulted about any change to be introduced to the school and should not be coerced to accept it. They know the school better than any other people, which allow them to share their views, give advice and make suggestions based on the school context. Effective communication and consultation give teachers a sense of ownership of school change that motivates them to respond positively to change and reform in the school (Wrigley, 2013). As the head of the school, the principal is responsible and accountable for whatever change is introduced into the school, whether it is voluntary or mandatory (Hoppey & McLeskey, 2010; Park & Jeong, 2013; Sarafidou & Nikolaids, 2009). Major decisions for school change have to be endorsed by the principal in consultation with the teachers before implementation. Implementers of school change can either be groups of teachers, individual teachers, or administrators who have relevant skills and knowledge that relate to the planned change.

Much has been published on teacher collaboration and its importance. In the implementation stage of school change (Evidence Based-Intervention Work Group, 2005), school leaders and teachers need to work collaboratively in order to build trust between teachers and principals and trust amongst teachers (Christophersen, Elstad, & Turmo, 2011). Good working relationships and team work in the school help the teachers to share ideas, solve problems together and learn from other teachers to enhance knowledge, skills and talents that enable them to respond positively to school change. Wagner and Kegan (2006) state that respectful and trusting relationships between teachers encourage them to learn from each other and to take the risks involved in school change. Fullan (2001) notes that good relationships remove distrust, fear and dissatisfaction and allow teachers to feel safe enough to explore change. This means it is important to share the vision for school change with the teachers. They need to be consulted, involved and part of the process of school change to give them the sense of ownership that motivates them to respond positively to school change.

Schools can achieve effective change if they involve parents and communities in their school improvement programs. Communities have manpower, people with special talents, knowledge and skills, and resources that are needed to enhance teachers' responses to school change. Therefore, the principal and teachers need to effectively involve the wider community in school improvement. According to the work of Brinson and Steiners (2012), lack of involvement as a result of poor communication between the school principal and teachers forms a weak foundation on which to create, develop and build a change effort. Education authorities and communities both want good schools for their students; thus instinctively they are willing to be involved in positive school change (Sarafidou & Nikolaids, 2009). This reinforces the need for the principal and teachers to share their school vision with communities to give them clear mental images of what they want to achieve.

2.3. School Culture

Different meanings and explanations exist in the literature for the term "culture" (Erickson, 1987; Gaziel, 1997; Schoen & Teddlie, 2008) and there is no single definition agreed upon by scholars. The term "culture" has been used interchangeably and synonymously with the terms "climate", "ethos" and "saga" (Stolp, 1994). The culture of a group of people may be defined as:

> [A] pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaption and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 2004, p. 12).

The differences in definitions of school culture have been influenced by the context of discussions and by educators' perceptions of school issues, disciplines and subject areas, so it is not surprising that there is no mutual agreement on the definition of school culture (Prosser, 1999). Peterson and Terrence (2002) regard culture in the school context as a set of standards, belief systems, value, ways of life, rituals and how people work and confront challenges together in the school. Similarly, Gaziel (1997) refers to school culture as the "character of a school as it reflects deep patterns of values, beliefs and traditions that have been formed over the

years" (p. 311). In a review of the study of school culture, Prosser (1999) supports these views by referring to school culture as the "values, beliefs, norms of behaviour, social structure, social systems and social groups" (p. 12) that are shared in the school. In these three studies, there is overall agreement that school culture is all about people's beliefs and behaviours, norms and expected standards, which influence how people respond to each other in the school social system.

Patterns and standards are developed and shared in the school community through the regular behaviour of principals, teachers and students as they work and interact together to achieve their goals. This means that in the school context, culture refers to the principles, values and practices the school community upholds and achieves through its interactions. In his major study of culture, Schein (2004) explains that culture is embedded in the skills the members of the group display to accomplish given tasks. Therefore, in the school it is how school leaders, teachers and students behave, interact, relate to each other, the type of skills they have and the language they use when they interact in the school.

It is apparent that school culture in the national secondary schools (NSSs) in the Solomon Islands is commonly influenced by the Melanesian culture and the predominant culture and practices of the ethnic groups in the school. The influence of Melanesian culture in the school community affects how people relate to each other, their engagement in school activities and their ways of resolving problems. In Melanesian culture, the school community's belief as to who is the leader in the school is based on the individual's ability to manage complex relationships within the school (Sanga & Walker, 2005). This Melanesian cultural perception can influence the school community to divert their respect from the leadership of formally appointed leaders. In Melanesian culture, recognition of leadership is not always dependent on how leaders are appointed by the education authority but on how individuals use their skills to serve the common interests of the school (Sanga & Walker, 2005).

2.4. School Ethos

According to Glover and Coleman (2005) and McLaughlin (2005), the concept of 'ethos' is difficult to analyse because it is similar to and often described in terms of ideas related to ambience, atmosphere, climate, culture and ethical environment. In relation to ethos and humanity, Hannah and Avolio (2011) explain that ethos relates to practical skills and wisdom, virtue and goodness, and goodwill toward others in their community. This explanation helps us to understand the relationship between teachers and students and the reason why they may "act in particular ways and why their actions can be different in different schools" (Bragg & Manchester, 2011, p. 5). In another view in relation to authority, Donnelly (2000) explains that ethos relates to the "wishes of those who command authority within an organisation [who] are committed to what is deemed natural, proper and right" (p. 136). In Church-operated schools, the church hierarchy sets out the purposes and expectations the school should live up to. These explanations indicate that ethos is about good sense, good moral character and good will, meaning that individuals make good practical judgements, behave honestly, respect others, have a sense of right and wrong, act appropriately, and are friendly, helpful and cooperative.

The variety of definitions and explanations of ethos confirm that there is no single 'correct' meaning of the term, but rather a range of meanings which combine to provide a persuasive definition in terms of practical use and application in the educational arena. For the purpose of this study, ethos thus refers:

> Inter-alia, to human activities and behaviour, to the human environment within which the enterprises take place (especially the social system of an organisation), to behaviour and activity which has already occurred, to a mood or moods which are pervasive within this environment, to social interactions and their consequences, to something which is experienced, to norms rather than to exceptions, and to something that is unique. (Allder, 1993, p. 60)

This study also uses McLaughlin's (2005) explanation that ethos "relat[es] to the core values of the school and is deeply fundamental in its life and work" (p. 310).

The school ethos links with and embraces school policies and procedures, cultural values and the social and physical environment of the school. School ethos can be referred to as the formal and informal expressions of the school and the school members and " these expressions tend to reflect the prevailing cultural norms, assumptions and beliefs" (Donnelly, 2000, p. 136). This concept of ethos depends on school contexts and school expectations. Sometimes school ethos is regarded by teacher leaders as an obscure concept, but an important one (Donnelly, 1999). Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) explain that the influence of positive school ethos helps to improve school effectiveness, support teachers' professional learning, students' learning and strengthens coexistence in civil society. Similarly, Nelson (2008) and Sandoval, Rodríguez-Sedano, and Cadena (2011) found that school ethos is associated with positive outcomes for students' academic performance and the implementation of positive change in the school. In explaining the ethos of the Victorian school, Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) state that a good ethos nurtures students who perform well academically and also creates an environment that encourages teacher leaders to release their potential for other leadership roles in school development.

School ethos is also regarded as providing support and control in the school (Markham, Young, Sweeting, West, & Aveyard, 2012). This means that sometimes a school's ethos exercises a certain amount of power to condition students and staff members of the school to think and act in acceptable manners (Donnelly, 1999, 2000). Such enforcement influences and shapes individuals in the school to commit to what is right and to act within an agreed set of standards.

Literature on Christian ethos has highlighted that while the ethos of all schools is academically oriented, the ethos of Church-run schools is more focused on Christian beliefs (Anglican Church Southern Queensland, 2013; Hill, 2010; Queensland Catholic Education Commission, 2014). In many religious-based schools, it is obvious that the school ethos reflects the church ethos. It is common in Christian schools that fundamental beliefs, Christian faith, Christian hope, love and assumptions are based on the Bible and are commonly reflected in the school logo (Anglican Church Southern Queensland, 2013). However, the similarities and differences in church schools' ethos are based on each church's fundamental beliefs

and values. For instance, the Seventh Day Adventist school ethos ensures that professional development of the Seventh Day Adventist teachers and teacher leaders is based on Adventist faith and highlights Adventist distinctiveness (Hill, 2010). The Archdiocese of Hobart (2012) explains that in Catholic schools the ethos is focused significantly on the concept of a faith based on gospel values. In their study of Catholic school ethos, Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) found that "religious education and religious worship will be provided in accordance with rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church" (p. 19). This practice was supported by Wasuka (2006) who found that through church school ethos, the Anglican Brothers had strong relationships with Anglican schools and were invited to be involved in school change. Hartwick (2007) found that teacher leaders in church schools were more successful in their assigned roles if their practices incorporated spiritual and religious facets of beliefs. This belief is also supported by Hill (2010) who found that in SDA schools, teachers must participate in worship sessions before engaging in teaching and other school activities (Oncescu & Giles, 2012).

Wasuka (2006) notes that teachers in Church of Melanesia schools must be familiar with the Anglican faith and ethos in order to strengthen Christian values, and promote unity, peace, justice and equity to make positive change. The school's ethos and the church's ethos are both part of school life that encourage teachers and students "to strive for education that is founded on Christian values of faith, hope and love" (Wasuka, 2006, p. 9). In state-run schools in the Solomon Islands, teachers and students are expected to have knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable them to make a living, live in peace and in harmony with others and their environment and have fair opportunities for a better life (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007).

As such, school leaders, teachers and students in the Church-run NSSs are expected to uphold Christian values and standards in the school. They must demonstrate their faith to others and perform Christian rituals in the school. According to the Anglican Church Southern Queensland (2013), "Anglican schools are recognised and affirmed as part of the mission of the Church and as such should bear witness to it in all they do" (p. 2). Furthermore, Church schools should accept

diversity, have respect for others, work hard, and be open to ideas and debate (Adventist Schools Australia, 2016; Anglican Church Southern Queensland, 2013; Queensland Catholic Education Commission, 2014). The school ethos is like a 'hidden curriculum' in the way that it influences the school environment and impacts on the life of the school community (Queensland Catholic Education Commission, 2014). In a similar manner, the Anglican Church Southern Queensland (2013) states that Church school developments must be based on a vision of the Gospel, with a loving and caring approach; the school treats each individual as a 'child of God'.

In the Solomon Islands, Religious Education is compulsory in many church NSSs but it is an optional subject for students in state schools. Fundamental religious beliefs provide a framework that guides and influences the choice and the type of school change in church-run schools. Moreover, all the Church-run NSSs in the Solomon Islands are boarding schools with a vision for nurturing students to develop self-reliance in various school activities (Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development, 2007).

2.5.   The Principal and Whole School Leadership

Much of the current literature about the role of the principal pays particular attention to the areas of teaching and learning, administration, maintenance of buildings and school budget. One of the focuses on the role of school principals is the part they play in school change. Effective school principals are able to develop a vision and goals for targeted school change and communicate them to their staff, with clear responsibilities (Holmes, Clement, & Albright, 2013). They establish working conditions that allow teachers to have clear directions, and make the most of their motivation and commitment to school change and reform (Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008).

In the case of the Solomon Islands, the responsibilities of the school principal are stipulated in the Solomon Islands Teaching Service Handbook. In addition, under the directions and instructions of the education authorities, principals take the leadership role in the daily operation of the schools. As in other countries, the

Department of State Education and district school boards also give directions for the principals' roles (Holmes et al., 2013).

The leadership roles and responsibilities of school principals are varied in nature depending on the school context. According to Glover and Coleman (2005), the principal acts as a manager, coordinator, and delegator. Geijsel, Sleegers, Leithwood, and Jantzi (2003) describe the principal as someone in the school who is responsible for assuring instruction is aligned with academic standards, maintains and continues improvement in the school infrastructure, and oversees the school budget. In addition, effective school principals have an intrinsic desire to bring about change and reform.

According to Crowther, Ferguson, and Hann (2002), in parallel leadership, teacher leaders and their school principals work collaboratively, with clear shared visions, as they engage in different activities for school change. Teachers and principals work in parallel to support each other in professional learning to enable teachers to respond positively to school change. Principals as parallel leaders bring together "teachers, administrators, and support staff in shared professional learning [and have one] other powerful effect ... to sustain focus and momentum in spite of changes in staff" (Crowther et al., 2002, p. 61).

The success of schools in achieving their desired goals depends very much on the school leaders (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). Many researchers of school development have found that success rests on the style of the leadership of the principal (Geijsel et al., 2003; Hulpia, Devos, & Keer, 2011). While there are different styles of leadership, Hulpia et al. (2011) found that distributed leadership has a strong influence on teachers' organisational commitment and is strongly related to better outcomes. In distributed leadership, differences between teachers and school leaders become smaller and teachers are committed to their leadership roles and responsibilities (Spillane, 2006). Teachers can participate fully in school decision making and are actively involved in school change if they believe that a highly cooperative leadership team leads the school (Hulpia et al., 2011).

In addition to distributed leadership for school change, Geijsel et al. (2003) note that transformational leadership stimulates change and innovation. Therefore, principals' transformational leadership style motivates teachers to do more than they originally intended and often more than they thought possible (Shields, 2010). In this style of leadership, principals energise the school community by creating new cultures that encourage working together and discussions on professional practice.

An enabling style of leadership allows principals to see the overall school plan and give each teacher responsibility based on their knowledge, skills and talents. The principals do not do the tasks alone; instead they delegate to the teachers and enable them to perform their tasks effectively. Eclipse Research Consultants (2004) state that tasks are strategically organised in a way that allows teachers to share with other members of the team to perform the tasks. As an enabler, the principal facilitates close working relationships with each of the teachers by asking questions, listening to their concerns and suggestions, and by being interested and understanding what they feel about the given tasks. When delegating tasks and enabling teachers to perform new tasks effectively, the leader organises ideas, sets priorities, and provides resources, training and feedback (Klump, 2014). Principals with enabling styles of leadership help teachers to work as a team to establish effective communication, share decision making and act in a concerted way. Enabling teachers to perform tasks effectively is the aim of enabling principals. Thus, at times principals who lack the knowledge and skills to support the teachers can also select teachers who have the required knowledge and skills and share the leadership role.

Principals' roles and responsibilities are many and can be complex depending on the school context, and the nature of the needs and issues that emerge. Therefore, principals who have visions for school change share and/or engage teachers who have the required skills, abilities and knowledge to perform school change. Geijsel et al. (2003) note that demands for school change rely on teachers' commitment to change. School principals who respect and trust their teachers involve them in school change. Bryk and Schneider (2003) emphasise the importance of trust, noting that "without interpersonal respect, social exchanges may cease" (p. 41). Thus, respect

and trust between school leaders and teachers encourage initiatives for school changes to diffuse across schools.

As a culturally specific manifestation of this, in the case of NSSs in the Solomon Islands, it is common practice as an indication of respect and trust for school leaders to select teachers who are in the ethnic group close to the schools or are senior teachers, and to use the wantok system (the principals' relatives or those whom they know personally) when assigning leadership roles.

2.6. The Involvement of Teachers in School Change

2.6.1. Teacher Leaders

There are many studies describing teacher leaders. Danielson (2006) and Frost (2008) list similar characteristics of teacher leaders, emphasising the set of skills that teachers demonstrate in the classroom with their students and also extend to others, both within the school and outside of the school. Crowther et al. (2002) point out that individual teachers have knowledge, skills and experience essential for school reform. This view is further explained by Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and Vetter (2012), who state that with these potentials, a teacher leader can give advice and share ideas and assistance with others to identify the areas that need improvement in the school and devise suggested responses. For the purpose of this study, the term teacher leader implies that a teacher's influence in leadership extends beyond the classroom (Ngang, Abdulla, & Mey, 2010; Spillane, 2006).

Wrigley (2003) refers to teacher leaders using the concept of 'hope'. Driven by their successful experiences with their students' learning and a feeling of justice and care for each other, teachers can contribute to reforming a school (Andrews & Crowther, 2002; Crowther et al., 2002; Wrigley, 2003). Teacher leaders have high expectations and see themselves as agents of reform who can bring change and hope to the school (Crowther et al., 2002; Vannest, Soares, Harrison, Brown, & Parker, 2009). A teacher leader is optimistic, and generally believes that any situation in the school can be improved (Danielson, 2006).

Often, as part of a collegial team in the school, teacher leaders attract and retain support from other teachers in the school in involving parents and community and adhering to school policies and procedures. Similarly, the interpersonal working relationships amongst teachers have a great impact on teachers' sense of fairness and sense of ownership of school change, as they work to improve and strengthen their commitment to change for the better in the school (Danielson, 2006).

Teachers find their way into teacher leader positions in a variety of ways. According to Spillane (2006), in some schools, through the democratic process and transparency, teachers are voted into leadership positions by fellow teachers; whereas in other cases, teacher leaders are appointed by the school leader. The criteria for selecting teacher leaders depend on the position, the standard of the school, the teacher's experience, skills, ability, and attitude (Chrispeels, 2004; Murphy, 2005; Spillane, 2006). Chrispeels (2004) explains that by using the school's monitoring mechanisms, teachers who have the potential to take leadership roles for school change can be easily identified.

Generally teachers are motivated to take leadership roles when there is division of labour to perform different functions, when they work together in a collaborative approach and when they perform the same roles without or with very minimal supervision from other leaders (Chrispeels, 2004; Spillane, 2006). With distributive leadership, teachers work with the principal and other teachers in the school with a sense of ownership for improving students' learning. However, O'Hair and Odell (1995) found that not all teachers are ready to take up distributed leadership roles. Such teachers usually respond with 'we are just teachers'; their lack of confidence is due to the adoption of a 'wait and see' attitude (Danielson, 2006; Murphy, 2005; O'Hair & Odell, 1995; Spillane, 2006). Such teachers need to be empowered and motivated in order to use their potential and respond positively to school improvement.

One threat to the realisation and release of potential is wariness of the issues related to the proposed change (Murphy, 2005). Similarly, Bovey and Hede (2001) posit that the uncertainty of how human behaviour will be influenced by the success

or failure of the change outweighs any other aspect of the school change process. According to Milteer (2010),

> We often fear we will look foolish and stupid during the learning process. We feel easily intimidated by those who seem to be more technically minded. Many times we refuse to learn about a new phone system or computer simply because we feel inadequate. (p. 42)

Hargreaves (2005) explains that continuity of school success and positive change depends on strategic planning by the school principals and teachers. However, Fluckiger, Lovett, and Brown (2015) found that teachers are often compliant and controlled by the instructions of their leaderswho impose involvement in school improvement rather than providing opportunity for teachers to think about it.According to Fullan (2002), moral purpose keeps teachers close and motivates them to work as a team to develop better strategies and school plans for accomplishing school goals.

2.6.2. The Role of Motivation

There are many published studies describing the importance of motivation in the workplace using Maslow's theory of motivation (Margolis & McCabe, 2003; Mcinerney & Mcinerney, 2010; Slavin, 2009). While all the five needs presented and discussed in Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory are relevant in this study, safety needs are chosen for the purpose of discussion in this section of the literature review. Safety needs include a feeling of security and well-being. Slavin (2009) states that "personal security, financial security, good health and protection from accidents, harm and their adverse effects are all included in safety needs" (p. 269). In the school, the principal and teachers account for the safety needs of the teachers, students and other members of the school community by providing a safe working and learning environment.

It is crucial for teachers to achieve feelings of professional self-worth, competence, and respect from their previous achievements. This feeling can give teachers a sense of accomplishment and encourage collaboration and work commitment (Whitaker et al., 2009). An excellent way to motivate and inspire

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teachers is for the organisation and the school leaders to be positive towards the teacher leaders. Teachers' efforts and contributions to successful school change must be acknowledged and recognised. According to Whitaker et al. (2009), positive people have a positive effect on the people around them. In the NSSs of the Solomon Islands, the sources of positive influences are commonly expected to stem from the school leaders, head of departments and senior and more experienced teachers.

It has been found that a lagging school and lagging teachers opt for change when external motivation is provided (Whitaker, Whitaker, & Lumpa, 2009). These types of teachers are most likely to be motivated by factors like a good salary, payment for taking extra responsibility, and being appointed to a more recognised teacher leadership positon. They tend to withdraw their support for the leadership of the principal and school improvement when external motivation is not provided. Lieberman and Miller (2004) and Whitaker et al. (2009) explain that teachers who resist change or school improvement are often resistant to hard work. Therefore, for ongoing participation in NSS change, teachers' needs and sources of intrinsic motivation have to be considered and addressed.

2.6.3. The Importance of Trust

Trust is a willingness to depend on or have confidence in another party (Adams, Forsyth, & Mitchell, 2009; Webber, 2002). Trust is the glue that holds the follower to the leader while pursuing a desired goal (Bartram & Casimir, 2007). It is also commonly known as a leading mechanism in a well-functioning organisation and a key element for school effectiveness (Cosner, 2009; Moye, Henkin, & Egley, 2005), and it affects the quality of relationships within the school (Price, 2011). According to Kouzes and Posner, (1993), the cornerstones of trust are credibility and integrity.

A principal's actions and quality of decision-making are the keys for developing and sustaining trust in the teacher leader. First, the principal has to trust the leadership capability of the teacher; likewise teachers must have trust and respect for each other (Cosner, 2009; Gillespie & Mann, 2004; Joseph & Winston, 2005). Trust in a teacher's capacity is commonly based on the teacher's quality of decision-

making that encourages school reform, and in their ability to effectively and efficiently manage their assigned roles (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). A teacher's good communication across the school attracts and retains the principal's and colleagues' trust. Followers render support as evidence of trust when they see positive reform and change due to effective communication (Joseph & Winston, 2005; Price, 2011).

Gaining and retaining trust from followers allows teacher leaders to make good decisions and encourages determination to accomplish the assigned tasks and to work effectively (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998). Teachers' commitment and determination to accomplish change increases when they feel that they are valued and trusted to take leadership roles through power sharing (Price, 2011). Due to trust, distributing power to teachers increases their active participation in school change and also encourages an innovative teaching approach (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2008; Price, 2011). With mutual trust between members of the school team, there are collective efforts towards problem solving and decision making. According to Cosner (2009), when individuals trust one another, conflict resolution is made easier and more productive. Positive school change prevails if there is collective trust amongst followers. The ripple of change and reform will be felt across the school. Bryk and Schneider (2003) stated that:

> Strong relational trust also makes it more likely that reform initiatives will diffuse broadly across the school, because trust reduces the sense of risk associated with change. When school professionals trust one another and sense support from parents, they feel safe to experiment with new practices. (p. 43)

To develop trust in teachers in the school, the selection of teachers to take leadership roles is very important. In schools, typically, principals appoint teacher leaders with the required technical skills, who are influential and have good communication skills (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). In rural schools as in the case of the Solomon Islands, a teacher who is a member of the tribe that owns the land where the school is built is trusted to be an effective teacher leader (Sisiolo, 2010). Moreover, a teacher who is labelled as hardworking, honest, transparent and faithful by the school team gains and retains a lot of trust from others as a teacher leader.

2.6.4. The Formation of Professional Learning Communities

There are numerous published definitions of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs); the range of different meanings and interpretations may be attributed to different perceptions, contexts and cultures. According to Linder, Post, and Calabrese (2012), PLCs involve teachers in school-based on-going professional development. Moreover, according to DuFour (2005), PLCs are groups of educators working and supporting together with shared visions, beliefs and values. PLCs are groups in which new knowledge about teaching and learning and possible intended changes in schools are challenged and critiqued (DuFour, 2005; Linder et al., 2012).

Mullen (2009) describes PLCs from a school organisational perspective as a reform initiative for the school staff aimed at improving the school. From a cultural perspective, PLCs transform pedagogy and other (extra) curricular activities through community support programs. From a leadership perspective, the community and the school expect and encourage teacher leaders to turn the school into a collaborative learning culture (Doolittle, Sudeck, & Rattigan, 2008; Mullen, 2009; Stoll & Louis, 2007). Interestingly the three PLC perspectives are focused on how teachers can contribute to different aspects of school change. Therefore, while a variety of definitions have been suggested, this study uses definition suggested by Mullen (2009) and DuFour (2005), who view PLCs as collaborative group initiatives with shared visions and beliefs for school change.

PLCs influence teachers' beliefs, values, culture and learning, and in a similar way, teachers influence students' academic achievement (Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Webb, Vulliamy, Sarja, Hämäläinen, & Poikonen, 2009). One of the reasons teachers embrace PLCs is that they feel empowered by having the opportunity to be led and supported "by colleagues in their leadership and new teaching strategies" (Pancucci, 2007, p. 63). Therefore, inspiring and mentoring teachers in leadership roles is an effective way to scaffold teacher leaders.

Teachers and teacher leaders in schools have different beliefs, skills, interests and experiences and belong to different cultural groups; therefore, choice of professional development is considered an individual teacher's decision (Opfer &

Pedder, 2011; Song, 2012; Webb et al., 2009). With freedom of choice, teachers normally opt for the professional development that guarantees options for personal advantage and further advancement. The extent to which a teacher feels valued and trusted by the school motivates that teacher to decide on the direction to take that will lead to positive change for them and the school (Brooks, Adams, & Morita-Mullaney, 2010; Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Stoll & Louis, 2007). Therefore, encouraging PLCs should expand teachers' knowledge, skills and interest in school change.

Fulton and Britton (2011) found in some schools in America that teachers who work in conducive professional learning communities are more satisfied in their teaching career, motivated to take leadership roles for school change and likely to remain teaching in a school for more than three years. In Australia, Conway and Andrews (2016) found that through professional learning communities, teachers embraced and engaged in a school wide approach for school improvement. Therefore, teachers' and theprincipal's collective effort for developing strategies for school improvement coupled with motivation are evidence of a clear moral purpose in the professional learning communities. Lewis (2003) also explains that "not all teachers felt able to engage in collaborative activities – those who embraced the opportunity began to work with their colleagues drawing on their professional knowledge to take some collective responsibility for the pedagogical and behaviour management challenges they faced" (p. 244).

2.7. Educational Change in the Solomon Islands

According to Sullivan (1998), 'educational change' or education reforms and educational improvements are an ongoing and ad hoc process in the Pacific. In attempting to redirect the Solomon Islands for nation building, the Solomon Islands government outlined a national development strategy plan in its 2011-2020 National Development Strategy Plan (Solomon Islands Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination, 2011). This strategic plan stipulated the areas for improvement in education and in schools. Along with the national development strategic plan, the Solomon Islands Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination (2011) reported in the Solomon Islands National Education Action

Plan 2013-2015 that the following areas needed change and improvement at the school level:

- Optimising the use of School Grants by schools and school boards, to increase effectiveness of planning development of schools towards MEHRD standards.
- Improving school-based management and developments.
- Improving teaching and learning.
- Strengthening school-based professional development of teachers.

At the school level, it is undeniable that teachers are major contributors to and implementers of school change. They have deep understanding of the nature of the initiatives in which the school is involved and also of their own involvement (Crowther et al., 2002; Kaniuka, 2012; O'Hair & Odell, 1995).

Quality education is achieved through teachers. Teachers provide values, skills, abilities and help students to learn (Sanga, 1999). Changes are required in the process of advancing and transmitting quality education. However, Booth (1993) found that in the Solomon Islands schools, many teachers are reluctant to become involved in school change. The reasons why NSS teachers act in this manner needs further investigation.

In the community high schools, the principals and village communities assumed that teachers are often reluctant to implement school change due to community pressure, and labelling teachers as incompetent to achieve change (Booth, 1993; Sanga & Maneipuri, 2002). The community and school committee sometimes influence teachers' participation in school change (Malasa, 2007). It is assumed that this may not apply to NSSs as all the NSSs in the Solomon Islands are boarding schools and therefore are not directly linked to a specific community. This helps to protect them from direct influence from communities and politicians.

Micro-politics in schools and land-related issues may also contribute to teachers' refusal to participate and become involved in school change (Sanga & Houma, 2004; Sanga & Maneipuri, 2002). This can adversely affect school change

in the case of the Solomon Islands as most of the lands where the schools are built are tribal lands. Similarly, Kneller (1965) explains that contextual influences and the social status of teachers all influence school change processes. Therefore, it is said that often change at school level is accompanied by role ambiguities and doubts.

According to the Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (2013), national secondary schools in the Solomon Islands have a lack of qualified trained teachers and principals who have educational leadership qualifications. If a school lacks qualified teachers and principals, it will experience difficulty in implementing school change. Such situations, when the school lacks qualified staff, can lead to poor planning and delaying of positive changes, fuel criticism and open up opportunities for rivalry for school leadership positions (Aruhu & Giles, 2011; Malasa, 2007).

Sanga and Maneipuri (2002) found in their study of Solomon Islands secondary schools that although the NSSs experienced a shortage of more qualified teachers, they still attracted more qualified teachers than the community high schools (CHSs) and provincial secondary schools (PSSs). NSS teachers are more qualified academically. Thus, they are the first choice to be consulted, and invited to be involved in national secondary school curriculum reform. They are also seen as more likely to be collaborative, initiate effective teaching methods with confidence, and show willingness to take assigned responsibilities (Sanga & Houma, 2004).

Melanesian culture has influenced many changes in the Solomon Islands NSSs. Therefore, the annual theme for education in the Solomon Islands in 2014 was "education-transformation of attitude and enhancement of leadership to achieve excellence" (Namosuaia, 2014, p. 1). In this approach, indigenous culture is promoted in support of positive change in the schools. This idea had also been introduced by Sanga and Walker (2005), who state that equal emphasis should be given to promoting local culture to make it visible in schools, civil society, the private and public sectors to enable positive change. Sikua (2002) and Malasa (2007) found that many of the recently built secondary schools in the Solomon Islands were established either by communities or as a result of political initiatives. In this study, of the four selected NSSs, three were established and run by Churches and known to

be pioneer schools and one was a state school. One of the driving forces for successful school change is the influence of school ethos. The ethos of each church school is somewhat different as it is related to each denomination's fundamental beliefs, values and practices. For this reason, teachers in each Church-run NSS have to be practicing members of the Church that establishes and runs the particular school, unless they belong to a church that shares almost similar beliefs. In addition, the appointment of teachers in this manner reflects the churches' sense of ownership over schools and their aim of protecting religious beliefs (Malasa, 2007).

In the context of the Solomon Islands, the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development has mandated changes to schools, which the schools are expected to implement within a given timeframe. However, the less qualified teachers in particular are reluctant to respond because they are not prepared for the change. This literature review also highlights that communities have strong influences over changes in schools. This influence is based on Melanesian cultural practices and church influences. Church belief systems have strong influences on changes in secondary schools because Christian beliefs are strong amongst the people.

2.8. Conclusion

The literature provides insights on the nature of change and the factors that influence school change in particular. These factors are connected with organisation; the authorities and the communities that the principal and teachers need to consider in order to create effective change in the school. Highlighted in this literature review are the players and elements that determine the choice of change in the school. These qualities include the vision of the principal, trust, good working relationships and school practices. The nature of these qualities is strongly influenced by the ethos of the school. Ethos also influences the teachers to respond in a particular manner in the school. The literature explains that most of the Church-operated schools adopt their church ethos. Similarly, school culture plays an important role in school change because it contributes to defining and determining teachers' practices and how they respond to change. Teachers, including the principal, are the key players in implementing change. Teachers work under the leadership of the principal. Hence, it is important to establish trust and good working relationships between the teachers

and their principal and share a school vision. The importance of professional learning development to prepare teachers to be involved in school change is also highlighted in the review.

As has already been noted, there is a gap in the literature about how teachers respond to change in the national secondary schools in the Solomon Islands. This study seeks to address that gap. It endeavours to add value to the body of literature relating to school change and in particular contribute to providing literature that will inform future educational research in the Solomon Islands.

In the next chapter, I discuss the methodology and the research design for this study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

Educational research has contributed to knowledge about education and educational practices (Cohen, Manion, & Morrision, 2007). Creswell (2013) explains the various purposes of educational research, including the ability to address gaps in knowledge, extend what people know and investigate what people have not previously considered. Furthermore, case study research conducted by educationists aims to inform people about educational judgements and improve educational action (Cohen et al., 2007; Lichtman, 2010; Stake, 2010).

3.1.1. The Research Problem and Research Questions

There are ongoing, multifaceted changes faced by the national secondary schools in the Solomon Islands. Teachers gauge and respond to ongoing challenges caused by external influences and changes within their schools. Thus, this study has proposed that it is important to listen to the voices of the teachers and learn how they respond to various changes across their schools. Hence, this study sought to identify what could be learned from the way teachers responded to what they identified as change in their national secondary schools and how their school ethos and school culture influenced their responses.

Cohen et al. (2007) assert that investigations are value bound and influenced by investigators by framing, bounding and focusing question(s) on a particular problem. They add that investigation is also influenced by the paradigm employed and the research questions that guide the investigation into the problem. Hence, this study was guided by the overarching research question:

What can be learned from how teachers respond to change in their secondary school?

In order to answer the overarching research question, the following four sub-questions were formulated:

1. What do teachers identify as change in their secondary school?
2. How do teachers respond to the identified change?
3. How do the school culture and the school ethos influence teachers' responses?
4. What are the teachers' contributions to successful school change?

This study has attempted to understand how teachers responded to change in four Solomon Islands national secondary schools. Firstly, I explain the theoretical paradigm supporting this study qualitative research with an interpretive approach and then present the research design, which uses four single case studies. The research strategies used in this study included semi-structured interviews, document analysis, visual documents including photographs, and field notes and observations. I then describe the role of the researcher in the study and introduce the participants. In the final sections I describe the data collection techniques, data analysis, ethical considerations and limitations.

3.2. Research Paradigm

According to Creswell (2013), the four main philosophical assumptions held by researchers in qualitative studies are ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology. These philosophical assumptions constitute the research paradigm and they are the guiding principles of qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A research paradigm embraces interrelated practices and thinking and "shapes how we formulate our problem and research questions . . . and how we seek information to answer the questions" (Creswell, 2013, p. 18). According to Kuhn (1962), paradigm comes from the Greek word paradeigma, which means pattern. Kuhn further explained that the term paradigm refers to a research culture in which the pattern is a set of beliefs, values, and assumptions that the researchers have in common regarding the nature of the research and how it is conducted.

For the purpose of this study, the three philosophical assumptions that are discussed are ontology, epistemology and methodology. According to Creswell, "Ontological issues relate to the nature of reality and its characters" (2013, p. 20), and the epistemological assumptions in this case meant that in order to gain more

understanding of the participants being studied, the researcher went to the study site in order to get as close to the participants as possible. Merriam (2009) explains that ontology and epistemology relate to peoples' beliefs about the world and the characteristics that guide them to know about it. This means different individuals and groups have different world views. These multiple realities can change depending on situation and time. For this reason, it is important for researchers to be where their study participants live and work when they collect data (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2009; Mutch, 2005). Creswell (2013) adds that going out to the field gives researchers opportunities to understand what the participants say and to witness the context of the study.

Qualitative research is conducted according to specific procedures. Creswell (2013) refers to this research procedure as methodology. The procedure used for data collection is constructed based on the researcher's experience and knowledge of data analysis. Processes and techniques in qualitative research are flexible in order to meet research needs (Cohen et al., 2007; M.Q. Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009). Creswell (2013) further explains this flexibility by noting that sometimes during research, the research questions can be changed in order to more effectively answer the research problem.

3.2.1. Qualitative Research

There are many descriptions of qualitative research. However, this study uses the definition provided by Merriam (1998) who describes qualitative research as an umbrella concept encompassing inquiries that help the researcher to gain an understanding of the meaning of a social problem in its natural setting. Using this concept, qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings in such a way as to make sense of them and interpret peoples' ideas and experiences of the way they live (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Merriam, 2009). In such studies, qualitative research is focused on participants' experiences through how they communicate their own perspective and the way they structure their social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Gay & Airassian, 2000). To obtain participants' contextual experiences, the researcher conducts in-depth semi-structured interviews and listens to their real-life experiences in order to understand and make meaning of the context. In such

practices and approaches, qualitative research is not only descriptive, but also interpretive (Merriam, 2009).

The focus of qualitative research is on evidence that can be easily understood within a particular context (Gillham, 2000; Merriam, 2009). Understanding the context of where the research is conducted enables the researcher to investigate cases where little information is available about what is going on (Gillham, 2000; M.Q. Patton, 2002). Furthermore, Gillham (2000) explains that a qualitative researcher can:

> get under the skin of a group or organization to find out what really happens - the informal reality which can only be perceived from the inside and to view the case from the inside out to see it from the perspective of those involved. (p. 11)

Both Gillham (2000) and Merriam (2009) agree that qualitative research uses multiple methods for collecting data, which involves the active participation of the participants in their own settings.

In the context of this study, to gather contextual data, I visited each of the case study schools and observed what related to school change based on the participants' responses. Discussions with class teachers and school leaders were organised. Non-formal meetings about the study were organised with the participants. According to Hatch (2002), naturalistic methods and qualitative research are roughly synonymous in their goal of capturing actual activities and multiple realities in a natural setting. To see the multiple realities involved in how teachers responded to school change, this study was conducted in both formal and non-formal contexts at each of the schools. Cohen et al. (2007) explain the importance of collecting data in a naturalistic inquiry that is genuine, authentic and reliable. In a natural and in-depth setting, people interact, communicate, share and discuss perceptions. This view supports the idea of the interpretive nature of qualitative research, in which the researcher is trying to see the in-depth points of view of the participants. In other words, to obtain deeper social realities requires qualitative enquiry (Bragg & Manchester, 2011; Donnelly, 2000; Hatch, 2002), and entails the researcher in undertaking field work to collect information in natural settings.

In order to observe adequate social realities, the researcher was present at the research site long enough to focus on what the participants said in semi-structured interviews and personal accounts during conversations (Donnelly, 2000). There was ample time for observation, document collection and the gathering of information from on-site documents that were permitted for viewing only.

3.2.2. Interpretive Approach to Qualitative Research

Interpretation is about creating meaning from data. Much of the literature in qualitative research emphasises the use of interpretation to understand and create meaning from the data collected. According to Stake (2010), the most outstanding "characteristic of qualitative research is its emphasis on interpretation" (p. 9). Interpretations are based on the perceptions a researcher has about objects, events, relationships and what the participants say (Markham et al., 2012). Interpretation is a productive process that enables the researcher to set forth the multiple meanings of events, objects, experiences or texts (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Hatch, 2002) . In addition, the participants and the researcher are individuals. Therefore, it is possible that different individuals may interpret the same issues and data differently. This is so because various social actors interpret social reality differently (Markham et al., 2012).

Natural research settings and individual people are different. They are mysterious in many ways. Thus, interpretation of collected data is as far as the researcher can go to make meaning out of what is observed (Holliday, 2007). Although multiple methods were used for collecting data during this study, it was the researcher's powers of interpretation that were then needed to draw conclusions about the meaning (Cohen et al., 2007; Merriam, 2009).

3.3. Research Design

The purpose of this research was to investigate how teachers responded to change in four Solomon Islands national secondary schools (NSSs). Firstly, each school initially represented a single case within its own contexts and settings. Participants were selected teachers and school leaders in each of the four case study

NSSs. Later the findings from each of the four cases were compared to see what could be learned from each context and what further understanding would emerge from a cross-case analysis. This case study involved four different schools, provinces and education authorities, a factor adding richness both to the individual case studies and to the subsequent cross-case analysis.

Case study has a long history as a strategy that has been employed across many disciplines including neuropsychology, education, business, law, and environmental sciences (Merriam, 2009). One of the reasons educational researchers use case studies is to investigate topics in depth (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008).

In case study research, the researcher has to use appropriate ways to collect and present in-depth information. This includes describing, interpreting and explaining the information that is collected from the participants. According to Cohen et al. (2007) and Hallinger, Lu, and Showanasai (2010), these are the three principles of qualitative research that case study researchers commonly use. Similarly, Merriam (2009) notes that case studies are particularistic, descriptive and rely on inductive reasoning for handling and dealing with multiple data. This means that case studies are focused on a particular situation, event, program or phenomenon. The particularities that are under study are well described and easy to understand, throw light on the readers' understanding of what is researched, and give meaning to and affirm the known (Merriam, 1998, 2009; M.Q. Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009).

Case study research is a 'holistic approach' as it captures many different aspects of what makes up individuals and their roles and experiences in a particular context (Cohen et al., 2007; M.Q. Patton, 2002). With the use of a holistic approach, case studies are based on the study of a particular case within a given boundary (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Merriam, 2009). This means case studies are conducted in a particular setting or context, exploring a particular case in detail using in-depth data collection. The processes of data gathering may include interviews, observation, audio and visual recordings, documents and field notes, which this study also adopted. Relying on more than one source of data helps to provide an in-depth understanding of the case (Creswell, 2013).

This qualitative approach is supported by Merriam (2009) who states that a multiple case study involves single cases that are different in their contexts. However, in some ways, they had the same status in this study. All the four research schools in this study were different, but they shared similar status as NSSs. According to Cohen et al. (2007) and M.Q. Patton (2002), case studies are useful where one needs to understand specific people, a particular problem, or a unique situation in great depth and where one can identify cases rich in information. Similarly, Yin (2009) explains that a single case study does not represent a sample but helps to make general assumptions.

To gain a better understanding of the general process of case study research and the processes used for data collection, Creswell (2013) illustrated the main characteristics of a case study. "Table 3.1" presents an adaptation of Creswell's work to include the detail of this study.

Table 3.1

Characteristics of the individual case studies

Characteristics	Purpose	Specific for the four cases in this study
Focus	Developing an in-depth description and analysis of a case or multiple cases	For a bounded system, the focus of this study was to develop an in-depth description and analysis of four individual NSSs within their natural settings.
Type of Problem Best Suited for Design	Providing an in-depth understanding of a case or cases	Provide an in-depth understanding of each of the four NSS and later analysis across all four cases.
Units of Analysis	Studying an event, a program, an activity, or more than one individual	Twenty-nine participants (teachers and school leaders) across the four NSS case studies participated in this study.
Data Collection Forms	Using multiple sources, such as interviews, observations, documents, and artifacts	For trustworthiness of data, semi-structured interviews, document analysis, field notes, observation and visual materials (photographs) were used in this study.
Data Analysis Strategies	Analysing data through description of the case and themes of the case as well as cross-case themes	Six main themes and sub-themes emerged from the findings across all four cases. These themes were the basis of descriptive analysis; firstly for individual cases, then for analysis across all four cases.

Source: Adapted from Creswell (2013, p. 104)

3.4. Research Strategies

Merriam (2009) explains that the success of the study in a particular case is when there is a clear distinction between the phenomenon being studied and the context. Yin (2009) adds that collection of data for a case study is successful when the researchers use effective research tools to collect relevant and reliable evidence that allows the researcher to make interpretations.

In addition, Creswell (2013) identifies four types of validation of qualitative data including triangulation, in which multiple data sources and methods are used and theoretical issues are considered to avoid bias. According to Cohen et al. (2007), triangulation is the use of multiple methods of data collection in a research study, and it is a powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity in qualitative research. Thus, considering the nature of the study, the school context, the participants and the time constraints, this study used semi-structured interviews, document analysis, field notes, observation and visual materials (photographs) for the data collection.

3.4.1. Semi-Structured Interview

The semi-structured interview approach is flexible enough to allow the researcher to make changes to the research questions if required, based on professional judgment, and to discard, alter, reframe and paraphrase questions according to the participant's understanding (Cohen et al., 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Semi-structured interviews allowed the collection of in-depth perceptions and experiences from the secondary school teachers who were the participants in this study. The use of semi-structured interviews was particularly relevant because they allowed the same topics to be discussed, but in ways responsive to the participant.

Hess-Biber and Leavy (2006) state that semi-structured interviews allow room for conversation to be conducted more loosely and give individual participants "freedom to communicate what is of interest or important to them" (p. 125). The semi-structured interviews for this study were conducted in the Solomon Islands lingua franca (Pidgin English) and English. These languages were used interchangeably during the interviews depending on the participants' choice of language they used in their responses. Because there were no restrictions on the

principal language for interviews, I found in the interviews for this study that the participants had confidence and our conversations flowed naturally.

In the semi-structured interviews, the participants were asked a series of questions about topics that related to the study (Hess-Biber & Leavy, 2006). The interviews could never be repeated, or conducted exactly the same way with each participant (Cohen et al., 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Hess-Biber & Leavy, 2006). Throughout the interviews, the participants were allowed to express themselves freely about the topics. However, as the researcher I guided them to refocus on the interview questions if the conversations were not relevant to the study.

In semi-structured interviews, researchers do not have to ask all of the questions proposed in the plan (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Therefore, in this study the questions outlined in Table 3.2 were only guidelines. Creswell (2013) adds that interviewers also might choose the questions they are comfortable to ask and which are adapted to the interviewees. Depending on different situations and the nature of the participant, questions have to be formulated differently. As has been highlighted, the semi-structured interview questions were not repeated exactly the same way with each participant, and some questions were asked specifically of certain participants for specific reasons. The important issue was that the interview questions should relate to and generate answers to the research questions (Cohen et al., 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

The research questions were formulated based on the literature review themes and the need to address the main research questions for this study. This plan (see Table 3.2) formed the basis and outlined the key guiding questions for the semi-structured interviews. Added to this were additional questions and clarifying questions which allowed the participants to provide more information and to reply fully on how they responded to change in the Solomon Islands NSSs.

Table 3.2

Guided questions for the semi-structured interview

	Guided questions	
Key topics	**For Principals, d/principals and teachers**	**Specifically for principals and d/principals**
Identifying school change	What do you identify as change across this school? Were these changes mandated or voluntary? Explain What are the changes and areas of improvement that you would like to see happening in this school?	Tell me about your visions and plans for this school?
Teachers' views and contributions to school change	How did you respond to the identified school change? What are your other leadership roles? What work/role do you enjoy most? Why? As a teacher leader, how did you involve your teacher-colleagues to work on your proposed plans? e.g as a head of department.	How did you involve teachers in school change? What were their responses? What did you do to motivate your teachers to prepare their lessons well and be faithful in performing their duties?
Factors that inhibited or affected school change	What were the barriers that hindered or affected your participation in teaching and learning and school improvement? How did you or the school go about addressing the issues that affected your work performance?	What are the barriers that hindered or affected your teachers' participation in teaching and learning and school improvement?
How teachers are motivated in the school	What motivates you to do your best on the job? What are the issues that have affected your working morale? What are your suggestions for addressing the mentioned issues so that you can actively involve teachers in school activities and programs?	What did the teachers complain about when they were asked to perform their assigned duties?
Successful change	What are the school achievements you have been aware of and also been part of? What made the mentioned changes successful/not successful?	
How school culture and school ethos influence school change	What is your understanding of the culture of this school? How does the culture of this school encourage you to contribute to school success? s Tell me about the ethos of this school. How does the school ethos influence your response and the level of your contributions?	How does the culture of this school encourage teachers' collaborative participation in school work?
Professional learning communities	What are the professional learning supports you have had during your teaching career? How do the mentioned professional learning supports help you in your teaching and also as a teacher leader? What forms of training should be provided for the teachers and why?	What professional learning development supports has the school provided for the teachers?

3.4.2. Document Analysis

School documents serve a range of purposes. Merriam (2009) states that in a broad sense documents are any form of written communication. They can be official or unofficial, for public use or private purposes, prepared and preserved for historical purposes, and/or used for practical purposes (Merriam, 2009). The written documents that were examined for this study included school records, school improvement and development plans, newspaper reports, photographs and minutes of meetings. Through documents, the researcher can gain access to the stages of past changes (Cohen et al., 2007; Merriam, 1998, 2009).

In addition, some school documents strategically outlined the future short-term, medium-term and long-term changes for the school. These documents acted as a guide to school change and could be accessed in the school leaders' offices. After the semi-structured interview sessions in the NSSs, I accessed the necessary documents with the permission of the relevant staff.

Visual documents: Photographs - According to Creswell (2013), creative data collection methods are encouraged in qualitative research; therefore the researcher needs to consider the use of visual materials. Photographs capture activities in real settings as they happen. This includes non-verbal behaviours and communications such as physical appearance, facial expressions and gestures (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Merriam, 2009). Photographs can provide a lot of information and need only be limited by what the researcher's mind can imagine and interpret (Merriam, 2009). I chose to use photographs for data collection for this study because they were an affordable, effective and attractive way to capture and present reliable information from natural settings.

Moreover, according to Merriam (2009), the "photo alone can tell the story of what the photographer thought was important to capture" (p. 145) for a particular purpose. The photographs I took at the research sites were only taken with the approval of the participants. Having a photographic record helped the researcher to recall and remember details of the study that otherwise might have been overlooked

or that were not obvious at the time of data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Merriam, 2009). The taking of photographs was subject to ethics approval.

The photos taken for this study included the schools' physical infrastructure, school campus, classrooms, teachers, and students. Permissions and consents for photographs were granted by the individual participants and the school leaders concerned prior to actual photographs being taken.

3.4.3. Field Notes and Observations

Remembering data long enough to record it is a major challenge in qualitative research. Thus, Vockell and Asher (1983) and Mutch (2005) recommend collecting four basic types of field data using field jottings, field notes, a field diary and a field log. However, for the purpose of collecting data for this study, field notes were used. Field notes serve to keep a record of and summarise the field data collected on the research sites during the day (Creswell, 2013; Mutch, 2005). They are notes taken in the field at the time of observation. These notes are supplemented by the information collected, including photographs and recordings. Importantly, other information like body language, which may not be captured on digital recordings and photograph, can be recorded in field notes.

According to Merriam (1998), many qualitative researchers prefer to use observation for data collection because it provides firsthand information. Through observation, the researcher can "gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 396) and also is informed of nonverbal responses and can focus on events, behaviours and qualities.

Moreover, according to Creswell (2003), through observation, information can be elicited about things that the participants find uncomfortable to discuss with the researcher. It is common for a participant to say one thing and do another. In this case, Cohen et al. (2007) suggest that it is important for a research observer to be right where the action is and personally witness the action. Observing at the research site gives the researcher the opportunity to reconcile and confirm with the participants what has been observed.

Case study researchers are not pure observers; they are partially involved so they can perform their role as researchers in a real social setting (Merriam, 2009). This means the researchers are not part of the group being studied, but are present in the participants' natural setting to observe and collect data. As a non-participant observer, the researcher was in a better position to provide objective information.

For the purpose of collecting reliable data and subject to the consent of the principal and the participants, I was not a participant observer but observed activities and infrastructures on the school campus that were related and appropriate to this study. Observations were focused on, but not limited to, school programs, school activities, school infrastructures, teachers, and meetings.

3.5. Research Process

3.5.1. The Researcher in the Study

I am from Choiseul province in the Solomon Islands. It was an advantage for me as a Melanesian to conduct research in the Melanesian NSSs. I am familiar with the Melanesian culture, practice, and protocols. Therefore, Melanesian protocols on how to access institutions and select participants were adhered to at all times with few difficulties. This allowed the school leaders and the teachers to voluntarily render their support, interest and willingness to be interviewed and to participate in the data collection. This was also an opportunity to select teachers who covered the range of identified variables. I found that my presence in the case study schools and interactions with the teachers in the course of conducting interviews were taken by the participants as normal interactions and talks.

In addition, doing my Master's Degree study at the University of Waikato in New Zealand, being a lecturer in the only teacher training institution in the Solomon Islands and on study leave to do PhD studies in Australia were added advantages for my data collection. Many teachers across the schools in the Solomon Islands knew me. The Solomon Islands has a small population (515,780 in the 2009 census) and very few people have Master's or Doctoral qualifications. Thus, my study was highly

regarded by the Solomon Islands government (my sponsor) and the case study school communities, as demonstrated by their cooperation and positive responses.

Moreover, the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) where I taught was changed from a college to a university in April 2013. This is a source of national pride. Consequently, educational institutions across the Solomon Islands supported initiatives that related to human resource development for SINU staff. For these reasons, my presence in the NSSs was collectively accepted by the school leaders and teachers, with enormous support for my data collection.

My experiences in working with teachers in schools and conducting my Master's degree research in the secondary schools also guided me to control and manage possible issues that might trigger bias in the collection of authentic data for this study.

3.5.2. Access to Institutions and Participants

As required by the University of Southern Queensland, I obtained research permission after the confirmation of my candidature through submission of an ethics application.

As an overseas researcher, I had to obtain written permission from the relevant authorities (see Figure 3.1) to conduct research with school leaders and teachers in the NSSs in the Solomon Islands. Firstly, I applied to the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (MEHRD) through the Undersecretary and was granted a Research Permit (Appendices 1 and 2). This research permit allowed me to apply (Appendix 3) to the four education authorities (EAs) of the four selected NSSs in order to gain access to the NSSs, for which I was also given Research Permits. With the education authorities' approval, I sought permission from the principals (Appendix 4) to access the schools and the teachers, which was subsequently granted.

The application to conduct research that was sent to the MEHRD, EAs, and principals explained my position as a researcher, the reasons why I needed to

conduct the research and the expected timeframe for visits to the schools. They were also informed of the ethical aspects, the title and the focus of this study. Soon after my ethics application was approved, I flew to the Solomon Islands for data collection.
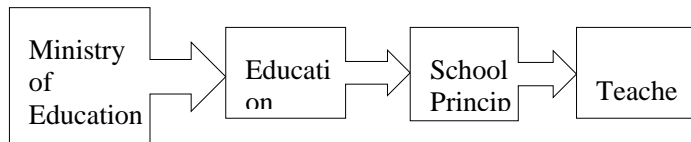
Figure 3.1

Authorities: The authorities in the Solomon Islands that granted permission to conduct research for this study.

3.5.3.   Selection of Case Study Schools

A number of factors may be considered as criteria for selecting case study sites, depending on the purpose of the study. For the purposes of this study, these included, for example, school size, its location, number of teachers and the type of organisation. According to Merriam (1998), some of the considerations that could guide the researcher for selecting cases are the purpose of the study, the size of what is to be studied, convenience to the study site and form of the case study. Selecting a case depends on the research problem (Creswell, 2013; Gillham, 2000; M. Q Patton, 1990). In attempting to address a research problem, the selected cases should be the ones from which most can be learned. "Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about the issues of central importance to the purpose of the research" (Merriam, 1998, p. 61).

This study was conducted in four selected NSSs in the Solomon Islands. Most NSSs offer secondary education from Form 1 to Form 6 and the University of the South Pacific (USP) Foundation program in Form 7. Successful completion of the Foundation program provides students the opportunity to enter a degree program at USP. The schools were selected based on their secondary status as senior NSSs as listed in Table 3.3, in localities that could be accessed and were also operated by different education authorities in different provinces. The four selected NSSs were located across the Solomon Islands. To maintain confidentiality, pseudonyms were

used for the NSSs, the participants and the education authorities. These four NSSs have different contexts, as described in each case study, making them a good cross-sectional sample for this study.

Table 3.3

The Four Case Study Schools

National secondary school	Education Authority	Academic staff
1 Mountainway	Pioneer of Faith Church	25
2 Valleyway	National government	28
3 Hillway	Word of Hope Church	28
4 Highway	River of Life Church	28

3.5.3.1.   Selection of research participants.

The proposed participants for this study were the principal, deputy principal and six teachers at each of the four selected NSSs in the Solomon Islands. This should have given a total of 32 participants. However, the actual numbers of participants who made themselves available for the semi-structured interview were: Mountainway NSS 7 participants, Valleyway NSS 8 participants, Hillway NSS 8 participants and Highway NSS 6 participants. No teachers in the four case study schools I approached refused to be interviewed and also there was no issue in having the principal advise me on selecting participants.

I followed Melanesian protocols when selecting the participants. After having a meeting with the principal about the study, interview process, and the variables, we approached teachers and asked for their voluntary participation. In this arrangement and selection process, the principal and the deputy principal of each school worked with me to select the participants. They knew their teachers, so they helped me to select the teachers who covered what was required in the purposive sampling.

A number of variables were identified that captured a variety of teacher perspectives, which gave more depth to the data. Each participant covered two or more variables so it was not difficult to identify six teachers who represented both genders, a range of years of experience (both as teachers in total experience, and as teachers within the particular school), who originated either from the local

community of the school or elsewhere in the Solomon Islands, and who were involved in implementing change in the school (both proactively and/or as part of their normal duties). The sampling encompassed a range of staff, giving voice to a range of perspectives on change and thus enriching the potential of the collected data.

3.5.4. Data Collection Techniques

The four data collection techniques used for this study were semi-structured interviews, school document analysis, visual documents (photographs) and field observations. Data collections for this study were conducted in two separate visits to each school. The first data collection was conducted from the beginning of October 2014 to the end of November 2014. After transcribing all the data collected during the visits, I took the transcribed data back to the participants in the second visit to clarify some of their responses and confirm the interview interpretations where interviews had been translated from Melanesian pidgin to English. The second visit was also an opportunity to collect additional data as appropriate. However, the analysis procedures for data collected in the two separate visits used similar techniques.

After identifying the teachers, who between them covered the range of identified variables, the researcher approached them individually and invited them to participate. Prior to the interviews, those who agreed to participate were briefed about the interview in the staff room and invited to sign the consent form before commencement of the interview. Interviews with individual participants were conducted in private in the Solomon Islands Pidgin English and English. Interviews with each participant took approximately 40 minutes to one hour with breaks as necessary. The interviews were digitally recorded with the permission of the participants. Of the four case study schools, two schools' interviews were conducted in the school library while the other two used the principal's office.

3.5.5. Data Analysis

According to Cohen et al. (2007) and Mutch (2005), early transcription of interviews is important because it helps to manage the data properly. Thus,

transcriptions of semi-structured interviews were commenced immediately after the data collection in each of the four case study schools. All responses in English were typed verbatim and some were used as direct quotations in the findings. The responses in Melanesian Pidgin were translated into English and also typed verbatim.

One of the analytical strategies in case studies is to identify apparent issues within each case and look for common themes that transcend the cases (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998; M.Q. Patton, 2002; Yin, 2009). In this process, logical stages in the analysis of data are important in order to properly identify and organise emergent themes,-and subthemes and retain the original meanings from the collected data. In addition, visuals of schools and the participants were used as illustrations in support of the findings.

In explaining the data analysis approaches for qualitative data, Cohen et al. (2007) state that researchers need to decide whether to present data according to each case and then later, if desired, to amalgamate key issues emerging across all the cases, or proceed by working within a largely predetermined analytical frame of issues that apply across the cases concerned. In this case, the narrative descriptions of data for this study were organised in different categories and ordered as a way of understanding and creating meaning from the multiple realities involving the data and the participants' responses to school change. According to Silins, Mulford, and Zarins (2002), NVivo software is commonly used in the interpretation of semi-structured interview data, including description pattern analysis. For this study, four projects were created in Nvivo to deal with the four case study schools.

Data analysis procedure

- After the interviews, audios were imported to the NVivo program, and transcribed.
- I read through each of the interview transcripts and identified frequently occurring ideas that related to the literature review themes and appeared as reliable responses to the research questions. The six main themes that emerged were: school context; types of leadership;

teachers and change; culture; resources and change; and professional learning development.

- The six main themes and their sub-themes were organised according to different nodes and sub-nodes when inputting data into the NVivo software for analysis purposes.

- I read the transcripts and highlighted the ideas using different colours according to different subthemes.

- The fifth step involved copying and pasting the ideas into the related sub-themes. At this stage, information collected from document analysis, field notes, observations and visual materials (photographs) was also inserted.

- The final step was writing the report for each case, which gave the narrations and descriptions of issues related to each theme in the findings, themes in the literature review and addressed the research questions.

3.6. Trustworthiness of Qualitative Research

Creswell (2013) asserts that trustworthiness in research is established when the findings closely reflect the meaning of what the research participants have described in the research context. Therefore, procedures that qualitative researchers follow to ensure the trustworthiness of their data include thorough keeping of notes and recording of activities. Data must be well organised and in easily retrievable forms (Hittleman & Simon, 2006). This means researchers use different ways to ensure the trustworthiness of their research. In this research, I developed my own methods based on my viewpoint and philosophy, which ensured the trustworthiness of my study not only in the case study schools but also throughout my research work so that observations were well documented and distortions were minimised. In commenting on trustworthiness, M.Q. Patton (2002) explains that trustworthy research uses triangulation as it gives strength to a study by combining data sources. Relying on one method of data collection is not adequate and may not provide in-depth information about the case. For this reason, this study employed more than three methods for collecting data: Semi- structured interview, Document analysis, Visual document (Photographs) and Field notes and Observation.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Cohen et al. (2007) confirm that trustworthiness provides qualitative researchers with a set of tools by which they can illustrate the worth of their projects. To establish the trustworthiness of qualitative research based on their philosophy and assumptions, many qualitative researchers have used different terms to describe the tools that are used. Some of the terms Denzin and Lincoln (2000), Creswell (2013), Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Cohen et al. (2007) use to establish trustworthiness of research are credibility, authenticity, confirmability, reliability and validity.

Merriam (1995) states that one way to strengthen the validity of qualitative research is through member-checks. To ensure validity of data, researchers took back the tentative interpretations of the data to the participants from whom the data were collected for confirmation that the interpretations were 'true'. This could also apply to clarification of responses. Creswell (2013) also explains a similar process using the term credibility. This is to ensure that tentative interpretations were cross-checked by the participant and were accurately interpreted according to the participant's meaning. Therefore, for this study, I took back to the participants the tentative translations of the Solomon Islands Pidgin English version into English. The participants confirmed that the interpretations were true according to their meanings before the data were analysed. Also in the second phase, essential data that were overlooked in the first phase were collected.

3.7. Ethical Considerations and Limitations of the Study

Ethics is a major concern in any research. Therefore, this study complies with the University of Southern Queensland code of ethical conduct for research involving humans. The research ethics application for this study met the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, 2007 and full ethical approval was granted in 2014.

It is important that mechanisms be put in place to ensure confidentiality and security of information collected from research participants (Merriam, 2009). In this study, prior to the semi-structured interviews, the participants were briefed on the purpose of the study and how issues relating to confidentiality would be addressed.

The participants were assured that pseudonyms would be used in the reports (Appendix 4). This included the name of their school and education authority and church denomination. Pseudonyms would not carry any clues that could lead to easy identification of the participants. Hence, because they trusted that they would remain anonymous, the participants responded openly in the interviews. Participation in this study was voluntary, and before any involvement, the participants were provided with information sheets (Appendix 5) and signed informed consent forms (Appendix 6).

Priority was given to securing all the data that were collected from the participants. Thus, all paperwork and hard copies of documents have been kept in a locked cabinet in a room that is not easily accessed by unauthorised persons. Both the study room and the cabinet were securely locked at all times. All electronic files that were saved on flash drives were protected with the use of passwords, thus controlling access to the data.

Participants were informed that all appropriate measures were taken to protect their true identities and the identity of their schools. Only codes and pseudonyms were used. According to Holliday (2007), researchers must be aware that their presence with the participants may influence the participants' responses. This could be true in close-knit communities where members know each other well, and there is strong communalism. This could also increase the possibility of interviewees disclosing only positive aspects of information.

According to Stake (2010), one of the limitations of the case study approach is that the researcher's feelings may influence the interpretation of data. This was addressed as the researcher sought to avoid bias interpreting the data as collected and presented. Another limitation is that the findings cannot easily be generalised to the wider population.

As a developing country composed of scattered islands, disaster-prone regions and with unreliable transport services, transport systems and communication in the Solomon Islands are a major challenge. However, the timeline for this study shows that the data was collected within the proposed time frame.

The next four Chapters (Chapters 4, 5, 6, and 7) present the findings from each of the four case study NSSs. The same structure is used to present the findings in each of the four chapters. First, in order to set the scene, information is presented about the school context, the education authority and the principal. The second section in each case study presents the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the findings, initially describing what the teachers identified as change in their schools and then capturing their responses to the changes they identified. The third section, also presented thematically, explores the influence of the school ethos and the school culture on teachers' responses to school change. The final section in each case study presents the teachers' contributions to successful change.

CHAPTER 4: CASE STUDY ONE
Mountainway National Secondary School

4.1. School Context - Setting the Scene

Mountainway NSS is situated on the Mountainway River plains and has reliable transport to Honiara city. As part of a reorganisation and restructuring of Pioneer of Faith Church schools, Mountainway NSS was relocated to the current site in the early 1970s. The national government of the Solomon Islands took over most schools in the Solomon Islands during the 1960s and 1970s. However, fearing the erosion of Pioneer of Faith Church beliefs, values and practices, the Pioneer of Faith Church did not want to surrender Mountainway secondary to the national government to operate. Since then, the school has continued to be operated by the Pioneer of Faith Church under the auspices of the Congregation of Clergies.

Faith has played a significant role in the historical development of the school and its particular educational culture and continues to be an important factor in current school identity. The evidence of faith is seen in the installation of religious statues in selected school buildings and the Clergies' compound. From the school gate, a large cross on top of the chapel building is clearly visible. Some of the Pioneer of Faith Church workers live in the Clergies' compound on the Mountainway NSS campus. They are responsible for spiritual aspects of the school program.

The daily program at Mountainway NSS starts at 5 am with a compulsory study period followed by a meal and prayer, which is also compulsory. After the meal, classes begin at 8 am and finish at 2 pm. During the day, there is a 30 minute short break, and lunch and prayer at 12 pm. Student work sessions on the school farms and on campus start at 2:30 pm and end at 4 pm. The evening meal and prayer are at 5.30pm followed by a study period until 9 pm. Lights are off at 9:30 pm.

The boys' dormitories and the classrooms share six buildings. The classrooms are on Level 1 of each building, and the boys' dormitories, connected by chain bridges, are on Level 2. The buildings, in parallel arrangements, are adjacent to each other. Therefore, the male students are closer to their amenities during class periods

than the female students. The female students have five separate dormitories located approximately 200 metres from the classrooms (Field Notes, 16/10/2014). Mountainway NSS has a total of 19 classrooms.

The walkways to all buildings are earth footpaths. Consequently, during the wet season, water-logging and mud often force the teachers and students to veer off the paths and watch their step carefully while walking (Field Notes, 16/10/2014). The school chapel and the library are open buildings with security mesh but no shutters. The teachers are accommodated on campus and their houses line the main road leading to the school campus. Most of the Mountainway NSS buildings were built in the 1970s (Field Notes, 16/10/2014).

4.2.   School Enrolment and Academic Staff

Mountainway is a co-educational boarding NSS with an enrolment of almost 500 students in Forms 1 to 6. The students depend on the school farms located at the northern end of the school campus for their food supply. At the time of data collection, the school had a rice farm, root crops, a vegetable farm and cattle. During work sessions, the teachers and the students are organised to work on the school farms and do other cleaning jobs around the campus.

The school has 25 academic staff including six female teachers and four clergy. All the teachers have teaching qualifications ranging from diploma to bachelor degree level. Not all the teachers at Mountainway NSS are Pioneer of Faith Church members; however, religious practices and belief systems are an integral part of the school programs and activities and all teachers are expected to be involved.

4.3.   Research Participants

The seven participants in this study are briefly introduced. Names have been changed to maintain confidential. The summary in Table 4.1 provides the relevant details needed for this study.

Table 4.1

The Mountainway NSS Research Participants

No	Sex	Participant	Position
1	M	Peter Waka	Principal
2	M	Mosese Tova	HOD
3	M	Bilisary Ramavule	HOD
4	F	Roselyn Pita	HOD
5	M	Rex Biolo	HOD
6	M	Robson Pitavato	Class Teacher
7	M	Lindon Lukukana	Class Teacher

The seven participants had teaching experience ranging from 4 to 30 years, with all but one participant having taught for 10 years or more. Five of the participants had bachelor's degree and two had advanced diplomas. Two participants had additional qualifications in theology, and one of these (as a member of the clergy) took on additional responsibility for organising spiritual activities for the school while also teaching Religious Education.

4.4. Mountainway: A Pioneer of Faith Church-Operated NSS

The clergy were the pioneers of Mountainway Boys' School which, over time, developed into Mountainway NSS (McCane, 2003). In the early 1970s, the Pioneer of Faith clergy operated all the Pioneer of Faith Church schools in the Solomon Islands and girls were enrolled and the school was renamed Mountainway Mission School. They established and operated Mountainway in terms of daily operation, administration and teaching. When the authority to operate the school was transferred to the Archdiocese of Honiara education authority, the clergy no longer had an active role regarding school administration and management operations of the school. They were not directly involved in the planning of teaching, student assessments, supervising of study periods and conducting teacher appraisals except involved in religious programs. The Archdiocese of Honiara education authority that now operates the school has worked with the clergy in the school to monitor and maintain Pioneer of Faith Church beliefs, practices, and improvements in the school.

It was apparent that the education authority had entrusted the clergy, resident on the school campus, to provide spiritual assistance and to support the school

community. On behalf of the school, the clergy also liaise with international church communities overseas. There was evidence that despite the change of authority to operate the school except on spiritual programs, the clergy still have some influence in the operation of the school. The presence of the clergy in the school has a positive impact on the Mountainway NSS community as they are still actively involved and participate in school programs and activities. At the time of collecting data for this study, three members of the clergy were formally employed to teach at Mountainway NSS.

Several years ago, it had become apparent to the education authority that the school was facing many issues and that it would benefit from an external appraisal. Roselyn commented that deterioration of student behaviour, student academic performances and teachers' work commitments were some of the areas that had been causing concern in the year preceding the appointment of the current principal towards the end of 2011. Thus in 2012, the Pioneer of Faith Church education authority in Honiara engaged a former principal who was also a clergy member from Australia as a consultant to review the school. The principal and three long-serving study participants commented that the education authority has continued to maintain good support links between the school and external partners overseas. It therefore appeared that assistance to review and transform the school was an integral part of the church's assistance network.

The Australian clergy member who reviewed the school connected Mountainway NSS with a Pioneer of Faith Church school in Australia in a sister relationship as a means of improving Mountainway. The two secondary schools have student exchange programs. Rex remarked that students from the sister school in Australia came to Mountainway NSS with donations of teaching resources, sports equipment and library books.

The principal, who is also a spiritual leader, indicated that the education authority had instructed the school to implement the recommendations that were suggested in the Mountainway NSS review report. According to Robson, the report recommended that teachers who had diploma teaching qualifications should be encouraged to pursue further studies at the University of the South Pacific through distance and flexible learning modes. According to the principal, the report further

suggested that the teachers' lesson preparations, teaching styles and work commitment needed improvement and that workshops and in-house training for the teachers should be held to deal with these areas.

Four participants acknowledged that the clergy's involvement in school development had an enormous impact on school improvements. The principal clarified that "*the Honiara Pioneer of Faith Church education authority and the school recognised the Clergies in their continued support for the school. They authorised the Clergies to use their network to seek international assistance for the school.*" Bilisary added that, with permission, "*the Clergy in the school have worked closely with Clergy counterparts in Australia and New Zealand to raise funds to build a new school administrative building for this school.*" With the assistance of the clergy, John reported that the school has aimed to raise one million Solomon dollars (SBD) before asking aid donors for another one million. According to the principal, the school had already raised almost one million dollars.

The principal, Robson and Rex reported that the education authority was informed through the school review report that there had been an erosion of Pioneer of Faith Church values and practices at Mountainway NSS. According to the principal and some of the participants, the education authority then exercised its power by instructing the school to continue to uphold Pioneer of Faith Church values and practices. To do so, the school was advised to live a life of prayer. A spiritual leader participant mentioned that "*prayer and students' participation in religious activities is compulsory. To reinforce the spiritual climate of the school, the education authority has also entrusted the three clergy who teach in the school to help the school in its spiritual development.*"

Furthermore, the principal reported that "*the Archdiocese of Honiara education authority has instructed the staff of Mountainway NSS to teach Religious Education. Before 2012, Religious Education had not been taught in this school.*" The participants commented that the education authority wanted the school to be like other NSSs in the Solomon Islands that taught Religious Education as a subject and that teaching Religious Education portrays the Christian status of the school and the church denomination it represents. They went on to mention that teaching of Religious Education also gave the school the opportunity to transmit Pioneer of Faith

Church beliefs and spiritual dimensions to its students. In doing so, it fulfils its purpose of nurturing students in Pioneer of Faith Church beliefs, practices, and values. The teachers reflected that in the past the clergy in the school organised daily prayers with students. Therefore, teaching of Religious Education as one of the taught subjects in class could be viewed as duplication of Church organised prayer programs in the school.

Religious Education is an optional subject in Form 4 and 5 and in the Solomon Islands national examinations in Form 5. The principal commented that previous failure to teach Religious Education at Mountainway NSS was inconsistent with the Pioneer of Faith Church school system.

The principal explained this in Pidgin English that:

Relijas edukeson olketa no teachm lo disfala skul lo olketa yias go finis so dis taem olketa edukeson aotoriti talem mifala fo tisim relijas edukeson. Becos olketa atiri talem, distaem, relijas edukeson mifala tisim lo skul olsem arapala sabjeks.[1]

Religious Education had not been taught in the school for many years. Thus, the education authority has instructed the school to teach religious education. Because of the education authority's instruction, Religious Education is now included as one of the teaching subjects in this school.

4.5.   The Principal of Mountainway NSS

Before he was appointed as a principal, Peter Waka had taught at Mountainway NSS for seven consecutive years. Within that seven year period, he was head of the English department and also significantly involved in Church activities in the school. Rex and Robson commented that the principal was a member of many committees in Honiara because of his outstanding contributions in discussions, communication skills and planning.

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[1] The Solomon Island pidgin quotation is included here that shows how the principal expressed his view clearly in Pidgin English. It also provides an example of a translation from Pidgin to English

The principal reflected that his fourteen years of teaching experience in secondary schools, of which seven years were at Mountainway NSS, his leadership at department level and his membership of other committees, were advantages that led to his appointment as principal. He was selected for the principal's position during a period of uncertainty in the school following the resignation of the previous principal and his transfer to another NSS.

While some principals at this level may have studied leadership and management, Peter Waka has not done so, instead, he has learned on the job and used his experience in teacher leadership as head of a department to manage, administer, organise, supervise and lead the school to achieve its desired goals. The principal reported that he also used his teaching experience both overseas and in the Solomon Islands to help him to identify the areas that needed change and to map his vision for school improvement.

According to Lindon, the principal's style of leadership is consultative because he regularly consults with the teaching staff for additional advice. I also observed this during data collection. In addition to drawing on his teaching and teacher leadership experiences, the principal reported that "*I consulted with the Pioneer of Faith Church education authority, Pioneer of Faith Church workers, the clergy on campus and the teachers for advice.*"

As a new principal, Peter Waka brought into the school the values, practices and standards that he expected the school to accept as a way to improve the culture of the school. His leadership was spiritually oriented as he demonstrated his increased engagement in spiritual activities and encouraged the school to organise more spiritual programs. According to half of the participants, their principal wants to make a difference in the school through the spiritual life of the teachers and students. He always faithfully attended and was involved in school Church activities including church services, staff worship sessions, small prayer groups and bible sharing groups and asked the teachers to do likewise. Bilisary commented that:

> *As a spiritual person, the principal suggested a redemptive approach to*
> *disciplining students. In this approach, students who were honest and asked*
> *the teachers for forgiveness should not be punished but forgiven. However, we*

were not agreed. Students should be punished accordingly for breaching
school rules.

Bilisary and Lindon added that the principal listened to the teachers' concerns so the students were punished accordingly for breaching the school rules.

The participants seemed to say that the principal gained their support, respect and trust because he is a spiritual person who put God first in the school programs. He considered the opinions of the teachers as part of his shared decision-making in the school.

4.6. The Principal's Vision That Was Shared With the Teachers

The principal outlined his personal vision for change for Mountainway NSS, a vison that he shared with the Pioneer of Faith Church education authority, teachers, students, and parents. A key aspect of the principal's vision was to improve students' academic performance. To achieve his vision, the principal reported that "*I introduced a change by increasing the number of study periods, organised classes on Saturdays and introduced a school language policy that discouraged the teachers from communicating in their lingua franca and [encouraged them to] speak in English on the school campus.*"

Next, his vision was to improve the school culture to allow teachers, students, parents and the Pioneer of Faith Church education authority to work together. To improve the school culture, the principal commented that he used a consultative style of leadership. He usually consulted the teachers for professional advice and guidance when required for major decision-making activities. In addition to drawing on his teaching and teacher leadership experiences, he reported consulting with the Pioneer of Faith Church education authority, the clergy and Pioneer of Faith Church officers from time to time.

The principal reported that to improve student behaviour and strengthen Pioneer of Faith Church belief, value and practice in the school, he has to be a spiritual person. When describing the principal's personal life and student behaviour improvement programs, the participants commented that the principal is a spiritual

leader who encourages the spiritual development of the teachers and students. Robson reported that "*the principal had maintained his personal integrity and had high regard for spiritual emphasis in the school that made the school organise and involve in many religious programs.*"

Regarding his vision to improve the physical school environment and school infrastructure, the principal reported that as in other areas of school improvements, he set achievable goals and shared with the teachers. He commented that "*I worked with the teachers, former students and parents to raise funds and appeal for donations to renovate existing buildings and build new ones.*"

The principal's strategy for achieving his vision was first to improve the spiritual environment of the school by re-emphasising Pioneer of Faith Church values and practices, increasing time for prayers and other religious activities and installing religious statues. He gained respect and leadership support from the teachers because he shared his vision with them, worked them and consulted them for advice.

The data presented in the remainder of this chapter are drawn from interviews with the participants at the school in 2014 and 2015, along with my observations as the researcher in terms of field notes, audio and visual recordings.

4.7. Identifying School Change and Teacher Responses: The Mountainway NSS Teachers' Perspective

The data presented in this sub-section provides the answers to research sub-questions one and two.

1. What do teachers identify as change in their secondary school?

2. How to teachers respond to the identified change?

When asked about what they identified as change in their secondary school, the seven participants gave a range of perceptions that represented their individual views. To manage and present the data in a more organised manner, I grouped the

participants' related and similar views, thus condensing their perceptions into five main areas of school change.

The data is presented in two parts. The first section deals with what the participants identified as change in Mountainway NSS, and is followed by a section describing how they responded to the identified change.

The changes the teachers identified in their NSS are as follows:

1. Physical school infrastructure and farm improvement
2. Access to the Internet
3. Change relating to school curriculum
4. Changes in student academic performance
5. Student behaviour

4.7.1. Physical School Infrastructure and Farm Improvement

When they were asked about their perceptions of school change, all the participants responded firstly with regard to changes related to physical school infrastructure, before they commented on other changes. For school physical infrastructural change, they referred to renovation of old buildings and construction of new ones. They made reference to the school's current fund-raising to build the proposed two-storey administrative building and new teachers' houses.

Roselyn commented that "*the staff room is old and poses safety concerns and has negative impacts on the teachers' work commitments. The timber floor is old and has holes in it.*" One can feel the floor of the staff room is shaking and making rattling noises when walking inside the room (Field Notes and Observation, 16/10/2014). Rex reported that "*teaching staff has increased but the staff room is small, thus, it cannot provide enough working space for all the teachers.*"

With regards to staff residences, Lindon commented that "*the library and almost all the school staff houses were old, small and low. Therefore, new teachers' houses should be built high for safety from flooding.*" The participants reported that they had big families with an average of five members, which could not be accommodated comfortably in their current houses. Furthermore, the participants reported that the school library was vulnerable to flooding during torrential rain

because it was a single storey building. In April 2014, a tropical depression which developed into cyclone Ita had caused flash flooding that destroyed some school buildings and property at Mountainway NSS (Field Notes, 16/10/2014).

Another change the participants identified was the improvement of the school drainage system and grading of the gravel road leading to the school; thus, waterlogging on the school campus was reduced and there were no longer potholes in the gravel road leading to the school. The national project was funded under the Rehabilitation Program (Rex; Robson; Lindon). According to the participants, this road project was awarded to Mountainway NSS based on assessment reports from the Solomon Islands national disaster committee.

As previously mentioned, Mountainway NSS is on the Mountainway plain. Thus, the gravity-fed water supply often suffers from low pressure. Roselyn and Robson reported that "*previously, a regular supply of clean drinking water was a daily concern. However, we were relieved by the change to have water tanks installed on our staff houses.*" At the time of the research, the water tank project had already started. More than half of the teachers' houses had had water tanks installed (Field Notes, 16/10/2014). This water tank project was funded by Australia's Direct Aid Program.

The participants also spoke of the desired changes they would like to see introduced to Mountainway NSS. These changes included the expansion of school farming projects such as cattle, vegetables, and root crops like sweet potatoes, cassava, taro, and yam. At the time of data collection, the school had created gardens for watermelon, corn, cucumber and some common vegetables in the Solomon Islands, such as cabbage (Observation, 16/10/2014). Robson commented that "*the school has planned to increase the size of plots for rice, cattle, and vegetable and root crop farms. Our aim is to sell the produce in the open markets in Honiara city.*"

4.7.2. Teachers' Responses to the Physical School Infrastructure and School Farm Improvements

4.7.2.1. Physical school infrastructure.

Many of the participants reported that their working areas in the staffroom were small when all the teachers were present in the office for meetings. For this reason, most of the participants commented that they were not comfortable working in overcrowded rooms so sometimes they stood in the corridor, especially when staff meetings were being held in the staff room. Roselyn complained that "*as a female teacher, I am not comfortable working with the male teachers in a crowded office so sometimes I just excused myself from working in the school office.*"

More than half of the participants commented that they were determined to ensure that the new administration building was built so they formed a school development committee and discussed how best they could get a good architectural plan and raise the money. Mosese reported that "*due to no availability of affordable and qualified architects in the Solomon Islands, with the help of the clergy the school engaged an architectural expert from Papua New Guinea who drew plans for the new administrative building.*"

As part of their ongoing fundraising to build the new two-storey administration building and to renovate and build new teachers' houses, the participants reported that they were appointed as leaders of a variety of fundraising groups. Roselyn reported on teacher leadership for fundraising that "*Bilisary was the leader of the Are'are ethnic pan pipe group, Rex was the leader of the Isabel Province custom dance group, and Lindon and I are the organisers of soccer and netball competitions.*" Robson and his group of students aimed to grow enough vegetables, fruit and root crops for sale in the annual school Bazaar.

Bilisary reported that "*I accepted the appointment from the principal to work on furniture projects for sale and also make new furniture to replace the old desks, tables, and chairs in the classrooms and office with the industrial art teacher and students.*" In 2014, the Industrial Arts Department aimed to raise about SBD $12,000.00 (AUD$1,714.28) through the sale of five kitchen food safes, 20 wooden dining chairs, 10 dining tables and other small furniture (Bilisary) as shown in

Figure 4.1. Mountainway NSS Bazaar has an annual school fundraising in early December that coincides with the closing of the school academic year, which the public is invited to attend.

Figure 4.1 Furniture for sale: The furniture for sale in the school bazaar

The participants reported that they also involved overseas clergy in fundraising for the proposed school physical infrastructure projects. Mosese, one of the three local clergy, reported that "*we involved other clergy in the Solomon Islands and our counterparts in Australia, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea in our fundraising to raise money for the new administrative building projects.*" The principal reported that "*through various forms of fundraisings in the school and outside, the school has almost reached its aim of raising one million Solomon Islands dollars. We will apply for another one million dollars from other funding agencies when we reach our one million dollar target.*"

4.7.2.2. School farm.

Some of the participants reported that they supported any positive initiatives to improve the school farms for students' food security and as a source of school income because the school has available land for farming. Their desire to improve the school farm was evident in their support for allowing the school land to be leased to the Republic of China (Taiwan) (ROC) and the Solomon Islands Ministry of

Agriculture to grow rice for the school as well as using the rice farm as a demonstration for other rice farmers in the Solomon Islands. Robson, the head of the Agriculture Department commented that "*because we allowed school land to be used for farming, I was given a work attachment to the ROC Demonstration farm in the Solomon Islands and the Solomon Islands Ministry of Agriculture to introduce rice farming in the school.*" Figure 4.2 shows harvesting of rice in the school farm.

Figure 4.2 Rice farm: Teachers and students harvesting rice during a work session

Robson reported that "*around 2011, the school received SBD$ 10,000 and a donation of a rice milling machine from ROC.*" It appeared that the donations had boosted the teachers' and students' cooperation to provide free labour on the rice farm. As an indication of positive response to the desired change, some of the participants reported that they selected groups of teachers and students to work on the rice farm, vegetable farms, and root crop farm during work sessions every day except Sunday. Robson reported that "*I supervised the school to plant rice covering an area of 1.8 hectares. The school offered free labour.*" In 2012, the school harvested 10,000 kg of rice in one harvest.

According to the principal and Robson, the school experienced some challenges in maintaining the operation of the rice project when ROC left. In response to the transfer of the rice project to the school to operate and manage, Robson, one of the farm supervisors, commented that "*the teachers provided manpower to work in the school rice farm with the students but their involvement*

has gradually eroded over the two or three years since ROC left.” Rex and Bilisary mentioned that because of slow withdrawal of labour support from the teachers and the high operational cost of using the school diesel generator to pump water from the nearby Mountainway River for farm irrigation, teachers decided to reduce the size of the farms. For these reasons, Bilisary suggested that “*the school should venture into small commercial farms to generate school income to finance its operational costs.*”

The participants responded to physical school infrastructure and school farm improvement by expressing their feelings, organising and forming school project committees and sub-committees, and organising fundraising that involved and engaged a wide range of people within their church organisation. They allowed their school land to be used as a demonstration farm, from which they could learn from to operate their existing farms as well as expanding to other forms of farming.

4.7.3. Access to the Internet

Four long-serving participants commented that laptops and smartphones were introduced to Mountainway NSS in 2011. At that time, it was very expensive for them to purchase personal computers and smartphones. Thus, only a few teachers had personal computers and smartphones.

The early career (EC) participants spoke a great deal about their desire for a change in which the school introduced affordable technology for teaching and learning. They commented that if they used the available technologies, they could improve their lesson preparations, planning, and teaching and learning.

4.7.3.1. An attempt to install and connect the school to the Internet.

Lindon reported that “*Mountainway NSS already had an opportunity to have computers and the Internet. The US Marine Corps wanted to connect an Internet link for the school for free, but the Pioneer of Faith Church authority stopped it.*” Not allowing the Internet to be installed in the school was evidence that the Pioneer of Faith Church authority controlled what new information technologies could be used at Mountainway NSS. The Church authority took the view that use of the Internet could give teachers an opportunity to access obscene materials and information.

Many of the participants further elaborated that the students were not allowed to have mobile phones in classrooms as the staff believed students would spend most of their time using their phones, which would disturb and interrupt studies.

At the time of the research, Mountainway NSS was still not permitted to install and use the Internet on the school campus. However, it is within the coverage of the mobile broadband Internet link provided by Solomon Telekom Communication Company. Consequently the principal used a dongle to access the Internet while some of the teachers and students accessed the Internet on their personal smartphones (Field Notes, 16/10/2014).

4.7.4. Teachers' Responses to Access to the Internet

The majority of the participants reported that although they had a strong desire to have a free connection to the Internet in the school, they still respected and complied with the Pioneer of Faith Church education authority's decision to prevent connection. The school has adopted the Church's ethos. Thus, some of the participants shared the belief that the decision was based on the Pioneer of Faith Church values.

The participants commented that when desktop computers, laptops, and smart mobile phones were introduced to the school, they were keen to use them for teaching and learning, communication and research. As Lindon, an early-career (EC) teacher, reported:

> *To convince the school and in particular the Church authority to appreciate the need for using the computer and the Internet for teaching learning purposes, I used my personal laptop to prepare my lessons and examinations and also type other teachers' work and showed them to other teachers. I even type other teachers' work. They appreciated and supported my idea to install the Internet in the school. I also downloaded information from the Internet on my smartphone and shared with my colleagues. The teachers even asked me to research their information on my private mobile phone. Eventually, some of my colleagues bought their own smartphones.*

Rex also reported that "*with the support of the long-serving teachers, we discussed and shared ideas with the school principal to buy three more computers for teachers' use.*" In support of the idea of introducing the Internet in the school, Lindon reported that "*I accepted an appointment from the principal to teach the teachers basic computers skills. Although attendance at the training was voluntary, most of the teachers attended. They requested that similar training be organised during the one-week study break.*" He went on to say that only one long-serving teacher, who was at retirement age, was reluctant to attend the training.

The actions of the EC teacher convinced the LS teachers of the importance of the use of computers and the Internet. His actions thus gained support from other teachers and provided a basis for further consultation with the education authority to reconsider their decision about Internet availability in the school. At the time of data collection, only three desktop computers were available in the staff room for teachers' use; the teachers gathered in front of the computer while Lindon demonstrated how to work with Excel and keep records of students' assessment grades (Field Note 16/10/2014).

With the desire to use the Internet on the school campus, the participants reported that many of them and their students breached the school rules and used mobile phones to access the Internet for learning purposes but with some guidelines that still uphold respect of church values. This practice had shown that their great desire to use new technology for learning had forced them to compromise school rules enforced by the authority. The majority of the participants admitted that they knew some students had brought mobile phones to school and hidden them among their possessions in the dormitories and were using them for research purposes on the Internet. Roselyn mentioned that "*we were aware that many of our students used their mobile phones in private either in their dormitories or the nearby bushes. We only confiscated their phones if we were convinced that the mobiles disturbed their study.*"

The participants reported that because Mountainway NSS is only about ten minutes' drive from Honiara city, most of them either used public Internet cafés or asked friends and relatives to do research for them. According to Rex and Robson, who were enrolled at the University of the South Pacific (USP), while using the

USP Internet for their studies, they also researched to prepare their lessons for Mountainway NSS. Rex went on to say that "*I went to the USP campus once a week to use the university Internet.*"

The participants responded to the Internet access problem by accepting the authority's decision not to install a school Internet system, but they still accessed the Internet on their mobile phones. The desire to access the Internet had forced them to use the Internet in the school, compromise school rules by allowing students to access the Internet on their mobiles and meant that they went to the city to access the Internet in training institutions, public Internet cafés and via friends and relatives.

4.7.5. Change Relating to School Curriculum

4.7.5.1. School curriculum.

The majority of the participants reported that the school curriculum had not been fully revised for almost 20 years. See Figure 4.3 for student text book. Roselyn, a member of the secondary school Science Subject curriculum writing panel commented that "*the review of the secondary school national curriculum is currently in progress. The World Bank funded it. However, due to unknown reasons, we were not recalled to continue with the review and writing.*" She continued to say that priorities in the curriculum review were on the core subjects such as English, Science, Maths and Social Science.

The participants also reported that Mountainway NSS is a Christian school; however, Religious Education had been excluded from the teaching subjects prior to 2012. Rex, a long-serving teacher at Mountainway NSS reflected that "*in past years, the school only encouraged the teaching of compulsory subjects in the national examination. Religious Education is an optional subject.*" The three long-serving (LS) teachers at Mountainway NSS shared similar comments that before 2012, the school was aware of not teaching Religious Education but did not take the initiative to teach it until the Pioneer of Faith Church education authority instructed the school to teach it. All the participants reported that teaching Religious Education in the school was a new change.

The participants reported that as far as they could remember, the last supply of text books to Mountainway NSS was more than 10 years ago. However, three senior teachers reported that they had noticed a change in the school, in which some subject departments were more resourceful than others. Robson reported that "*I noticed that only the heads of departments who were members of the curriculum writing panel had enough and updated teaching resources.*" Some of the participants asserted that while attending the writing workshop, the heads of departments collected learning resources for their subject areas from the National Resource Centre. Mosese reported that "*although NSS has a national curriculum for Religious Education, we use the Pioneer of Faith Church textbooks and resources, so we have no problem in teaching Religious Education.*"
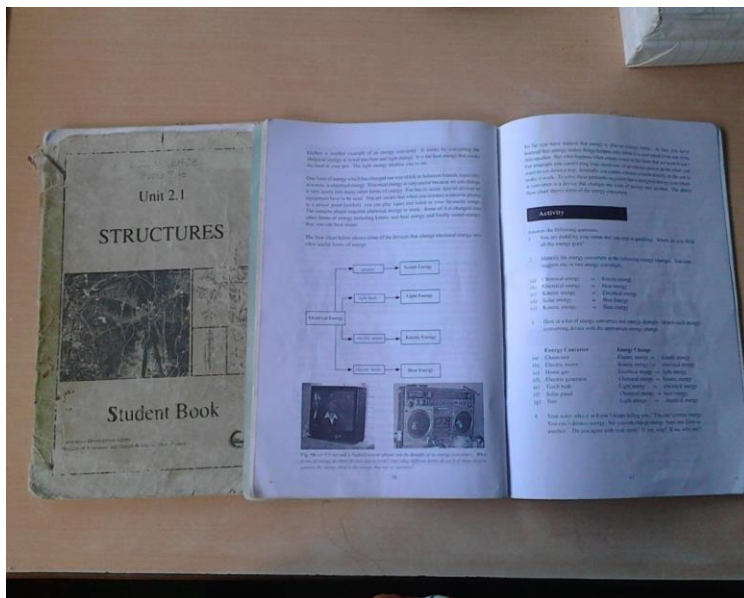
Figure 4.3 Student book: The national secondary school student's text book

4.7.5.2. Teachers' responses to change relating to school curriculum.

The participants referred to school textbooks, stationery and teaching and learning materials when they talked about resources. These resources were normally supplied by the curriculum division, the education authority and the school.

Most of the participants indicated that because the school depended on the national curriculum, they did not have much influence on changes in the national

secondary school curriculum if they are mandated and supported by the curriculum development division (CDD). Roselyn reflected that "*I was excited and accepted a request from the Curriculum Development Division to be one the three teachers representing Mountainway NSS as a member of the national secondary school curriculum review panel.*" Roselyn continued to say that they have been reviewing the school curriculum for five years during school holidays. However, she wanted resource support and remuneration from the CDD before organising in-house training for the Science teachers on what had been covered in the review.

The participants reported that the curriculum writers had the privilege of collecting teaching and learning resources for their department from the national resource centre while attending the writing panel in Honiara. Roselyn, the head of the Science department, reflected that:

> *We had enough textbooks for the students in almost all Years for teaching science. The advantage of our school is its proximity to the city and I am a member of the national curriculum development panel. Thus, the national curriculum division has given us the privilege of collecting school textbooks from the national resource centre.*

Some of the participants mentioned that other subjects, in which the subject teachers were not members of the curriculum writing panels, did not have enough teaching and learning resources and depended on the curriculum development division to supply their textbooks. Lindon reported a critical shortage of teaching and learning resources: "*In my English class at least three students share one textbook across all Forms.*"

While some of the participants responded to the critical shortage of teaching and learning resources by just waiting for the next supply of resources from the curriculum development division, Rex and two business teachers produced Business booklets. All the participants reported that so far only Rex had initiated new ideas to produce Business department booklets. Rex confirmed that "*I worked with my two teachers to collect information from the University of the South Pacific, the Internet and library and other business organisations to compile them into booklets.*" He went on to say that "*the school paid our department $17* (AUD $2.40) *for each booklet that was sold. Therefore, we plan to produce more booklets next year.*" The

principal reported that since 2013, the Business booklets had become popular as Business teachers from other secondary schools in the City and provinces bought the booklets and used them in teaching. Other departments could use the available resources, just like the Business teachers, to produce departmental booklets.

When the education authority mandated the school to teach Religious Education, the teachers accepted the change and provided much-needed support for its implementation (Principal; Mosese; Robson). Mosese reported that "*before teaching of Religious Education using the national curriculum was introduced to the school, religious programs and activities were organised by the clergy and were only focused on Pioneer of Faith Church beliefs, values, and practices.*" Some of the participants made similar comments that they embraced the inclusion of Religious Education with moral support, providing working space, teaching the clergy-teachers how to write schemes of work and lessons and sharing their stationery.

The participants responded to the school curriculum either individually or as a group of professional teachers. There were advantages and positive responses to teachers who were members of the curriculum writing panel collecting text books from the national curriculum centre. It was apparent that other teachers who were not members of the curriculum writing panel shared the available school texts with their students. Of all the subject departments, only the Business department teachers responded to the school curriculum needs by producing a book to supplement their national school text books. The teachers responded positively to the inclusion of Religious Education as one of the subjects in school by using the Pioneer of Faith Church materials as textbooks to supplement the national curriculum.

4.7.6. Student Academic Performance

4.7.6.1. Change identified in student academic performance.

Most of the participants measured students' academic performance and the status of the school based on the number of students who passed the national examinations in Forms 3, 5 and 6 and the grades they received. When explaining the school's results, they made similar comments that one big change at Mountainway NSS was the improvement in students' academic performance after 2012. Bilisary reported that "*around 2010 and 2012, the student pass rate in the national*

examinations across all three forms was about seventy-eight percent." When comparing the school results in 2013 with 2015, Rex reported that:

> *In the 2015 school results, about ninety percent of the students passed in Forms 3, 5 and 6 at Mountainway NSS compared to 2012 only eighty-five percent. The female students' academic performance was also improved with an increase to forty-nine percent of the students enrolled in this school.*

Rex, Roselyn, and Lindon noted that there were significant improvements in Science, Business, and English in the national examination results. Rex reported that "*eleven students received 'A' grades in the Business subject and ten students received 'A' grades in Science subjects in the Solomon Islands Secondary School Certificate results.*" Solomon Islands Secondary School Certificate is a national examination that students sit in Form 5.

The participants measured improvements in students' academic performance in two ways. First was the improvement in the overall school results in the national examinations in Forms 3, 5 and 6 leading up to 2010. The pass rates continued to improve from 78% in 2010, to 85% in 2012 and 90% in 2015. Another improvement was the increased numbers of students getting good grades in the national examinations. Another significant improvement was the increased pass rate of female students. At the time of the survey 49% of the school enrolment was female students.

4.7.6.2. Teachers' responses to change in student academic performance.

The participants reported that their responses to improving student academic performance were informed and guided by the recommendations in the school review reports. They mentioned that their commitment to ongoing professional learning and to teaching and learning were their responses to improving students' academic performance.

4.7.6.3. Ongoing professional development.

The participants reported that they normally attended teachers' workshops and conferences organised by the Pioneer of Faith Church Education Authority for the teachers in Pioneer of Faith Church schools within and around the Honiara Diocese in September. Mosese reported that "*presentations at the Pioneer of Faith Church teachers' conference covered a range of topics including reemphasizing of Pioneer of Faith Church beliefs, values and practices, leadership, management, professionalism, gender equity, and restorative practices.*" Bilisary also reported that "*we learned how to help the teachers and the students from different denominations to strive for academic excellence in the Pioneer of Faith Church community regardless of their cultural and religious differences.*"

In response to improving student academic performance through professional learning and teacher collaboration, Roselyn reported that:

> *We have a school policy that guided us to improve our students' academic performance. We formed a school academic committee and the members were the heads of departments and the teachers who were identified by the teachers as more knowledgeable about their teaching subjects to moderate examinations before allowing the students to sit them.*

Rex and Robson, members of the academic committee, explained that they moderated all the teachers' examinations, include correction of English grammar, levels, types and number of questions, structure and type settings. Four participants commented that at first, they were embarrassed when other teachers corrected their work but later they found that the practice had improved their teaching and learning. Rex added that "*to improve the student academic performance; first we have to improve ourselves academically so in 2014 five of us pursued further studies through extension studies at the University of the South Pacific.*" Roselyn and Rex reported that two teachers who had advanced diplomas in teaching qualifications pursued bachelor qualifications, and three pursued Postgraduate Diploma qualifications, going to the university learning centre either once or twice a week to attend classes. Rex and three other participants reported that they were attracted to transfer to teach

in schools close to Honiara to study for higher qualifications through Distance and Flexible Learning Mode (DFL). They were denied the opportunity of pursuing further studies when they were posted in the remote schools.

The participants reported that another initiative the school has taken to improve students' academic performance is to improve their English language skills. Bilisary commented that "*the school has introduced a language policy that both teachers and students have to speak English in meetings, worship, discussions and casual communications in the school campus.*" When the language policy was enforced, the participants reported they struggled to speak in English because they always preferred to communicate verbally either in their mother tongue or Pidgin English which is their lingua franca.

4.7.6.4. Teachers' work commitment.

The participants reported that with collective responses to improve student academic performance, they reconsidered and improved their work commitment and attitude towards student learning. As Robson noted:

> *We learned from our past mistakes and changed our attitude and now are more committed to our work. We monitored and measured our attendance by introducing daily staff attendance records in which we signed our arrival times in the office in the morning and signed out after work in the afternoon.*

The head of department participants reported that since the school review, their staff attendance registers have shown that their teachers had been faithful in attending their class periods, and marking students' work with constructive comments, which helped the students to learn. Lindon reflected that "*in the past, it was a practice that some of the teachers put their students' work on the chalkboard and went to the city. But this is no longer practiced in this school.*"

Robson commented that "*I observed that after the school review, the teachers in our department are now always early and wait at the doors of the classrooms before their class periods started. Teachers who were always late and absent from their classes were now early and even remain at their working stations until all the class periods of the day ended.*" The male participants commented that they increased their time for one-to-one tutorials, small group tutorials, and consultations.

Even at night during study periods, they provided one-to-one and small group tutorial sessions. According to Rex, "*my practice towards teaching and learning changed. I worked in my office until 12 am. I was available for consultation, especially for the senior male students in Years 10, 11, and 12.*"

Roselyn and Rex reported that they needed more time to teach the students so they discussed, approved and had extra classes every Saturday from 8 am to 12 pm without asking the school to pay an extra responsibility allowance. The participants reported that they also organised study periods for one hour every morning and two hours every night except on Saturdays, when they are only in the morning.

Most of the participants reported that although they had not organised in-house training for professional development, they still used fortnightly meetings, academic committees, and informal discussions in the staff room to share new ideas and experiences about teaching and learning. Bilisary commented that "*informal talks in the office and around the school campus were avenues in which many of the teachers had the courage to share and asked other subject teachers for assistance related to their teaching subjects.*"

The teachers acted to improve student academic performance by faithfully attending workshops, forming academic committees that moderated teachers' work and provided required assistance, and enforcing a language policy that requires teachers and students to speak in English. They improved their work commitment by engaging more in teaching and learning with the students. The improvement and dedication to teaching and learning was evident in the increased number of study periods, organisation of classes on Saturday and extended time for student consultations even at night.

4.7.7. Student Behaviour

4.7.7.1. Change identified in student behaviour.

More than half of the participants in the study spoke a great deal about their observations on the change in student behaviour. They reported that school discipline and behaviour had been weakening in past years. Rex, an LS teacher at Mountainway, reflected that "*up to 2011, quite a big number of students were*

punished, suspended and even expelled. Many of the teachers were not committed to address student misbehaviour-related issues." Mosese further elaborated that "*in that period of time, we had many disciplinary cases related to students consuming alcohol and causing disturbance in the school, fighting, quarrel and stealing from other students in the dormitory and escaping to town without permission.*" Rex reported that parents even came to the school campus and collected their children without getting permission from the school.

However, most of the participants reported that they had noticed significant changes and improvement in the school discipline system and student behaviour since 2013.

4.7.7.2. Teachers' responses to change in student behaviour.

The participants reported that their response to student behaviour was guided by the school review report which reformed the school. The reforms included appointing the new principal in 2012, introducing a new discipline system, and involving the teachers and the students in spiritual programs and activities. They promoted and advocated good student behaviour through school announcements, notices pinned on the school notice board and programs and activities. For dining hall rules, see Figure 4.4.
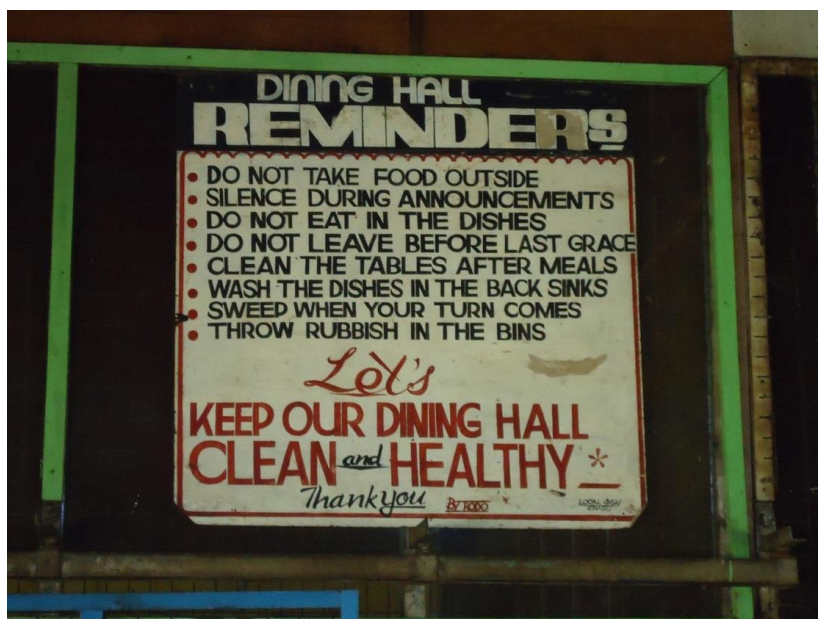
Figure 4.4 Dining hall rules: The hall rules that reminded the students what to do and not to do in the dining hall.

They also commented that they increased their involvement in different stages in the school's disciplinary processes, including the counselling of students at each stage of the process. Mosese reported in detail on the disciplinary process:

In our meeting, we discussed and changed the term punishment to community service. As a result of a change of term in disciplining students, the students did not have negative feelings when they were doing community service. Those who did community service three times were reported to the class patron teachers for counselling. If they still breach school rules, they would be reported to pastoral care. If the concerned students continued on community service, pastoral care would report their case to the disciplinary committee. In these processes of school discipline, we pray with the students.

Next, they increased student involvement in religious programs. Mosese, one of the clergy, reported that "*we increased the involvement of teachers and students in religious programs and activities. We used the students' mealtimes in the dining hall as an opportunity for them to pray together.*" The participants reported that students have less free time to get bored and misbehave as they are involved in singing and bible readings not only on Sundays but also during week days.

In reporting staff responses to student behaviour, Rex commented that:

As a result of the students' involvement in religion with the clergy and the teachers' support, they reported that they have noticed a positive change in the students' behaviour and attitude like drinking of alcohol on school campus, no fighting, less stealing cases, bullying, control of loud noise and established a healthy relationship.

Furthermore, the participants explained that another response that contributed to the improvement of student behaviour was the improvement in keeping records of disciplinary cases by the deputy principal, which allowed them to properly manage disciplinary cases and deal with them promptly. Rex, a member of the school disciplinary committee, explained that "*we introduced a change that students must be suspended twice before expulsion. This change takes into account the child's right to education.*"

The last response was involving parents to improve student behaviour. The participants reported that they used the annual school closing day, which coincides with the annual school bazaar, to inform parents, Pioneer of Faith Church authorities and the public about the school approach to discipline. Rex reflected on the teachers' presentations about school discipline to the parents: "*we announced to the parents that they must comply with the school rules to get permission and complete the requirements and administrative formalities before collecting their children from the school.*" Mosese added that "*I reminded parents in the announcement not to encourage their children to breach school rules and regulations as had been practised in past years.*"

The school review report provided a guideline on how the teachers responded to student behaviour. From the recommendations, the participants responded to student behaviour by improving the school disciplinary system, increasing the number of spiritual programs and student and teacher involvement. The response also involved parents and guardians by inviting them to the school and informing them of the school rules and their expected response to student behaviour.

The next section presents the findings on the influence of the school ethos and the school culture on the teachers' responses.

4.8. The Influence of the School Ethos and the School Culture on the Teachers' Responses

The findings presented here provide the answers to research sub-question three: How do the school culture and the school ethos influence teachers' responses?

The participants reported that the ethos and the culture of Mountainway NSS are guided by four pillars: hospitality, prayer, formations, and service. They mentioned that the four pillars are biblically based and influenced and shaped the culture of the school and how they responded to school change.

4.8.1. Hospitality

The participants commented that welcoming a stranger and visitors is part of their school culture. Right in front of the parking area and the school gate is the

school administrative office, which is a low building, with teachers' workstations and the principal's office facing the car park and the school gate. In this setting, the principals and the teachers have a culture of going out to the car parking area in front of their office to greet visitors upon their arrival (Field Notes, 16/10/2014). The participant reported that they believed this practice made visitors feel accepted in the school. Rex reported that *"being friendly and welcoming visitors is unique about us. This practice has encouraged parents, former students and other people to work with us and parents have complied with school rules by getting permission before picking up their children."*

In the open staff room, the teachers have individual tables which are their workstations. These tables were arranged in a 'U' shape (Field Notes, 16/10/2014). Rex commented that *"the U arrangement of the teachers' tables created a feeling of teamwork, encouraged collaboration and also made it easy for the principal to monitor teachers' attendance through general observation besides marking the staff daily attendance register."* The office arrangements seemed to make it convenient for the school to organise meetings and have good discussions. According to Lindon's view, *"the layout of the teachers' tables encouraged transparency and provided the opportunity to have regular discussions for school improvements."*

Roselyn and Bilisary commented that the current office arrangement created an environment that enabled them to feel comfortable to sit at their own workstation and contribute effectively in staff meetings and discussions. Lindon expounded a similar view that *"their workstation arrangement encourages informal meetings and discussions. Often, matters discussed in the informal meetings many times are taken into consideration by the principal."*

4.8.2. Faith Formation and Spirituality

The participants commented that they were committed to providing quality education and responding positively to change that encourages effective learning alongside the Pioneer of Faith Church beliefs and values. With the influence of the idea of formation, they commented that they have positive working and learning relationships among themselves and with their students as was evident in the

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formation of prayer groups, and being involved in Bible readings and other Pioneer of Faith Church practices in the school.

Mosese reported that "*the teachers reformed a culture in which our students felt accepted, valued and respected. They are welcomed by the teachers either as an individual or in a small group in their working stations at any time without making appointments.*" Many of the participants shared similar views that the culture of Mountainway NSS is evolving around helping students to draw near to God. Several of the participants made similar comments that the school had provided many opportunities for the teachers and the students to have spiritual enrichment while striving as a team for school improvement and academic excellence. Bilisary further explained that "*it is the culture of this school that we have to ensure that individual teachers are part of the school's development and improvement by delegating to them tasks to perform.*"

Robson reported that "*we are stewards in this school, so we have a responsibility to ensure that our students gain the knowledge and skills that are required for their study.*" Some of the participants further explained that their role as steward is to devote a considerable amount of time to student learning, even after normal working hours, to provide one-to-one, pair and small group tutorials, being available in the staffroom for consultation until around midnight using a private solar light.

All the participants reported that the students' times are programed from the rising bell in the morning at 5:30 am to lights off at 9:30 pm but senior students were allowed to study until midnight. They spoke of the programs and planned activities in addition to class periods. The school had organised study every night except on Saturday, and they have a study period in the morning at 5:30am. Tuesdays and Thursdays were sports days and other days were work sessions. "*The students are expected to be busy and kept engaged at all times. Therefore, teachers are always working with the students and available for consultations. Such engagement is to prevent them from being distracted and engaged in other unacceptable activities*" (Principal).

At the time of the research, Mountainway NSS did not have the Internet available for email, or a landline telephone. For this reason, students and teachers frequently visited the school notice board for any announcements. Roselyn explained that "*we have a culture of giving information and announcements to teachers and students using the notice board and announcements during meal time in the dining hall, class period, and worship. Passing information through word of mouth is commonly practised, accepted and respected in this school. We encourage social interactions and create interpersonal relationships in the school community.*"

4.8.3. Prayer

All the participants reported that Mountainway NSS lives a life of prayer. They expressed their belief that through prayer, they can be successful in their plans and achieve their goal. Mosese reported the times for prayer: "*every morning, the students wake up and have organised prayers in their dormitories. Teachers supervise students to pray at 12 noon and 5:30pm.*" Some of the participants commented that the reason why the teachers and the students cooperated and worked together as a team to improve the school is because of the power of prayer.

The principal commented that " *the school incorporated the Pioneer of Faith Church ethos, thus as a church-run school, teachers are expected to behave like Christians and share with others Pioneer of Faith Church values and school values and cooperatively pursue what is best for the school.*" All the participants shared similar views in their comments that they believed in the power of cooperation, respect, sharing, caring and obedience that influenced their work commitment in teaching and learning, fundraising and other engagements in school change. In their endeavour for school improvement, Rex reported that "*we turn to God through prayers to improve our talents and skills to make a positive change to this school as our response as stewards.*"

Many of the participants commented that symbolic reminders of Pioneer of Faith Church moral values, such as statues of Jesus and Mary, are placed in selected buildings on the school campus. Robson stated that "*the biblical symbols in the schools are always reminding us to honour our school, our leaders and behave according to the expected standards in our everyday life in the school.*" Mosese

noted that the evidence of God answering prayers and the school's commitment to spiritual activities was that graffiti and vandalism were no longer evident on school property after they installed the religious statues.

All the participants mentioned that the presence of the Pioneer of Faith Church workers near and on the school campus and their involvement in school prayer programs and numerous religious activities made the teachers feel that they were working in a Pioneer of Faith Church institution and thus were expected to behave as Christians. Mosese commented "*I am impressed to see the involvement of Pioneer of Faith Church fathers and clergy in the prayer programs including Holy Communion in the school. We are part of a big Pioneer of Faith Church family.*"

4.8.4. Service

The participants explained their belief that teaching at Mountainway NSS is fulfilment of a commission to work for God by serving the school and putting into practice the other three pillars – hospitality, formation, and prayer. They reported that they developed a communal culture in which they care for students' and staff wellbeing through their pastoral care office, which provides general support services and counselling for students and staff. Rex added that "*along with the pastoral care office is the school development committee and other small committees to serve the school, not only in teaching and learning but also involved in varieties of school projects.*" Four of the participants reiterated that as teachers teaching in a Church-operated school, they are mandated to use their God-given talents and skills to cooperatively and collaboratively serve the students, the school, the authority and the nation whenever possible.

However, there were some issues related to gender equity in the school due to the influence of Melanesian culture in the school. As Roselyn reflected, "*when it comes to delegation of leadership roles to the teachers, females were second choices. This practice had suppressed our legitimate service and contributions to school change in the school.*" The imbalance was evident in the appointment of the heads of department; as the principal reported that "*of the nine head of department positions, only two were headed by female teachers.*" Roselyn reflected on her first leadership appointment that:

I was appointed to the head of Science department position because maybe I used to contribute to the discussions in the male-dominated meetings, a long-serving teacher in this school with high qualification compared with the two Science teachers and I can work with male teachers.

Roselyn went on to report that:

I performed exceptionally well in my leadership as evident in renovation and furnishing of the Science laboratory and providing Science equipment and other teaching and learning resources compared with some of the departments headed by the male teachers. Thus, I was reappointed as head of the Science department for six years.

The participants reported that the idea of regionalism remains a challenge in the school as some teachers from other provinces felt quite reserved about working with teachers who originated from a particular ethnic group. They admitted that the feeling sometimes had impacted the degree of their service to the school. The majority of the participants reported that the effects of ethnic tension in the Solomon Islands in early 2000 still affected the teachers' working relationships as some of the teachers were cautious in their choice of who to work with in the school.

The next section presents the findings on teachers' contributions to successful school change.

4.9. Teachers' Contributions to Successful School Change

The data presented in this subsection seeks to provide the answer to research sub- question four: What are the teachers' contributions to the successful school change?

4.9.1. Planning for School Change and Work Relationships

It appeared that the way the participants responded to the identified school physical infrastructural changes had helped the school to strategize its plans and map the directions guiding the school towards its desired change. It seemed that the way the participants responded to the school's physical infrastructural change had led the school administration and the Pioneer of Faith Church authority to reconsider and

redesign the types of physical infrastructure that could accommodate the growing infrastructural needs, demands and safety requirements in the school. For instance, this was evident in the principal's statement that the new administrative building would be a two-storey building in which the teachers would have good sized office rooms. The participants envisaged that working in a safe and comfortable environment would improve their work morale, which in turn would improve the students' academic performance.

According to the participants, their positive responses to the farming projects had given the school a good farming reputation with the national government through the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock and the international organisation from the Republic of China (Taiwan). It appeared that the success of the rice project had built a close, good relationship between the school and other funding agents. Building relationships is one of the school cultures of Mountainway NSS. The principal and Robson, the agriculture teacher, commented that because the school had succeeded with the rice project, it had established a link enabling it to work alongside the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock on vegetable and root crops, and honey farms. This working relationship has created the possibility of assisting the school with food security and increasing school income.

4.9.2. Being Resourceful and Creative

The introduction of new technology and technological initiatives by the participants had provided the school with opportunities to improve teaching and learning and to link with the outside world. Lindon and Rex found that their teachers' mindsets regarding improvements in teaching and learning were gradually leading to the use of technology. As a result, Business teachers used information collected from the University of the South Pacific (USP) Internet to produce departmental booklets; the first of their kind in the NSSs in this developing country. Some of the participants initiated ways and means to be self-supporting through the use of information technology. Some of the participants commented that if the Pioneer of Faith Church Education authority allowed the school to connect to the Internet, they would also produce similar booklets.

Rex, Lindon and some other participants commented that after they became aware of the use of the Internet for online learning, they enrolled at the USP centre in Honiara, to attend lectures in Fiji through a satellite link. Five teachers pursued higher degree qualifications through distance learning but the number would increase if the school was connected to the Internet. They reported that the teachers who were doing extension studies at USP collected information from the university Internet and shared it. It is apparent that they even shared new knowledge, new ideas and new skills learned from their studies.

Many of the participants mentioned that they would continue to use the available technologies in the school and at USP to try to improve teaching and learning; raise teachers' level of performance, access more updated information and undertake ongoing professional development. They believed that improvements in these areas would convince the Pioneer of Faith Church education authority to allow the installation of an Internet connection at Mountainway NSS.

In their response to various changes related to improvements in school discipline, spiritual life in the school and the teaching of Religious Education, there was evidence supporting the existence of a reform of school culture. It was apparent that in the school culture reform, across the school there was a sense of belonging and an intrinsic desire for the teachers and students to meditate, engage and empower others to uphold Pioneer of Faith Church beliefs, values, and practices. Spiritual activities became a default part of the school's programs. The teachers' approaches in the various school changes were based on the four pillars of the school ethos; hospitality, formation, prayer, and service.

4.10. Summary

This case study has presented what the participants identified as change and how they responded to the identified changes at Mountainway NSS. The changes they identified and responded to were physical school infrastructure and farm improvement; access to the Internet; school curriculum; improvement in student academic performance; and student behaviour. The participants' responses to the identified school changes were well planned, organised, and strategic and creative

because of the guidelines provided in the school review report. Importantly, their responses were influenced by the principal, the style of leadership of the principal, Pioneer of Faith Church beliefs, values, and practices, school ethos and school culture, which enabled them to respond in various ways to a range of school changes.

In the next chapter, findings from case study two: Valleyway NSS are presented.

CHAPTER 5: CASE STUDY TWO
Valleyway National Secondary School

5.1. School Context - Setting the Scene

Valleyway NSS is situated in the remote and isolated outskirts of one of the nine provinces of the Solomon Islands. Because of its remoteness and isolation, transport to Honiara, the capital city of the Solomon Islands, involves either 24 hours by boat or an hour's direct flight. Semi-passenger and cargo ships provide services to the school, on average once a month, and a domestic flight is scheduled twice a week. The nearest provincial centre is around 50 minutes travel by pick-up truck on a rock-strewn road. In the vicinity of Valleyway NSS are local village communities, a River of Life Church mission station, primary schools and a provincial secondary school.

Initially, Valleyway NSS was an AUSAID-funded project intended as a new agricultural boarding school as part of the Solomon Islands government plan for decentralising developments to the provinces. The school complex consists of 56 buildings including classrooms, administration block, specialist agricultural learning facilities, kitchens, mess buildings, dormitories, ablutions blocks, staff housing, and the associated support infrastructure including water supply, power supply, sewerage, drainage, and roads. However, after it was completed, the Solomon Islands government converted the school to a Solomon Islands government NSS.

There are 18 classrooms located at the centre of the school campus, while most of the teachers' housing is situated between the main school and the beach. The male students have eight dormitories at the eastern end of the campus, while the females have only four at the western end. The walkways between the classrooms, chapel, library, dining hall and administration building are concrete, but all other footpaths are bare ground. All the buildings are separate and single-storey apart from the new female students' dormitory, which is two-storeyed.

5.2. School Enrolment and Academic Staff

Valleyway NSS enrols students from across the Solomon Islands for its intakes in Forms 1, 4, 6 and 7. Although the selection and student catchment areas are country-wide, the majority of the students enrolled at Valleyway NSS are from the hosting province. The school offers basic academic secondary education including English, Maths, Social Science, Science, and Business as core subjects. At the time of data gathering, the school had 28 qualified secondary school teachers. According to the principal, in January, 2014 490 students were enrolled of which 245 were males and 245 were females. Gender balance in NSS enrolments is mandated by the Solomon Islands National Government through its NSS enrolment policy.

5.3. Research Participants

The eight participants in this study are briefly introduced. Their names have been changed to maintain confidentiality. The brief information (see Table 5.1) provides the details relevant to this study.

Table 5.1

The Research Participants at Valleyway NSS

No	Sex	Participant	Position
1	M	Wilson Philip	Principal
2	M	Tom Nelson	Deputy Principal/HOD
3	M	Pitakia Rex	HOD
4	M	Denson Mark	HOD
5	M	Samson Varane	HOD
6	F	Jacinta Qila	HOD
7	F	Joy Tobe	Teacher
8	F	Clarish Ramavule	Teacher

5.4. Valleyway: A State-Operated NSS

The Solomon Islands Ministry of Education and Human Resources (MEHRD) in Honiara is the education authority for Valleyway NSS. Valleyway NSS is thus

administered and managed by the Permanent Secretary and the Undersecretary. At the school level, Valleyway NSS has a Board that governs, informs and advises the MEHRD through the Permanent Secretary and Undersecretary on matters that require high-level administrative decisions.

With this administrative structure and line of command down to the school level, the school principal and the teachers of Valleyway NSS are answerable to the Permanent Secretary and Undersecretary on matters that require the decision and endorsement of the education authority. The principal reported that processes are currently in progress and once all the formalities are completed, Valleyway NSS will have a separate board and become autonomous with regards to its governance, management and other affairs. However, the MEHRD will still be part of the governance and administration of the school through the position of Chairperson and Board members.

The principal reported that as a state-operated NSS, Valleyway is focused on academic achievement and shaping the students' behaviour and attitudes to train and prepare them to become hard working and productive citizens of the Solomon Islands. This initiative is reflected in the school motto, 'Train a youth, build a nation'. With regard to the school motto, Pitakia explained that "*the school prepares the students to build the nation by involving them with tasks that will nurture and shape their behaviours, attitude, and vision as responsible and productive citizens both in academic and practical work.*"

Most of the participants reported that due to remoteness, communication challenges and other national commitments, the Permanent Secretary, Undersecretary and school inspector at the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development have not conducted regular visits to the school for teacher appraisals and school inspections. The principal further explained that:

> *I am aware that the officers in the Ministry of Education are dealing with and more committed to national issues so they maybe do not have much time to conduct regular visits to our school and work closely with us. Therefore, they trusted us as professionals to work by ourselves most of the time for school improvements.*

5.5. The Principal of Valleyway NSS

Wilson Philip had been a principal in a community high school (CHS) and a Church-operated NSS before he was selected as the principal at Valleyway NSS. At the time of data collection, Wilson had been principal at Valleyway NSS for three years. He was an early-career and highly qualified Maths and Business teacher prior to his first appointment to a principal's position at a CHS. Wilson reflected on his first appointment that:

> *As a young principal with a social character who put more emphasis on improving the students' academic performance in a remote and isolated community high school dominated by long-serving teachers, I gained leadership support from the teachers and the people in the village communities within the catchment area of the community high school.*

The principal commented that his outstanding performance in building new permanent teachers' houses, additional classrooms, assisting unqualified teachers in securing Solomon Islands government scholarships for further studies, and improving Form 3 school results in the national examinations in his first principalship contributed to his selection as deputy principal at the Church-operated NSS. After three years as deputy principal, he pursued further studies and completed a Bachelor's degree in education. He was then appointed to the principal's position in the same Church-operated NSS and served for two consecutive years before he applied for and was appointed as the principal of Valleyway NSS.

 The principal noted that "*before I was selected to this school, I was aware that some of the national politicians had a strong influence on the choice of principal, which caused a conflict of interests, compromised the school leadership and affected teacher cooperation.*" The long-serving participants compared the leadership of the current principal at Valleyway NSS, commenting that under the leadership of the two former principals, they had not often shared or discussed ideas as a team of professional teachers. The two previous principals did not normally consult them during decision making.

The principal reported that the political influence in the school had challenged and also guided him to frame his style of leadership to encourage co-operation,

collaboration and social coherence in the school. He reported that "*as a young and energetic person, my first impression of the school was that a majority of the teachers were young.*" He reflected on his past leadership experiences in the previous secondary schools, where he usually gained strong leadership support from young EC teachers.

5.6. The Principal's Vision That Was Shared With the Teachers

With his leadership experience, having been a principal in two different levels of secondary schools for 13 years, the principal brought to Valleyway NSS values and a mental image, directions and goals for school change. His vision was also focused on school improvements with regards to access to the Internet, student behaviour and academic achievement, school infrastructure, and ways to encourage and support the teachers to strive as a team to achieve the school's goals.

The principal reported that he formed and refined his vision for the school and style of leadership while taking into account the past political influence and leadership challenges the school had experienced before his appointment to the principal's position. He further commented that:

> *When I was appointed and assumed duties as principal, I learned from the teachers' accounts about the strengths and weaknesses of this school, their feelings about the style of leadership of the two former principals and their desired change for the school, which helped me for collective decision making.*

From the teachers' accounts of their past experiences, the principal commented that he shaped his school vision, which included supporting and engaging the teachers' work commitment for school improvements and change, creating a positive working environment in which teachers could have self-esteem, and establishing a benchmark or standard that reflected the school's status as a senior state NSS. The principal explained that "*to get the teacher support, I must make sure to consider their views and address their needs, concerns, frustrations, and expectations if possible.*" In this, he referred to how he helped the teachers to receive their extra responsibility allowance paid by the Ministry of Education. When commenting in

support of the effectiveness of the current principal's leadership, some of the participants reported that the two former principals had done little to help them sort out their extra responsibility allowances.

When commenting on the teachers' observations on the current principal's style of leadership, the principal mentioned that:

> *I inspired them to rebuild a collegial relationship, encouraged and engaged them in their leadership roles to improve student behaviour and academic performance, implemented the national student enrolment policy for gender equality and endeavour to connect Internet link to Valleyway NSS despite remoteness and isolation.*

Despite the remoteness, as a result of the principal's effective communication skills, the school had established a good relationship with the provincial government, the Ministry of Public Service and other non-governmental organisations in Honiara, the capital of the Solomon Islands (Joy; Denson; Samson). Pitakia reported that "*as a result of the current principal's effective communication network, many us were invited to attend training and workshops offered by different organisations in the provincial capital and in Honiara city.*"

The data presented in the remainder of this chapter are drawn from interviews with the participants at the school in 2014 and 2015, along with my observations as the researcher and field notes, audio, and visual recordings.

5.7. Identifying School Change and Responses: The Valleyway NSS Teachers' Perspective

The data presented in this subsection provides the answers to research sub-questions one and two.

1. What do teachers identify as change in their secondary school?

2. How to teachers respond to the identified change?

When asked about what they identified as change in their secondary school, the participants gave a range of perceptions that represented their individual views. To

manage and present the data in a more organised manner, I grouped the participants' related and similar views, thus condensing their perceptions into five main areas of school change.

The data is presented in two parts. The first section deals with what the participants identified as change in Valleyway NSS, and is followed by a section describing how they responded to the identified change.

The participants identified the following as changes at Valleyway NSS

1. Changes of style of leadership

2. Access to the Internet

3. Changes in student behaviour and academic performance

4. Improvement in school building infrastructure

5.7.1. Change in Style of Leadership

Four participants who had taught at Valleyway NSS for more 10 years suggested that from 2009 to 2011, the school had experienced some negative impacts that had not reflected well on the status of Valleyway as a prestigious NSS, because of the style of leadership of the two former principals. These participants claimed that some of the negative impacts were reflected in an approximately 7% drop in student results in the national examinations; and increases in student misbehaviour and in the number of students punished, suspended and expelled.

More than half of the participants reflected that in the past they could feel and see the decline in teachers' cooperation and collaboration with each other and with the principals. The participants compared the leadership of the former principals with the leadership of the principal at the time of data collection and noted that the current principal had recreated a school culture that encouraged teachers' collaboration and teamwork. Samson reported that "*the current principal's style of leadership has effectively shaped the school for better teaching and learning, teacher empowerment and building of collegial relationships through a social style of leadership.*"

The participants mentioned that he had created a close working relationship with them in their various leadership roles either through formal or non-formal appointments to help achieve the vision and goals he shared with them. Pitakia commented on how the principal appointed the teachers to leadership positions: "*the principal had distributed leadership roles to us in a manner to avoid being seen by others as bias.*" To avoid bias, Denson explained that "*the teachers were appointed to leadership positions based on merit, but their experience, skills, province, religion, ethnic group, age, and interests were considered as his guiding criteria when making appointments.*" Most of the participants stated that there was evidence that the teachers and the students had a sense of ownership and whole school leadership, shown by respecting the physical school environment, interacting openly in various school programs and accepting leadership responsibilities for academic improvement.

5.7.2. Teachers' Responses to the Change in Style of Leadership

A number of participants commented that they evaluated the current principal's style of leadership before they pledged support to him. Almost all the participants reported that it had been their desire to regain Valleyway's status as an outstanding NSS after they had experienced uncertainty in school leadership from previous principals; therefore, they discussed and shared the vision of their current principal. Most of the participants commented that they had accepted whatever leadership roles the principal distributed to them as a means of improving the school culture. Such determination for school change from the participants made them respect, support and comply with the instructions and leadership of the principal.

The evidence indicated that the change in style of leadership at Valleyway had impacts across the school. As Samson reported:

> *To extend and implement the vision and plans they shared with the principal, we increased the number of student leader appointments. We involved the students in some of our school decision making because they understood other students well at their own levels in terms of their concerns, feelings, frustrations, expectations and what was workable for them.*

*S*ome of the participants indicated that unlike their responses under the leadership of the two previous principals, they were now willing to accept delegated leadership responsibilities and to work with other teachers and the students. Samson, the spiritual leader, and Jacinta, the female students' dormitory supervisor, spoke of the trust they gained from the principal's leadership that motivated them to involve teachers and students in a range of activities that encouraged ongoing, open dialogue. These activities include the school forum and school debate, in which the students had the opportunity to talk about issues that affected them. Jacinta commented that "*because I have a close working relationship with the female students, they trusted me and so with the leadership of the principal. This trust builds their confidence to express their concerns to me.*" These close relationships between teachers and students could be also interpreted as a reflection of two-way trust between the leadership of the principal and the teachers with their students.

Tom, the deputy principal, reported that "*[of] the two former principals of Valleyway NSS, one was not a Solomon Islander and politically appointed. He ignored Melanesian Culture. The other was a River of Life Church Bishop, who was forced to transfer from the previous state NSS school because of his style of leadership; thus we were not fully supporting their style of leadership.*" As a consequence of their style of leadership, Samson reported that "*we slightly withdrew our support which was evidenced [by the fact] that not all of us normally faithfully attended staff meetings, other school appointments, monitoring, controlling and managing student behaviour.*" But with the new principal, almost all the participants reported that it was a great change as he established close social relationships with most of them. As Tom reported:

> *The principal has won our support through involving teachers in various social activities and also by being a sociable, open-mind and friendly person. He always organised a teachers' party and regular fishing trips with the teachers to fish for the school community. These programs encouraged us to break our personal differences amongst us and to work together as one team. On the other hand, his social interaction sometimes was not good because it involved sharing of smoke and drinking beer with some of the teachers.*

The principal mentioned that "*to know more about my teachers and the students and to establish good working relationship with them; sometimes I visited the teachers in their respective houses and the students in their dormitories and around the school campus.*" Samson added that "*we felt that such courtesy visits had made us feel important, accepted, honoured and respected.*" In their social and casual meetings, especially with the male teachers who smoke and chew betel nut, the principal shared with them in these activities. It is part of Melanesian culture that is practiced in the school. This practice also demonstrated that Melanesian cultural practices still have some influence in strengthening teacher relationships in the school.

Another teacher response was that the participants demonstrated their loyalty to the principal in recognition of his help and efforts that made it possible for the MEHRD to pay extra responsibility allowances. The head of department participants reported that they responded positively to the leadership of the principal as a token of their appreciation that through his leadership, the MEHRD paid their extra responsibility allowance. This enthusiastic response showed that some of the heads of departments had withheld their leadership support from the previous two principals when the MEHRD had not paid the extra responsibility allowances to which they were entitled. Tom, reflecting on the previous style of leadership, noted that "*although the former principals wanted to bring change in this school, the issues of teachers' allowance must be addressed first. To be honest, we are not motivated when our entitlements are not paid.*"

Furthermore, while Melanesian practices of prioritising males in teacher leadership still persist in the school, the female teachers are beginning to bravely face the odds and slowly get into leadership positions with the new change in school leadership. The principal mentioned that "*I noticed many female teachers were normally silent in our meeting discussions, except Jacinta who broke the Melanesian practice and made a difference among the male teachers and shared and argued her views with courage.*" Samson added that "*normally in our meetings, other female teachers would raise their concerns through Jacinta for discussions. Therefore, I believe that for this reason, the principal picked Jacinta as a head of department.*" This challenge has meant that in the past, female teachers had to perform

exceptionally compared with male teachers before they could be appointed to senior positions.

While most of the EC participants appreciated and accepted the social style of the principal's leadership, some of the LS teachers and the female participants expressed their discontent. As Tom, Joy, Clarish and Joy explained, although they were not happy with the principal and the EC teachers who had the practice of sharing smokes, drinking beer and chewing betel nut in the school, they still supported the principal as his new style of leadership has encouraged teachers to work together, faithfully attending and sharing and discussing ideas.

The female participants reported that the change in style of leadership had improved the social environment of the school, which in turn had enabled the teachers to work together as professionals, as reflected in the positive responses to a range of school changes. However, it had created social inequality as the female teachers and the LS teachers were not fully part of the secondary socialisation in the school. It appeared that these minority groups voluntarily excluded themselves from secondary socialisation because they did not share similar interests with the principal and the younger teachers. As Jacinta commented, "*we female teachers could not join with them because of our Melanesian culture that means we could not socialise with them through sharing of smoke, drinking beer and chewing betel nut*" However, Clarish mentioned that:

> *We still socialised and supported the leadership of the principal because he introduced a staff family picnic at the end of semesters. I observed that socialising and meeting the teachers in the staff picnic had broken personal barriers among us and made us work together.*

Finally, according to Jacinta, "*active work like driving the tractor to plough school farm is the male agriculture teacher's job. Also as a female, I could not work alone on the farm.*" Joy also admitted that "*I could not do work as men do. I could not carry heavy tools.*" Jacinta and Clarish reiterated similar family experiences in that their roles as mothers had often prevented them from fully engaging in leadership roles as they did all the house cleaning, cooking, washing of clothes and preparing children for school. The collective responses from the three female teachers demonstrated that the school still recognised the potential the female

teachers have for creating school change. However, their feelings towards the actions of the young teachers, the lack of support the school provided for them to learn how to use computers and the Internet, and the practice of Melanesian culture in the school had either inhibited or caused negative impacts on how they were able to respond to school change.

5.7.3. Access to the Internet

When commenting on technological change, the participants spoke more about Internet connections than other forms of technology. According to the LS participants at Valleyway NSS, the Internet was introduced to the school prior to 2012, but computers were introduced a little earlier, simply because Valleyway is a senior state-operated NSS. They reported that it was a significant school change when computers, mobile phones, and the Internet were introduced for teaching and learning, communications, research, and entertainment. However, at the time of data collection in October 2014, the mobile network link covering Valleyway NSS was quite poor, and the Internet had a fault. The participants reported in the second data collection that the Internet was reconnected in early 2015.

Five of the participants observed that since the Internet was introduced to the school, teachers and students had slowly shifted their focus on accessing the Internet to search for information to enhance the curriculum, improving teaching and learning. This was important because the curriculum had not been reviewed for more than ten years. Despite having technological equipment and the Internet that made the school no longer so isolated, maintaining the operation and repairing Internet connections remained a challenge as it took more than a year to fix a major problem (Principal; Tom; Samson; Pitakia).

5.7.4. Teachers' Response to Access to the Internet

The participants were motivated by and responded positively to access to the Internet. They expressed their desire to regain access to the school Internet to the principal in meetings and by forming a committee and writing proposals.

The participants reported that the Valleyway NSS Internet was connected in 2012 and was operational for only five months prior to January 2014 before failing

again in February in the same year. For this reason, the EC teachers reported they suggested to the principal to pay the costs of reconnecting the Internet. The principal affirmed that "*the school had made the payment but still waited for the expatriate IT [technician] from the MEHRD to come and fix it for almost six months.*" The participants reported that technological change, especially reconnecting the Internet, was one of the outstanding needs for school improvement. Thus, some of the EC participants reported that they continued reminding the principal in meetings and informal discussions to quickly address reconnection of the Internet at Valleyway NSS.

Pitakia, a member of the Internet committee, reported that "*we formed a five-member IT committee and produced a proposal for the Internet improvement and the new computer laboratory and submitted to the MERHD for funding.*" The principal reported that despite not being a qualified IT person, a science teacher had accepted a call from him to be in charge of the Valleyway NSS IT services and had performed some minor repair work on the computers.

Evidence showed that Valleyway NSS had an unreliable Internet connection. Reflecting on when the Internet was functional, Pitakia reported that "*the Internet was very slow and sometimes they had to wait for about five minutes for the Internet browser to open. We were not used to fast Internet so we were still patient to wait for that long.*" Five of the participants mentioned that when the school Internet was functional, they waited in the common staff room for their turn to use it. They explained that it was common for two or three staff to share one computer to search for information. According to Tom, "*it was a common practice that with the desire to use the Internet but the computers were limited, the male teachers especially more spent time in the staff office to take an opportunity.*" Tom, Joy, Samson and Pitakia observed that it became a daily practice that teachers returned to the staff office at 7 pm to conduct personal research and discuss any new information and ideas they retrieved from the Internet until the generator went off at 9:30 pm.

The fourth teacher response concerned the provision of basic computer and Internet training. The female and LS participants commented that while they appreciated the school had the Internet and other new technologies, many of them were not able to use them. However, Denson, who provided voluntary basic

computer training for the teachers, argued that "*the long-serving teachers and the female teachers were reluctant to attend the basic computer training.*" The two female participants explained that their non-attendance for basic computer and Internet training was based on three reasons; the school has only five computers, the training sessions were dominated by the EC teachers; and sessions were organised after normal working hours and sometimes at night until lights off at 9:30pm. Clarish reported that "*I felt quite reserved to compete with the male teachers on the 'first-in, first-served' arrangement on how to use computer and the Internet because all the young male teachers are already good at using it.*"

The fifth teacher response to this change was a dependence on others to provide information retrieved from the Internet. Jacinta reported that "*because they are females and have the feeling of incompetency, they could not attend the training and still depended on the male teachers by providing them with information to search for us on the Internet.*" Clarish reported that "*I asked my husband who is head of our New Testament study department to either share his information or collect my information from the Internet.*" Jacinta reported that "*as a female head of department, I asked the male teachers in our social science department to search for me on the Internet the information I want.*" This evidence confirmed that the current arrangement for computer and Internet training and time allocation for teachers to use the Internet had given the female teachers little opportunity to learn how to use the Internet compared to the male teachers.

It was evident that although the principal had created a positive culture that attracted mostly the young teachers to work together, he had failed to address how the female teachers and the LS teachers could have equal opportunities to the young male teachers to learn and use the Internet. As Jacinta suggested, "*the principal should organise separate trainings for us because we females are still computer illiterate. ...so far, we have not asked the principal to organise similar training for the female teachers only.*" This response was based on the view that in a professional learning institution, the principal should gather collective views from all the teachers regarding their knowledge and ability to access the school Internet and consider ways to give every teacher an equal opportunity to use it, regardless of

gender and years of experience; this would avoid leaving the female and LS teachers behind.

The final response to access to the Internet was that participants sought opportunities to access the Internet outside of the school campus. Most of the participants reported that when the school Internet was not working, they had to walk a few kilometres to the nearby coconut plantation to get good mobile reception on their smartphones to conduct research. Samson went on to report that:

> *Sometime we went to the provincial town to access the Internet on our smartphone, used the public Internet café. If we could not afford pay for the use of the public Internet café, we asked our relatives and friends who have the Internet to search for information for us.*

5.7.5. Changes in Student Behaviour and Academic Performance

Joy, Jacinta, and Tom, who had taught at Valleyway NSS for more than ten years, reflected that student behaviour in the school had improved remarkably under the leadership of Wilson, the new principal. They reported that before Wilson's appointment, the teachers' and students' pride in Valleyway NSS seemed to be eroded as evidenced by the increase in teacher and student behaviour problems. They indicated that many of the teachers withdrew their support from the school administration to some degree. As Samson reported:

> *The school was like university in which students had more freedom to do what they wanted to do. For example, the male students, straight after they completed sitting their national examinations, they drank beer in the classroom corridors and walked around the school campus causing disturbances and vandalising school property. This was practiced under the leadership of the former River of Life Church Principal, who introduced redemptive approach that students should be forgiven from their misbehavior.*

When reporting on the changes in student behaviour and academic performance, Tom mentioned that:

> *I found that under the leadership of the current principal, we don't have many serious disciplinary cases like students drinking beer, smoking and having*

special relationships with the opposite sex. We only have a few cases relating to absence and lateness. The male students especially behave well, so there was no report of physical fighting, stealing in the dormitories and less graffiti on school properties.

Two participants commented that students' bond money was deducted when they were found guilty of vandalising and writing graffiti on school properties.

Three female participants reported that in previous years, at night they had many cases in which male students disturbed the female students in their dormitories, which was evidence of loss of respect and created unhealthy relationships that affected the students' learning.

All the participants affirmed that there was a relationship between student behaviour and academic performance. According to five of the participants' observations, the student's behaviour improved from 2012. As of 2012, the school has had significant improvement in students' pass rates in the national examinations (Document Analysis, 20/10/2014). For instance, Rex reported that "*in 2012 the Form 6 pass rate was about 84 percent but in 2014 was increased to 91 percent. This increase includes improvements in female students' academic performance in the national examination as they performed well just like the male students.*"

5.7.6. Teachers' Responses to Changes in Student Behaviour and Academic Performance

5.7.6.1. Student behavior.

Firstly, the participants reported that the strategy they used to address student behaviour that badly affected academic performance was to meet with the principal and discuss ways of addressing student behaviour. They reported that they encouraged student participation in religious programs, stopped social programs such as contemporary dance, counselled students; provided assignments, offered rewards, celebrated student achievement and improved teacher–student relationships.

As a second response by the teachers, Tom, the deputy principal, and Samson, the spiritual leader and school chaplain, explained that in their student behaviour improvement initiatives, they organised programs that created good relationships and

a supportive work environment for teachers and students. The two most important intervention programs were spiritual programs and social programs. Samson reported that "*I asked the school to stop organising dance with pop music in the school; instead, we organised combined church services. Every Friday night and Sunday, all the teachers and students had their worship in their respective church denominations.*" Clarish and Samson, the school chaplain, further explained that besides organising spiritual programs according to dormitories and provincial groups, they also organised social programs according to provincial, cultural and ethnic groups to encourage teacher and student interactions.

It was apparent that the teachers changed the students' mindset towards the upholding of Christian values, practices, and principles by involving them in religious programs. Samson reported that "*we targeted to engage the students who have rowdy behaviours and bullying attitudes to be involved and participate in singing, bible study, bible quiz and prayers in religious programs and activities.*" They found a change that they now respected other students and teachers, school properties, behaved in an orderly manner and minded their words and actions.

The participants also found that an additional benefit of the interventional programs was that they had given the students more opportunities to take on leadership roles to organise many school programs and work with teachers. One way to change the students' behaviour is for the teachers to be role models for them. Samson reported that they encouraged each other to be good role models to the students. He went on to explain that the teachers who were involved with alcohol, smoking and chewing of betel nuts only performed supportive roles like visiting dormitories and encouraging students to attend religious appointments.

As a third response, Samson, Pitakia and Denson commented that besides the preceptors, preceptresses, spiritual leaders, and dormitory patrons providing counselling services for students, class teachers also counselled students. Providing six offices for counselling students indicated their attempt to rectify student behaviour and to improve academic performance. In addition, Samson commented that the best role moles are the teachers who influence other teachers and students to behave well in school.

5.7.6.2. Academic performance.

Another approach to improving student behaviour was by improving the classroom environment. The participants commented that they painted over graffiti around the buildings, provided new furniture in the classrooms, and re-installed doors and louvre glass window shutters in all the classrooms to motivate students to learn. They increased the school bond to SBD $500.00 (AUD$71.42). Previously, all the classrooms were open rooms. The participants commented that after creating a positive classroom environment, they discussed and agreed to engage the students in learning after normal classes because students often misbehaved when they were bored and not engaged. To engage the students more in learning activities, they agreed that each subject teacher had to give one homework activity to the students for one week, or major assignments to work on over several weeks. Joy commented that "*the arrangement was not only to keep students busy to control behavioural problems but to encourage them to learn.*"

Furthermore, the class teacher participants reported that in addition to the school rules, they also collaborated with the students to develop class rules as a way to maintain safety and a conducive learning environment that could mould their behaviour. As Denson reported:

> *In our classroom, the students and I agreed to produce some guidelines to control and manage the students' behaviour and encourage collaborative learning practices. Sometimes, I asked the students to recite the class rules. The class rules are based on politeness and simple manners like excuse me, asking before using other students' belongings, classroom order and cooperating to maintain a clean classroom, working in groups to sweep and remove mould and mildew.*

Furthermore, all the participants mentioned that the school had introduced a change that marks were given for the students' homework and assignments and more academically capable students received academic prizes at the end of the school academic year, to which parents and the public were invited. The principal reported that "*in 2013, about 40 different prizes were given to students who performed exceptionally in various academic and leadership areas. Now almost half of the students who win the academic prizes are the female students.*"

Some of the participants expressed their desire to continue with organising extra classes at the weekend to help them to complete teaching their lessons, coach the students in preparation for the national examinations and engage students to prevent them from being bored and misbehaving. However, Tom, the deputy principal, responded to the arrangement as follows:

I opposed the idea of having classes on Sabbath. The principal accepted my concern, so we discontinued extra classes on [the Sabbath].

Finally, Pitakia and Denson reported that to improve student behaviour and academic performance, the teachers agreed that the students must not be punished during class periods; all punishments must be organised either on weekends or after class sessions during the week. It appeared that in the past, students were forced to miss classes to undertake punishment work. The participants mentioned that common punishments included using bolo machete knives to cut grass around the school campus, working on the school farms, digging drains and chopping firewood.

5.7.7. Improvements in School Building Infrastructure

Valleyway NSS was built as an AUSAID project around the mid-1980s, so it was about 36 years old at the time of data collection. Participants reported that while some of the buildings were still in good condition, most of the teachers' houses needed renovation and the classrooms had been recently renovated. Construction of the new two-storey dormitory for female students was in progress at the time of data collection for this study (see Figure 5.1). Joy, the preceptress, commented that:

Female students' dormitories are very crowded, forcing some of them to sleep on the floors and walkways in their dormitories and share beds. The school increased the female student intake, but the female students still have only four dormitories whereas the male students have eight.

Figure 5.1 New bunk bed: The new bunk bed for the newly build girls' dormitory

All the participants commented that before principal Wilson was posted to Valleyway NSS; all the classrooms were just open rooms. It was under Wilson's leadership that the classrooms were improved with the instalment of doors and louvered glass shutters. They reported that so far they have built five new teachers' houses. Tom mentioned that "*one of the reasons why teachers resigned early from teaching at Valleyway NSS was due to poor [housing] and the shortage of teachers' accommodation. Now it is a change that with good accommodation, the school has attracted highly qualified teachers.*"

5.7.8. Teachers' Responses to Improve School Building Infrastructure

First, the participants expressed their understanding that Valleyway NSS is operated by the state; thus they expected that the formalities to secure funds, tendering processes and other major arrangements regarding major improvements in school infrastructure should be done by the permanent secretary of the MEHRD in consultation with the principal. This collective perception suggests that past principals also shared a similar practice of depending on the national government to fund school infrastructural development and improvements. This perception was confirmed by Tom, an LS teacher at Valleyway NSS: "*no major infrastructural improvements were done in the school until the new principal was appointed in 2011 because they depended on the state to provide funds and facilitate the renovation.*" However, some of the participants explained that under Wilson's leadership, they

submitted a classroom development proposal to the MEHRD and it was approved, but the ministry had not provided funds. Tom mentioned that "*it was also proposed in the school development plan proposal that the school should build at least one staff house every year and continue renovating the old ones. As a result, so far we built the chief mechanic's house in 2013.*"

Joy reported that "*to stop disturbance and interruption usually caused by strong winds, rain and intruders in the open classrooms, we organised annual fundraising as of 2011 to raise funds for classroom renovations.*" Participants who were members of the fundraising organising committee commented that their fundraising strategies included the annual school bazaar, appeals to high-net-worth individuals, former Valleyway NSS students, business houses, provincial government and national government. In addition, in support of the building projects, each of the nine subject departments prepared items for sale at the annual fundraising days. Tom reported that "*the teachers in the woodwork department produced chairs, tables, coffee tables and coconut scrapers. The teachers in the home economics department made table cloths, food covers, pillow cases and clothes and the agriculture teachers planted crops and vegetables for fundraising.*"

The participants commented that they liaised with the former Valleyway NSS student committee in Honiara to organise further fundraisers for school projects. Their fundraising strategies included barbecues, sale of food, card games with prizes, sales of beer and asking for $5,000 contributions from the former students representing each of the nine provinces in the Solomon Islands. In the combined fundraisings, they also organised sports competitions, bring and buys (including the sale of cooked and uncooked food) (see Figure 5.2), card games and many other games. The teachers and students also raised funds in their cultural and ethnic groups during the fundraising days. The school provided accommodation for the public who visited the school for fundraising, as the fundraising usually started on Friday morning and ran until about midnight on Saturday.

Figure 5.2 School bazaar: Customers buy food from the teachers' food stall during the school fundraising

The participants responded to the need to improve school buildings by seeking approval from the education authority. Teachers formed fundraising committees and sub-committees that organised school fundraisers. The state had failed to respond to requests to improve the school buildings. Thus, despite being a state-operated NSS, the teachers organised fundraising efforts that involved subject departments, the students and the wider community to raise money for necessary improvements. The teachers engaged the Industrial Art teachers and students to renovate some of the buildings and build some new ones.

The next section presents the findings on the influence of the school ethos and the school culture on the teachers' responses.

5.8. The influence of School Ethos and School Culture on Teachers' Responses

The findings presented here provide the answers to research sub-question three: How do the school ethos and school culture influence the teachers' responses?

5.8.1. The Influence of the School Ethos and the School Culture

It was evident in the participants' comments that the status of Valleyway as a state NSS created high expectations with regard to quality and standards. It was clear that these high expectations had influenced and shaped their school ethos and school culture and also influenced the teachers' responses to school change. Being a senior

state-operated prestigious NSS that is well recognised in the Solomon Islands, the participants commented that they had a responsibility to set a high standard, creating and fostering a learning environment that promoted the physical, social, and spiritual development and academic growth of the students.

5.8.2. Desire to Make a Difference in the Senior State NSS

When explaining how the school ethos and school culture of Valleyway NSS influenced their responses to school change, the principal mentioned that "*we used the expression 'the spirit of Valleyway' for things we do for this school. The shared common values drove and kept focusing us on our planned goals as a means to make a difference in the school.*" Some of the participants shared similar views; they valued their roles as teachers and teaching in a prestigious state school motivated them to be different compared with other NSSs regarding cooperation, teamwork, caring and supporting each other in whatever positive change would make it possible for the school to achieve its desired goals. The majority of the participants noted that the evidence of collegial spirit and communal instinct around the school campus had influenced them to socialise and have regular unplanned small group meetings. This social interaction appeared to be one of the ways teachers built and retained their close relationships.

The participants reiterated that it is the culture of their school for teachers to strive to work closely with their students to maintain and reflect the status of the school. It was evident in the findings that the teachers' desire to be seen as different in terms of producing highly academically capable students, and their shared values, had motivated the participants to continue to raise the academic standard of the school. Tom explained, with an example, that "*we maintained our school identity and reputation to the public that we are unique by working together as a team during a weeklong Banana festival in the provincial capital and won the first prize.*"

According to the participants, they have an overarching goal to achieve every two years. The school goals were aligned with the national improvement priorities in the MEHRD action plans that emphasise strong commitment from all the teachers for school improvement. Tom reported the yearly goals of Valleyway NSS; "*in 2011*

and 2012, our school goal was strengthening of teamwork and for 2013 and 2014 it is striving for academic excellence."

5.8.3. Striving for Academic Excellence

All the participants maintained that Valleyway NSS is known across the Solomon Islands for producing good results in the national examinations. It appeared that being a senior state NSS, only the more academically capable students in the national examinations were selected to attend Valleyway NSS, which is regarded as the cream of the secondary schools. They indicated that the school environment and culture are driven by academic excellence. Thus, the teachers and students have developed and practice a culture of striving for academic excellence. Tom explained that "*during their free time, many students do private study in the classrooms. And the teachers are also available to assist those who need help.*" Samson and Joy reported that they were impressed to see the students used their private solar and kerosene lights to do private studies in their dormitories after lights off at 9:30 pm.

The principal, Tom, and Clarish reported that because the students were more academically capable, it would be clear to them if the teachers had not prepared their lessons adequately before teaching them in the class. When the students found that teachers had not prepared lessons well, they would complain directly to the teachers concerned during the class period and later formally complain to the principal. The students expected the teachers to do extra research for their lessons and not just depend entirely on school textbooks. It was apparent that this culture had encouraged the teachers to continue to improve their teaching, which in turn influenced them to develop a practice of returning to the office to access the Internet when the school generator started at 6 pm and remain in the office until 9:30 pm when the generator was turned off.

The participants used the students' results in the national examinations to gauge their teaching quality and performance. For this reason, five of the participants reported that they organised extra classes, including group and one-to-one tutorials, to coach students in their preparations for sitting the national examinations in Forms 3, 5 and 6. Joy described this culture as "*competition within the team.*" Despite having a sense of competition, the teachers share their limited resources, including

charts, reference books, computers, audio-visual equipment and textbooks that are kept in the staff room for teachers' use (Field Notes and Observations, 20/10/2014).

5.8.4. Live the Life of Service

The participants commented that Valleyway NSS is a secular institution which puts less emphasis on spiritual programs. "*Nevertheless, Christian values, practices, and principles persist and have some influence in their decision making on how they serve the school.*" (Samson). It was apparent that the redemptive counselling program is an important service provided by the school that has improved the teachers' and the students' behaviour and attitudes. In addition, Samson, the school spiritual leader, reported that "*besides home visits, I opened my home for counselling and pastoral care. My home is like a clinic where I have teachers and students who came for counselling. This is my voluntary service besides my paid teaching job.*"

The participants commented that often they offered their knowledge and skills for free as part of their service to humanity. Determination to improve the school in order to produce productive citizens and the future leaders of the Solomon Islands motivated them to commit their time, knowledge and skills to students' learning and school improvement. They used their experiences and skills to relate and provide services for others with empathy. The teachers performed some extra responsibilities outside of their job descriptions for the sake of improving and maintaining communal services in the school that promoted a healthy and conducive learning environment. The young participants referred to their volunteer service on regular fishing trips to feed the whole school with fish as their act of love, care, friendship, happiness, kindness and respect for the school community.

Pitakia reflected on his almost free service to the school that "*I repaired and maintained all the school machines including the generator, lawn mower, brush cutter, tractor, outboard motor engine and the pickup truck. My payment was only one 20 kilogram bag of rice for a month.*"

5.8.5. A Sense of Social and Communal Cohesion

Most of the participants discussed the culture of the school in relation to their working relationship and interactions during the leadership of three different

principals. They found the two former principals to be less interactive and to socialise less with them. Such relationships, which failed to consider social interaction, may create gaps between the principal and the teachers that can have adverse effect on teachers' responses to school reform and change.

The EC principal influenced change in the school when he introduced his new style of social leadership. Almost all the participants reported that the principal was a social person who attracted the EC male teachers, who were the majority in the school, to support his leadership. Pitakia reported that "*the new style of leadership of the principal that encourages social programs allows us to easily communicate and interact with other teachers to share our school vision and values with a sense of purpose.*" The close bond between the EC teachers confirmed that being of a similar age group and in the majority in the school; they preferred to work with an energetic EC principal who shared their lifestyles and interests.

At the time of data collection, the principal, EC teachers and some students sat on the grass lawn in front of the school office, shared stories and had some informal discussions about some of the school issues (Field Notes and Observation, 20/10/2014). Tom and the female participants reported that the principal usually organised fishing trips for the teachers, a staff family picnic and a party during the school holidays. According to EC participants' comments, the social school culture and social relationships developed trust, teamwork, respect and recognition between the principal and the EC teachers which has had significant influence on their responses to change.

5.8.6. Desire to Maintain a Safe and Environment Conducive to Learning

The school has escaped some of the major outside influences because of its remote location. Thus teachers can concentrate and spend more time with the students for teaching and learning purposes. For this reason, the school environment is safe and encourages teachers and students to focus on learning. The participants mentioned that the locality of the school added value to the school learning environment.

Most of the participants reported that teachers would like to maintain a safe learning environment in which they can enjoy teaching and learning. Therefore, they

indicated that they had the practice of engaging teachers and students in various leadership responsibilities and decision-making processes. This involvement developed a feeling of being responsible and confident to maintain the safety standards of the whole school environment. They added that they involved the students in leadership roles because they trusted and valued their contributions towards maintaining a safe and conducive learning environment. The class teacher participants reported that in addition to the school rules, they collaborated with the students to develop their classrooms to maintain safe and conducive learning environments.

The participants explained that they devoted their collective effort to improving classrooms with adequate furniture, and developed the practice of making themselves available in the school office for student consultation because they have a safe learning environment which stimulates students' desire to learn. Pitakia commented that "*to make students feel safe and relaxed, I maintain cordial relationships with them. I respect their views and spend time working them in the classrooms and during work sessions.*"

The teachers responded to school change because they were influenced by the desire to maintain the status of the school as a flagship school in the Solomon Islands. The feeling of being different has influenced the teachers to strive for academic excellence and a life of service to the school. They developed a sense of social and communal cohesion to enable them to maintain a safe and conducive learning environment.

The next section presents the findings on teachers' contributions to successful school change.

5.9. Teachers' Contributions to Successful School Change

The data presented in this subsection aims to provide the answer to research sub- question four: What are the teachers' contributions to successful school change?

5.9.1. Changing the School Culture

It appeared that the teachers contributed enormously towards creating a collective mood for positive response to school change. There was evidence that supported the significant improvements in teachers' attitudes and responses in their leadership, work committees, teaching and learning and building of collegial relationships. The teachers and students supported the leadership of the principal, which had strong influences on the quality of their input in terms of teaching and learning.

The teachers developed and implemented a program that helped the students value their education, changed their behaviour and attitudes and maximised their participation to help them achieve their goals. Students, as reported by the participants, always looked forward to study, improving their learning and competing for academic excellence. The participants commented that it was an achievement that they had changed the students' behaviour and perception of learning. For example, the students practiced and developed the habit of treating their free time as study periods.

Some of the participants stated that the nature of the school culture seemed to be temporary. Pitakia explained that "*the extrinsic desire to organise social activities and other incorporate activities acted as scaffolds to create and establish a long-term positive school culture.*" This means that some of the school social and leisure activities that attracted teachers' cooperation and collaboration may be gradually withdrawn when they developed an intrinsic desire to strive for academic and other school improvements.

5.9.2. Creating the Platform for a Conducive Learning Environment

Many improvements in the school were a result of improvements in the school infrastructure. The classrooms were safe, secure, appealing and more conducive to learning. The new classroom environment had attracted and motivated both the teachers and students to be involved and participate more in learning activities. The ongoing socialisation had shaped and enhanced their belief systems, values, and practices with regard to teaching and learning. The participants reported that the students' behaviour and attitudes had improved as demonstrated by the change in

school culture that had increased the number of students working in the classrooms on private study.

5.9.3. Influencing the School to Implement Strategies to improve Teaching and Learning

Despite the fact that Valleyway NSS is a prestigious state-operated NSS, the issues related to remoteness and isolations have made the school less attractive to well qualified teachers. However, since the connection of the school to the Internet and the ongoing attempts to reconnect and further improve Internet connections, the participants reported that the number of teachers applying to teach at Valleyway had increased.

Despite the school's remoteness, the provision of an Internet connection has provided the teachers with opportunities for self-development and innovation. The participants shared similar views that technology has contributed to the improvement in the quality of teachers and helped students' achievement. Thus, many teachers reported that they had developed the practice of conducting their own research on the Internet and producing notes, hand-outs, remedial activities and class exercises for the students. The participants reiterated that the technology had offered them professional learning opportunities and enabled online study in which both the teachers and Form 6 and 7 students could pursue studies at the University of the South Pacific (USP). The majority of the participants reported that the quality of teaching had improved, which was demonstrated in the increase in students' pass rates.

Recent improvements at Valleyway NSS, as a result of the availability of technology, had forced the board of management to construct a computer lab building, reconnect the Internet and ensure that the school would receive 21 computers. The principal stated that their first target is that despite the school's remoteness, the teachers and students will have access to computers and the Internet. He added that with the teachers' continued support, the school, through the board of management, continued to work hard to ensure students receive a quality education.

5.10. Summary

This chapter has presented what the participants identified as change and how they responded to the identified changes at Valleyway NSS. The changes they identified and responded to were changes in the style of leadership; access to the Internet; changes in student behaviour and academic performance; and improvement in school infrastructure. The participants responded to these four identified school changes in different ways, which required either individual responses or collective responses. This depended on the nature of the change and the required responses. Importantly, the teachers' responses to school change were influenced by the principal, the principal's style of leadership, the school ethos and the school culture, which enabled them to respond in various ways in their contributions to successful school change.

In the next chapter, the findings from case study three: Hillway NSS are presented.

CHAPTER 6: CASE STUDY THREE
Hillway National Secondary School

6.1. School Context - Setting the Scene

Hillway National Secondary School (NSS) is located on one of the scattered islands in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands. Travel from the capital city Honiara to the provincial capital in the Western Province involves either 24 hours on a passenger ship or a one hour flight. It takes 1 hour 15 minutes on a 15 horsepower outboard motor canoe to travel from the provincial capital to Hillway NSS. The long distance from the city to the provincial capital and then to Hillway NSS has presented a major challenge to school change in terms of transport but isolation has been reduced since the school gained access to the Internet and the ability to use Internet services such as email and the World Wide Web.

Despite its rural location, Hillway NSS is within the range of mobile and Internet communication network coverage from the Solomon Islands Telekom communication tower in the provincial capital. It also has its own Internet connection using a satellite dish. Unfortunately, it experiences regular faults. With easy access to limitless information and communication through mobile phones and the Internet, the school can be described no longer as remote. There have been some negative effects of the use of the Internet on students, including distractions, compromising time available for learning, and the introduction of unacceptable types of clothing copied from the Internet and other sources.

Hillway is a coeducational NSS. It was started as a primary school in the early 1950s before becoming a vocational school to train standard 7 primary school dropouts in 1972. In 1979 and 1980, the Word of Hope Church in the Solomon Islands decided to establish secondary schools in each of its three local missions. The vocational school at Hillway was therefore relocated and in the same year, the campus was converted to Hillway NSS. Hillway NSS campus lies on flat land stretching for about five kilometres along the coast and approximately six kilometres inland. The seashore is rocky with a fringing reef. A river that runs through the school divides the campus into two. The river bank is used as the main departure and

arrival point to the school as canoes are the main mode of transport. Although the school has a reliable water supply piped from a stream in the forest, teachers and students often prefer to use the upper section of the river for everything apart from cooking and drinking water.

The classroom buildings and the school administrative building are built parallel with the rocky beach which is about 150 metres away. The staff houses are built behind and parallel with the classroom buildings, about 200 metres inland. All the classrooms, the library and the administration building are built from cement bricks and are single storey buildings. Hillway NSS has only two long buildings that accommodate all the classrooms apart from the industrial arts workshop and the home economics practical classroom, which are single separate buildings. The male students' dormitories are on the northern end of the school campus and the female students' dormitories are on the southern end.

6.2. School Enrolments and Staffing

School selections and enrolments at the Word of Hope Church-operated schools, including Hillway NSS, are guided by the Word of Hope Church education policy, under which 90% of students have to be Word of Hope Church members and only 10% can be from different church denominations. The majority of the students enrolled at Hillway NSS are Word of Hope Church members from the Western Solomon Islands.

Student enrolments in 2015 were 447 of which 223 were male and 224 were female. The increased number of female student enrolments was mandated by the MEHRD to create a gender balance in the secondary schools. The school had prepared to accommodate the increased number of female enrolments by building more female student dormitories just at the time when the MEHRD enforced the secondary school gender balance enrolment policy in 2010.

Vacant teaching posts in Word of Hope Church-operated schools are not advertised. According to the Word of Hope Church beliefs, teaching is a call for service to help the students to learn more about Jesus. With this guiding belief, the

Word of Hope Church education authority chooses a suitable principal and teachers are posted to Hillway NSS without applying for vacant positions.

Hillway has 24 teachers including the principal and deputy principal. Of the 24 teachers, at the time of the research data gathering, nine were females, most of whom were younger and more qualified than the male teachers. Almost all the teachers were from the Western Solomon Islands local mission (Western province and Choiseul province). All the teachers were members of the Word of Hope Church and were also called missionaries because they were expected by the church authority to perform church witnessing by helping the students and others to know more about God.

6.3. Research Participants

The eight participants in this study are briefly introduced. Their names (see Table 6.1) have been changed to maintain confidentiality. The brief information provides the relevant information necessary for this study.

Table 6.1

The Hillway NSS Research Participants

No	Sex	Participant	Position
1	M	Billy Pita	Principal
2	F	Hellen Tova	Deputy Principal
3	M	Bobby Biolo	HOD
4	M	Harold Darcy	Teacher
5	F	Ruth Vukakolo	Teacher
6	F	Lucy Abe	HOD
7	M	Max Ruben	Teacher
8	F	Liza Vune	Teacher

6.4. Hillway: A Word of Hope Church-Operated NSS

In the Word of Hope Church structure and administration in the Solomon Islands, the Solomon Islands Mission (SIM) is the administrative head and the office is in Honiara. Under the SIM are three local missions: the Eastern Solomon Islands

Mission, Western Solomon Islands local mission and the Malaita Mission. The Word of Hope Church in the Solomon Islands has only one education authority for all its schools, which is the SIM; however, the national head office has an education advisory committee of which each of the three associate education directors of the three local missions are members.

Associate officers are posted in each of the three local missions to administer Church business in their respective local missions. For instance, the SIM education director is located in Honiara while associate education directors are posted to each of the three local missions. The associate education directors in the local missions deal with teachers' postings, monitor teachers' performance and conduct, carry out appraisals, deal with teachers' holiday-related issues and provide information to the head office in Honiara.

Half of the participants concurred that most of the development projects, such as the building of the school new jetty, the renovation of dormitories and building of new classrooms were aid-funded projects with the approval of the Word of Hope Church education authority. The education authority supports Hillway NSS administratively but provides little finance assistance. Most of the participants explained that they were aware that the only major financial assistance given to their school through the office of the Word of Hope Church education authority was money collected during the annual Word of Hope Church appeal in various local Word of Hope Church congregations across the Solomon Islands.

Hillway NSS is under the administrative supervision of the local mission and its office is on the Hillway NSS campus. The participants felt that the establishment of the regional SIM office at the Hillway NSS campus had provided the Word of Hope Church education authority with opportunities to closely monitor the school programs, developments, teachers' working relationships and conduct, their performance and school discipline. The education department of the WSIM provides support to teachers at Hillway NSS to ensure that the Word of Hope philosophy of education, policy and the principles of faith-and-learning are integrated into the life of the school.

The participants explained that the philosophy of the Word of Hope education that Hillway NSS has adopted is Christ-centred to prepare students for a useful and joy-filled life and whole-person development. Billy, Lucy and Hellen made similar comments that the Hillway NSS education follows Bible-based values in accordance with the Word of Hope Church mission to the world. As a Word of Hope Church-operated NSS, the ethos and culture of Hillway are based on how best the teacher can fulfil the three pillars (belonging, believing and becoming), and the school motto "Growing to Serve". These pillars are derived from the Word of Hope Church fundamental beliefs.

The participants commented that the SIM education authority, through the WSIM, expected Hillway NSS to maintain its leading role as a flagship secondary school for other Word of Hope Church-operated secondary schools in the Solomon Islands.

6.5. The Principal of Hillway NSS

Billy Pita, the principal of Hillway NSS, is the son of a retired Word of Hope Church pastor. He was the longest-serving teaching staff member at Hillway NSS at the time of data collection. He had taught in both Community High Schools (CHSs) and NSSs for 20 years. After eight years teaching in other secondary schools, Billy was reappointed to Hillway NSS to the principal's position. His tenure in the position was only one year because he then accompanied his wife who pursued further studies overseas. Prior to his transfer to the Hillway NSS, he was appointed chairperson of the National Industrial Arts Subject Panel for the Solomon Islands secondary schools.

As required in the Word of Hope Church education policy, the principal has to be someone who understands and has the desire to promote the Word of Hope Church belief system, values and practices in the school community. With these guiding principles, the participants mentioned that the principal is a spiritual and active member of the Word of Hope Church in the school community. The school has an ordained pastor who is in charge of all the spiritual aspects of the school programs. However, as the principal, by default Billy was an assistant spiritual leader for the school.

6.6. The Principal's Vision That Was Shared With the Teachers

With his many years of teaching and leadership experience, mostly in Word of Hope Church-operated secondary schools, Billy Pita brought to Hillway NSS his vision and shared this with the teachers. His vision included striving to nurture the students to uphold Word of Hope Church beliefs, values, and practices and become responsible citizens of the Solomon Islands. He explained that he shared with the teachers his vision to create a culture where students interact with their teachers, who support them through their education mentally, physically and, most importantly, spiritually. Billy reported that his vision was based on his observations, previous school reports from the education authority and the school, the state of the school, comments from the teachers, and the school plan.

The principal reported that in the first few fortnightly staff meetings at the beginning of semester one, he shared his vision and discussed with the teachers how best the school could re-emphasise the Word of Hope Church moral values and practices; as a result they re-introduced the old distinctive dress code, and procedures and arrangements for Church worship services in the school chapel.

The principal went on to report that "*my plans for school improvements are to consider gender equity in teacher leadership.*" The principal and Hellen, the deputy principal, reported they were aware of the reasons that drove the Word of Hope Church education authority to appoint female teachers to school administrative positions. They reported that a highly qualified female teacher was appointed to the deputy principal position with the intention to improve accountability and transparency of how school grants were used and acquitted. The principal went on to report that most of the relatively highly qualified teachers at Hillway NSS were female teachers. Therefore, he opted to appoint four female teachers as heads of subject departments. The appointment of four female teachers had further demonstrated the support for promoting gender equity in school leadership positions.

The principal also had a vision for school curriculum improvement. As a former national Industrial Arts panel chairperson, he commented that he worked with the Industrial Arts department teacher to improve Industrial Arts teaching.

The data presented in the remainder of this chapter are drawn from interviews with the participants at the school in 2014 and 2015, along with my observations as the researcher, field notes, audio and visual materials.

6.7. Identifying School Change and Teachers' Responses: The Hillway NSS Teachers' Perspective

The data presented in this subsection provides the answers to research sub-questions one and two.

1. What do teachers identify as change in their secondary school?

2. How to teachers respond to the identified change?

When asked about what they identified as change in their secondary school, the participants gave a range of perceptions that represented their individual views. To manage and present the data in a more organised manner, I grouped the participants' related and similar views, thus condensing their perceptions into five main areas of school change.

The data is presented in two parts. The first section deals with what the participants identified as change in Hillway NSS, and is followed by a section describing how they responded to the identified change.

The participants identified the following as changes at Hillway NSS.
1. Student behaviour
2. Gender equality in leadership
3. Changing learning needs of students
4. Availability of the Internet to improve teaching and learning
5. School infrastructure

6.7.1. Change in Student Behaviour

More than half of the participants reported that in previous years, quite a number of common Word of Hope Church religious programs were no longer organised and practiced in the school, which they believed had contributed to

deteriorating student behaviour. In addition, the influence of students copying what they saw on the Internet and use of mobile phones also had negative effects on students' behaviour, prompting a desire for conformity to Word of Hope Church norms.

The participants mentioned that there had been an obvious decline in conformity to Word of Hope Church norms in past years; many of the students were not committed to attending church services, wore unacceptable clothing and played non-Christian songs in their dormitories. Hellen, Bobby and Lucy reported that it had become normal for girls to wear trousers on the school campus and male students had unacceptable haircuts, including shaving both sides of their heads and having ponytails. The teachers also reported that many students compromised their time for study and were late to classes and other school appointments because they spent most of their time in their dormitories on social media, using the Internet, mobile phones, laptops and mp3 players.

The LS participants reported that in the past there had been an increase in the number of students punished on week days and on Sundays, which was evidence of an increase in bad behaviour. Harold, a punishment supervisor, reflected that there were "*about an average of 30 students punished every Sunday compared to previous years about 20; however, with the reformed program, numbers of students punished were slowly reduced.*"

All participants commented that there was a change when the school introduced a worship dress code, in which all students were required to wear only approved colours of clothing to church worship services. Ruth explained that "*all female students had to wear a black skirt and white shirt while male students wore black trousers and white shirts to attend all Sabbath church worship services and female students were not allowed to wear trousers on the school campus.*"

6.7.2. The Teachers' Responses to Student Behaviour

In their first response to changes in student behaviour, the participants reported that they supported Billy in two staff meetings at the beginning of semester 1, 2014, at which they discussed and shared ideas to produce a plan on how best they could re-emphasise Word of Hope Church beliefs, moral values and practices in the school.

Half of the participants reported that the teachers were willing to take active leadership roles in various church programs and groups and work closely with the students. It appeared that the teachers were appointed to various roles in the local church in the school. Some of the participants were appointed by the Hillway local church board to be leaders of the students' spiritual Ministerial League groups, which met in the classrooms every Friday night from 7:30pm to 9pm to practice singing and other spiritual programs, while Ruth was appointed Pathfinder leader. Pathfinder is a Word of Hope Church children's club for those aged 10 to 15 years. Max was a youth and a Sabbath school leader and Bobby led both the Youth department and the Children's Sabbath school department. The local church departmental leaders were changed every four, six or twelve months. It appeared that the positions were all voluntary and unpaid.

The second response was to involve the students in church programs and activities. Hillway NSS had organised about 10 Ministerial League groups in which the teachers and the students were involved in singing and other religious activities. In encouraging students to be involved in Church programs, Harold reported that:

> *We [were] involved with the students in in-reach in the school and outreach in the village communities to run programs in their Ministerial League singing groups. As a result of having Ministerial League singing groups, Liza, a talented singer, organised Hillway NSS singing groups that enabled the school to produce two Hillway NSS Singing albums.*

All the participants commented that engaging the students to produce a singing album had a great impact in boosting their morale as members of the Hillway school community, improving their working relationships, and creating a sense of being part of one big family.

A third response was involving parents in school change. Three participants reported that parents were informed in advance through established church networks and circular letters that students must only wear black and white clothing to church services as it was one of the school enrolment requirements. At the school level, the participants reported that leading up to the enforcement of the new change, many of them took turns to preach at Hillway NSS Word of Hope Church revival meetings on

themes related to revival and reformation. The themes were focused on maintaining of Word of Hope Church beliefs, values and practices.

The fourth response related to monitoring students' attire. The participants reported that they supported the change when the principal introduced a new dress code and reactivated some common Word of Hope Church programs and activities in the school. Some of the participants reported that they monitored and advised female students who were found guilty of wearing trousers and instructed the male students to cut their hair properly when they had unacceptable hair styles. Hellen reported that "*any students who wore clothes that had offensive images and writings were also advised not to wear them on the school campus.*"

The participants reported that they monitored the students to ensure that they wore the required clothing to all Sabbath church services. Max explained the changes in dress code meant that "*duty teachers; especially on Sabbath days we had to visit the students in their dormitories to encourage them to wear the required dress before walking out of their dormitories to attend Sabbath church worship services.*" Ruth and Liza commented that in the church worship services, the weekend-duty teachers were responsible for making sure the student leaders marked the church worship service attendance register. The participants indicated that the new change has developed a sense of ownership and pride in their Word of Hope Church School with an increased sense of belonging.

The final teachers' response to changes in student behaviour was improving student punishment and counselling. Most of the participants reported their belief that punishment is an effective way to teach and nurture students to behave appropriately. Liza and Hellen commented that during normal class periods, students were punished unsupervised while the duty teachers attended their normal classes. At the time of the research, 20 students were not attending their classes and were being punished. They were sent to the river bank to carry and sieve sand for the new Form 7 classroom construction (Field Notes and Observation, 28/10/2014). The two participants reported that after the students were punished, they were counselled by the school preceptor, preceptress, church pastor or leaders of the spiritual singing groups.

The participants' first response to changes in student behaviour was to share and discuss the principal's vision for change and to work with the principal to ensure that students wore decent clothes. Secondly, they reintroduced church programs and increased student involvement in ministerial activities in the school and nearby village communities. The teachers used the church network and sent circular letters to inform parents to buy black and white worship clothing for their children. The teachers cooperatively monitored the students' behaviour and provided appropriate responses. Finally, punishment was one approach the teachers used to correct students.

6.7.3. Gender Equality in Leadership

The principal mentioned that the female teachers who were appointed to school administrative positions had Masters level teaching qualifications. All the participants acknowledged the increase in female teacher appointments to leadership positions. They all noted that ever since Hillway NSS was established, all the school leadership positions, including the positions of principal, deputy principal, registrar and heads of subject departments, had been dominated by male teachers because of the influence of Melanesian culture. Female teachers were believed to be incompetent leaders and not good at problem solving and decision making. Both the male and female participants commented on the change, in which many highly qualified female teachers were appointed to school administrative positions around 2012. Bobby reported that:

> *The increase in the appointment of female teacher leaders was made by the Word of Hope Church education authority and the school principal. The evidence is in the school administration; Hellen was deputy principal (first female deputy principal at Hillway NSS), a female teacher was a school registrar and Lucy was Form 7 coordination. In addition, half of the heads of departments were female.*

6.7.4. Teachers' Response to Gender Equality in Leadership

First, the participants made passing comments on changes in gender equality with regards to school enrolment before offering detailed remarks on gender equality

in teacher leadership. All the participants supported the increase in the number of female students.

The second response concerned the feelings that influenced the participants' responses to gender equity in teacher leadership. According to Billy, many teachers had mixed feelings regarding equity in appointment of teachers to various leadership roles, which involved reducing the number of male teacher appointments and increasing the appointment of female teachers. Two senior male participants expressed their discontent and concern about the appointment of female teachers to school leadership positions, which they claimed had some negative impacts on managing and controlling the unacceptable behaviours of rowdy male students.

In addition, some of the male participants reported that they withdrew support or were reluctant to support the female teacher leaders as a test of their leadership capabilities. Two of the participants argued that the female teachers appointed to school administrative positions and as heads of departments were incompetent because they had difficulty dealing with hostile and rowdy students who breached school rules. It was further suggested that hostile male students tended to respect male teacher leaders more than females. Some of the male participants also claimed that the female teacher leaders felt reserved about approaching and asking such students to participate in school work. Bobby and Max commented that sometimes they just waited until the female teacher leaders approached them or called for their involvement and participation. It was clear that some of the male teachers used Melanesian culture as a shield to protect their leadership positions. One of the participants reported that "*I was earmarked for the deputy principal post but later I was surprised that it was awarded to a female teacher.*" Bobby seemed to feel that as a male teacher, he had the right to be appointed to the deputy principal position. Bobby and Max argued that in the Solomon Islands, in particular in the Melanesian context, female leaders have little influence on other teacher colleagues to work for school change. However, in the midst of leadership challenges Billy reported that:

> *While some of the male teachers withdrew their support from the female teacher leaders as a means to justify their claim that male teachers are [more] competent leaders than female, the female teachers welcomed them, and*

together they accepted the challenges and new changes and continued to strive to prove to the teachers that they were also competent leaders.

As a third response, despite some claims and criticisms levelled against the female teacher leaders, some of the male participants and three female participants reported significant improvements in the school as a result of female leadership. These improvements included successfully encouraging teachers and students to actively participate in religious programs and activities and the organisation of the Maths department in-house training. They further reported that the female administrators shaped a collective vision for academic success for all students, organised regular staff meetings to discuss school issues in a transparent manner, met deadlines to submit reports to the MEHRD, Word of Hope Church education authority and other teachers, and another obvious change was the creation of a hospitable atmosphere in the school. Hellen reported that "*we the female teachers spent long hours supervising students, worked in the office to prepare our lessons and organised extra one to one, peer and small group tutorials; we were the last teachers to leave our office to go home. We did all this in order for the male teachers to recognise and appreciate our leadership.*"

Liza reported that "*Hellen, our deputy principal, and the female school registrar suggested the increase of study periods from eight periods to nine periods and organised optional tutorial classes to assist the academically struggling students who need extra academic help.*" The majority of the participants also acknowledged in the interviews that the young female school administrators encouraged, motivated and supported them to improve their pedagogy and connect them with professional people, educational institutions and organisations in Honiara for professional advice and teaching and learning support. Harold commented that "*the highly qualified female teacher administrators had good communication skills and established working relationships with church, government and non-government organisations and educational institutions.*"

The last response was that in the midst of their leadership challenges, the female participants used consultative leadership styles to improve their leadership. The female participants reported that they asked for leadership advice from the Word of Hope Church education authority director, principal, former principals, retired

Word of Hope Church principals, Word of Hope church leaders and their colleagues. Hellen, the deputy principal, commented that:

It was a challenge for me for the first time as deputy principal to be assigned a leadership role to improve school discipline, improve teachers' working conditions, initiate ideas to improve academic performance and complete the current Form 7 projects. However, I gained confidence and become more competent in what I was doing when I consulted our authority, experienced principals, mission workers, some of our working colleagues and the principal for advice.

The participants responded to gender equity in leadership with mixed feelings due to clashes between professional practice and the influence of the Melanesian culture that was practiced in the school. There was still evidence of allegiance to the leadership of the female teachers because the teachers believed that the education authority prayed before appointing them. Thus, they were God's workers. Some of the male teachers responded negatively to the female teachers' leadership. The female teacher leaders and the female teachers strove to improve the school in various ways to show the teachers, principal, education authority and the parents that they were also effective leaders.

6.7.5. Changing Learning Needs of Students

The LS participants reflected that as far as they knew, the Solomon Islands secondary school curriculum had not been reviewed. Billy affirmed that "*for almost 20 years, the curriculum has not been fully reviewed. We still use the same curriculum for Forms 1 to 5. Only for Forms 6 and 7 we have some recent changes but they are USP programs.*" The participants reiterated that a full review of the Forms 1 to 5 secondary school curriculum was long overdue and the current version failed to meet the learning needs of the students with regards to modern technology, environment, inclusive education and classroom teaching practices in the traditional subject areas. The students were quite advanced in their learning but the curriculum seemed to fail to meet their learning needs. For example, the curriculum has not included the impacts of the Internet, smart phones and changes in social pressures that the country has experienced (Billy; Bobby). In addition, Rex reported that:

*The current curriculum is examination-oriented and less opportunity
[is]given to students to develop practical skills ... the current education
system in the Solomon Islands has forced students to drop out from the
formal system in the secondary level and return to the village. Therefore,
[the] school curriculum should provide opportunities for students to learn
and acquire practical skills they need to make a living.*

The participants reported that due to exposure to and availability of modern
technology and access to updated information, the students were advanced in their
learning. It appeared that they were bored, not concentrating and complained when
lessons were based on an out of date curriculum. However, many of the teachers
noted that there had been a change, especially when some of the EC teachers
changed their pedagogy and used available technology to improve their teaching.

6.7.6. Teachers' Responses to Changing Learning Needs of Students

When commenting on their first approach to changes related to school
curriculum and pedagogy, most of the participants mentioned that they attended a
two-week teachers' workshop organised by the Solomon Islands mission of the
Word of Hope Church education authority for all the Word of Hope Church teachers
in the Solomon Islands in June 2013. They mentioned that from new knowledge
gained at the workshop, they were now able to integrate the Word of Hope Church
fundamental beliefs with some aspects of the national curriculum. In other words,
they responded to the national curriculum by integrating some of the subject
activities with Word of Hope Church beliefs to make the curriculum more
meaningful in the Word of Hope Church school context.

Harold, Peter and Hellen commented that at the workshop, they learned to
integrate Word of Hope Church beliefs, values and practices in their teaching
subjects. They gave an example on how to integrate a Maths lesson with the tithing
system – a system in which one tenth of a person's total income is given to the Word
of Hope Church authority. Billy reported that:

*The workshop was only focused on general curriculum, school management,
and leadership and Bible studies. Although the education authority advised us*

to organise similar workshops in the school level, we have not organised any because [we have] no funds.

In addition, when reporting on the teachers' initiative to improve school curriculum, Billy mentioned that "*my role as chairperson of the National Industrial Arts Panel before my appointment to Hillway NSS had given me an opportunity to be informed of the dire need for a secondary school national curriculum review in Industrial Arts subjects.*" He went on to report that because of the need for curriculum review to meet the students' learning needs, he organised a departmental curriculum workshop with an Industrial Arts teacher. According to Billy's observation, the EC Industrial Arts teacher was aware of the learning gaps in the Industrial curriculum and planned the Form levels by units, lessons and how the students would be assessed. Billy further elaborated that the EC Industrial Arts teacher included more practical activities, which aimed to help the students to make a living after they left secondary school. The practical activities include marking house profiles in the field, constructing building models and making furniture. In the Solomon Islands village communities, individual families build their own houses and do not necessarily hire qualified architects and carpenters.

The third response was that the teachers in the Maths department learned from the in-house curriculum organised by the Industrial Arts department and organised a similar workshop. Liza, a Maths teacher, reported that "*in our responses to the need for secondary school curriculum review and learning new pedagogy, we invited a Maths lecturer at the Solomon Islands National University (SINU) to run a one week in-house training for the Maths department teachers.*" Some of the participants commented that the head of the Maths department, together with three Maths teachers, organised Maths in-house training instead of depending on the school administration to organise it. Liza and Lucy reported that they used similar individual, pair and group work activities they learned in the Maths workshop to teach Maths concepts to their students. They learnt new and short-cut ways to solve many Maths problems, organise different Maths activities, and how to use a formula on the computer to determine students' grades. They reported that before attending the Maths workshop, they normally calculated students' grades manually using desktop calculators.

The participants reported that they were not confident to organise in-house training. They lacked confidence as they had low teaching qualifications, feared negative criticism from other colleagues, and were concerned about gender-related issues and workloads. As Ruth reflected:

I was appointed as the chief marker of Form 3 English national examination papers from 2008 to 2012 and am also a member of the national panel for English for Form 3. Therefore, I am aware of the area in English language that could address the language needs of our students. However, I have only a diploma teaching qualification while most of the teachers in this school have higher teaching qualifications so I am not confident to organise English curriculum in-house training.

The last response related to individual teachers' initiatives to improve teaching in their subject areas. It was evident that the older and LS teachers still preferred traditional ways of whole-class teaching in the classrooms and writing long notes on the chalkboard for students to copy, while the EC teachers opted to use groups, peer assistance, and class excursions. Max, the Geography teacher, reported that "*In 2012 and 2013, we took Year 11 and Year 12 students on study excursions to visit Noro Tuna cannery factory and the Noro international sea port to look at copra.*" Hellen and Max commented that during the excursions the students learned about the environmental impacts of developments and social and economic activities, changes in the city and the use of natural resources. They visited the cannery and observed how Solomon Island Taiyo tinned tuna was processed. For the next excursion, the school had already planned to take their students to the Arnavon Nature Conservation Island in Choiseul province.

Printed school materials are expensive and scarce in the Solomon Islands. The remoteness of the school remains a challenge, which made the teachers dependent on the Internet to supplement the outdated school curriculum. While some LS teachers who were on the verge of retirement still depended on the old curriculum, the individual EC teachers retrieved information from the Internet for their personal use and for teaching and learning resources (Lucy; Harold; Hellen). The participants reflected that due to problems faced with the school Internet in 2014 and 2015, most of the teachers depended on the mobile phone tower to access the Internet on their

personal smartphones, while some asked the Word of Hope Church secondary schools in Honiara for new information related to their subject areas. Max mentioned that "*not all the teachers owned smart mobile phones; thus, some teachers had to share their smart mobile phones with those who had not.*"

6.7.7. Availability of the Internet to Improve Teaching and Learning

The participants commented that the school was slowly introducing new technology in the areas of teaching and learning. The LS participants reflected that the school expressed its commitment to use new technology when it received 12 new computers donated by Australian volunteers in 2011. Hellen spoke a great deal about access to the Internet that:

> *The computer donation was arranged through the Word of Hope Church education authority and the Internet connection was a donor-funded project about the same year. Also we have good reception via the Internet connection link provided by the Solomon Islands Telekom Mobile Company from the provincial capital town. Thus, we could also access the Internet via smart phones.*

The participants who were posted to Hillway NSS before 2011 affirmed that the donated computers and Internet connection were introduced about the same time and connected to the 12 computers. Unfortunately, of the 12 computers donated in 2011, only two were functional at the time of data collection (Field Notes and Observation, 28/10/2015). The Internet connection to the desktop computers used a satellite dish; it was very slow and often had problems. To access the Internet, five participants reported that about an average of five students in a class of 35 had smartphones. The senior students were permitted to bring their mobile phones into the classrooms under the teachers' supervision as learning tools.
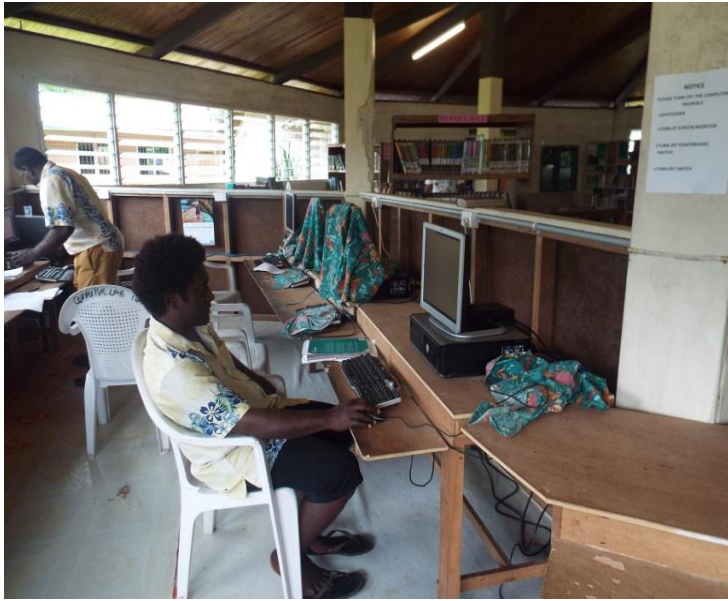
Figure 6.1 School Internet: A teacher works on the computer in the school computer lab

6.7.8. Teachers' Responses to Availability of the Internet to Improve Teaching and Learning

Teachers demonstrated their eagerness to use new technology for communication and teaching and learning. With the support of the Word of Hope Church education authority through the arrangement for computer donations and support for establishing an Internet connection to the school, the participants reported that they were enthusiastic and motivated to maximise use of the available technologies and to venture into other types of technology. Hellen commented that the school had stopped using manual type writers and manual stencil-operated duplicating machines and bought new laser printer machines, a data projector and connected a telephone link because of the availability of new technology. The teachers preferred to use computers, the Internet and laser printers because this helped their work look neat and professional (Billy; Hellen). The head of department participants reported that most of the teachers had shifted from handwritten work on lesson plans, schemes of work, class notes and notices to typing. Two teachers also owned personal laptops purchased through lay-by arrangements with the Word of Hope Church authority. The participants commented that as far as they knew, only one or two LS teachers who were near the age of retirement were computer literate; however, some of the teachers helped them to learn basic computer skills.

Secondly, most of the participants commented that they used the Internet to search for information whenever they had time, except on the Sabbath. Lucy reported that "*all the female teachers at Hillway were young so we were just like the male teachers who spent considerable amounts of time to use Internet and computers in the staff room.*" Bobby, Liza and Max commented that most of the teachers spent more time on the Internet until the school generator went off at 9:30pm every night because the school was in a rural district with few external influences. Science teachers at the school managed and administered the use of the school Internet.

The third response was that the teachers had a sense of ownership of the technological change and even encouraged the students to use their mobile phone to access the Internet in the school, with some guidelines and control measures. The participants reported that although only two computers were functional, they could still access Internet connections either on their smart phones or by using dongles as modems on their personal laptops. Since they were encouraged by the Word of Hope Church education authority and the school administration to use and access the Internet on their personal devices, the teachers indicated that they shared a sense of ownership of the technological change. Lucy commented that:

> *Sometimes during classroom teachings, the teachers who had no mobile phones asked the students to use their mobile phones to search for information they wanted. We not only played an active role to control and supervise the students on how they should use their mobile phones but also we depended on the students' technological devices as our resources for teaching. Sometimes we asked the students to use their smart phones to search for information.*

Finally, the use of email and social networking helped the teachers to collaborate, explore, share new and updated information and work as a team to improve their teaching and learning. The participants noted that teachers created a Facebook page for Hillway NSS which was used to inform current and former students, parents and the public about the school's vision, improvements, progress and challenges and areas that needed improvement. Some of the participants reported that since the school had accessed the Internet, five teachers had secured scholarships through online applications. Teachers also used social networks to discuss new ideas and solve problems.

The participants responded to the use of available technology to improve teaching and learning with passion. They embraced the change and used the available technology to improve their lesson preparation, teaching and learning and communication. The teachers devoted time and effort to using the Internet. They developed the practice of returning to the staff room after hours to access the Internet and share information with other teachers. The desire to use the Internet had motivated the teachers to share their mobile phones and their students' mobiles to access the Internet. The participants used social networks to advance their professional collaboration with other teachers.

6.7.9. School Infrastructure

The participants reported that the school has reasonably good school infrastructure in terms of the number of buildings to accommodate the teachers and students, classrooms and other accommodation needs. However, the Form 7 classrooms were still to be completed. Billy, Hellen and Lucy reported that because other NSSs in the Solomon Islands have had Form 7 classes since 2010, the Word of Hope Church authority, Word of Hope Church members and parents had encouraged the school to have Form 7; unfortunately, the classroom and science laboratory were not yet completed.

There had been problems with school infrastructure. Looking back, the participants reported that their kitchen buildings had been a major problem. They had been old and leaked; thus they were not safe to use and posed significant health and safety concerns. Furthermore, the LS participants reported that, until recently, none of the dormitories at Hillway NSS had been renovated for many years, as evident from the knife cuts on the bunk beds, windows and doors, the fact that all louver glass shutters had been broken or removed and the presence of graffiti on the walls and bunk beds. None of the boys' dormitories had door shutters and some internal ceilings had collapsed. Moreover, Liza reported that:

> *Free space in the school library was unutilised. The students' studies only used small areas and also [there was] not enough study furniture and photo copy machines for student use. In addition, there was evidence that the school*

needs more books as half of the book shelves were empty in addition to free spaces in the library building.

This situation had now changed. Hellen, Ruth, Harold and Liz reported that they were pleased to have their thatched sago-palm leaf kitchens rebuilt. At the time of the research, only 14 teachers' kitchens had been completed; the standard sizes were about 4 metres long and 3 metres wide and the posts were about 1 metre above the ground (Field Notes and Observations, 28/10/2014). Next, all the dormitories at Hillway NSS were renovated and refurnished (Field Notes and Observations, 28/10/2014). The participants proudly commented that the dormitory upgrades were funded by an Australian aid program. The dormitories were repainted, repaired and supplied with new double bunk beds (Ruth; Max). This was a significant change.

The participants reported that improvement in the school library was one of the most important changes in the school. The changes involved renovation, refurnishing and reorganising of rooms. It was apparent that the library (see Figure 6.2) was not fully used as free spaces in the library could be used to stock more books and accommodate more study tables. Liza explained that "*when the school receives donated books that were currently shipped from Australia, the free spaces would be used to display more books.*"

Figure 6.2 School library: The Hillway NSS library the teachers raise funds to improve

6.7.9.1.   A desired change: Renewable energy.

The participants commented on infrastructural change related to the use of renewable energy to generate electricity. Due to the high price of fuel, the participants reported they would like to use renewable energy, in the form of solar, windmill or hydro, to supply electricity for the school. They reported that it was very expensive to operate the school diesel generator with a diesel fuel price of SBD$12.00 (AUD $1.71) per litre. Hillway NSS is located in a region that has a lot of wind and sun and there is also a river that runs through the school campus. Billy commented that "*one of the school's long-term plans is to use renewable energy for generating electricity for the school.*" For convenience and affordability, many participants preferred the use of solar power. At the time of data collection, about nine teachers had installed private solar panels for lighting only in their homes (Observation and Field Notes, 28/10/2015).

6.7.10. Teachers' Responses to School Infrastructure

Billy and Hellen explained that most of the school infrastructure at Hillway NSS was funded through the school budget, Word of Hope Church donations or external funding agencies. The Word of Hope Church beliefs do not allow the school to organise fundraising through bazaars, gambling, playing of games or entertainment. They are limited to free-will contributions and working to earn money. It is apparent that the Word of Hope Church belief has influenced and guided how the teachers responded to infrastructural change in terms of their time, knowledge, skills and labour, which are offered for free.

With regard to their responses to building the new Form 7 classroom, most of the participants commented that they provided moral support and organised the students to carry building materials from the wharf and milled timber from the forest to the construction site. According to the LS teachers, the school hired a portable Lucus Milling machine to mill timber. Harold commented that:

> *Because of the long distance and muddy bush track, we have to carry timbers in a relay arrangement. We used the students during work session and punishments to carry timbers, which took us several months to complete carrying the milled timber from the rainforest down to the school campus*

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while funding and major construction work on the new classrooms buildings was done by the volunteers from Australia and later the local building contractor to do the minor finishing jobs.

In response to maintaining cleanliness and good order in the dormitories, the duty participants explained that they conducted regular dormitory inspections every Friday evening before Sabbath began and reminded students to respect and care for school property. They further explained that the school has appointed dormitory leaders to advise and monitor the cleanliness of the dormitories and remind the occupants of the dormitory rules (Max; Harold).

The teachers responded to the need for good kitchen buildings by including their construction in the normal work session programs from 2pm to 4pm, Monday to Thursday. Three participants commented that the school approved local bush building materials and appointed teachers and a group of students who built the kitchens during work sessions. The teachers who used the kitchens, as part of Melanesian cultural practices, had to prepare food to feed the building contractors.

In their responses to improve the school library, the participants mentioned that they entrusted Liza, a talented young singer who took a leadership role, to produce two singing albums and sell these to raise money for the school. Liza commented that "*I was tasked to raise money through the sale of Hillway NSS singing DVDs to fund the shipping costs of one container of donated library books from some secondary schools in Australia.*"

6.7.10.1. Desired change: Renewable energy.

The final response was that the teachers started to pursue their desire to install renewable energy equipment to supply electricity for the school. The participants expressed a strong desire for their school to use renewable energy sources that could provide reliable electricity. Most of the participants noted that this was discussed in two meetings to contribute ideas so the school principal could start to pursue a renewable energy project; either solar or wind or hydro. Bobby commented that "*the teachers were very supportive in our school development meetings to put ideas together for our school solar projects proposal.*" The school has worked on a

proposal to apply to their member of the national parliament to fund a set of solar lights (a 40 watt solar panel, battery, 3 lights and the accessories) for each teacher.

The next section presents the findings on the influence of the school ethos and the school culture on the teachers' responses.

6.8. The Influence of School Ethos and School Culture and on Teachers' Responses to Change

The findings presented on this theme provide the answers to research sub-question three: How do the school ethos and the school culture influence teachers' responses?

6.8.1. Teachers' Response to Change: The Influence of School Ethos and School Culture

The participants indicated that they were obliged to satisfy the three pillars of the Word of Hope Church, which are Belonging, Believing and Becoming, when responding to school change. They reported that these pillars are an integral part of the Word of Hope Church fundamental beliefs, and were also adopted by other Word of Hope Church schools. The three pillars of the Word of Hope Church are about community of faith and learning in the Word of Hope Church schools, in which teachers and students are expected to have a sense of belonging to the family of God and the Word of Hope Church (Murdoch, 2016). The Word of Hope Church school pillars indicate that the school provides an environment in which individual students develop their faith in God, engage in learning and community involvement, and become active in discipleship, worship of God and service (Murdoch, 2016).

6.8.2. Belonging

"*Our primary goal is to help our students to be saved in God's Kingdom. Thus, we would like the students to find and know more about Jesus in this school. Therefore, although the school has a busy schedule, we cannot neglect our church programs*" (Hellen).

All the participants agreed with Hellen's opening remark that the Word of Hope Church-operated school ethos is based on biblical principles by promoting their relationship with God and reflecting Word of Hope Church identities through their programs. As Hellen explained, the school strives to ensure that the students have a sense of belonging to the wider family of God; therefore, the school has a culture of creating small family-like religious groups while being affiliated with other, larger school groups. The participants reported that all the students had to be part of each of the religious groups and it was the work of the school church pastor and the school registrar to place the students in their respective groups.

With the sense of being part of a family of God, the participants reported that they embraced biblical principles and used them as their guide for making decisions, planning school programs and organising activities. Hellen explained that "*as a Christian, we love, serve, encourage and support one another in whatever we do because after all we are working to save life in God's Kingdom.*" For this reason, students and teachers at Hillway NSS were expected to participate and be involved in group programs to demonstrate that they belong to a school-family. Harold and Lucy reported that at Hillway NSS, it is quite easy to know and remember the names of all the students in the school because of its close family bonds and the influence of school culture.

The participants reported that one of the principles of the school is cleanliness, which was confirmed by the clean school campus and well-arranged landscape. Billy expounded that "*being a Word of Hope Christian school, we would like to see that this school promotes cleanliness, cleanliness is godliness.*" In reference to the school ethos, Harold pointed out that "*the first impression in the school is the general appearance of our students, which is their good dress and welcoming attitude to visitors.*" It is apparent that meeting and welcoming of visitors and strangers at the river bank, which is the arrival point at Hillway NSS, is normal practice. In addition, Hillway NSS usually offered free accommodation to visitors because when visitors or strangers arrive at the school, as a biblical principle they should be treated as part of the school family.

6.8.3. Believing

The participants explained that their Christian beliefs and values had influenced their actions, commitment, and plans for change. Thus, the school had a culture in which the teachers and students practised their beliefs about God and their roles as agents for Word of Hope Church by witnessing to nearby village communities through singing. They explained that all the teachers at Hillway NSS have to be faithful members of the Word of Hope Church in order to demonstrate untainted Word of Hope fundamental beliefs, values and practices. All the participants mentioned that they were godly teachers and expected to be actively involved and participate in morning and evening worship in the school chapel, assist the students in various programs and activities, integrate their faith and values in the school curriculum and conduct bible studies for the students. Lucy reported that "*it is our duty as duty teachers to worship with the students every morning and evening in the school chapel and to mark the roll.*"

All the participants spoke of the belief that they worked for God. Hellen asserted that "*our school's success depends very much on our relationship with God. Once we forget and put God last in what we are doing then definitely it will show in our school's poor academic results and deteriorating student behaviour.*" Thus, the teachers maintained a Christian atmosphere in the school that reflected Word of Hope doctrine, values and principles. In explaining how the national curriculum conflicted with what the Word of Hope Church believes with regard to diet, Ruth explained that "*for example, topics about pig farms, eating protein foods like shellfish and lobsters contradicted Word of Hope Church beliefs; thus, we had to choose different topics to teach instead.*"

6.8.4. Becoming

According to the participants' view of becoming, as a Word of Hope school, Hillway NSS has challenged each teacher and student to undertake active discipleship, worship and to equip themselves with skills so that they are responsible not only for themselves but also for other people. The LS participants commented that their roles were to serve God and to serve the school faithfully; in other words, to live a life of service.

Four participants explained that the general motto of the Word of Hope Church primary and secondary schools is 'Nothing Without Labour'; thus Hillway NSS has encouraged its teachers and students to be active in serving God and the school. For this reason, the teachers are also called missionary-teachers as they are expected by the Word of Hope Church authority to know the bible, live a godly life and participate in church missionary work (Hellen; Max). As reported by most of the participants, the school has a culture in which the teachers are actively involved in weekly bible study classes with the students and in other organised religious groups in the school like Ministerial League, Youth and Pathfinder. Bobby, one of the bible study teachers, commented that "*in 2014, 57 students were baptised by immersion into the Word of Hope Church. Some of the students were not born into the Word of Hope Church.*"

Billy reported that "*the school had an ongoing practice to organise staff worship for the teachers every morning from Monday to Friday before class period starts to encourage teachers' work commitment, faithfulness, cooperation and collaboration.*" It seemed that individual teachers also organised family worship in their respective homes. Such worship commitment established that the school lived a life of prayer.

There was apparent work commitment and cooperation in the school community, in which teachers used their skills and talents to transform the school for free. The participants reported that the teachers' and students' free labour contributed to the success of many projects and other reform programs. Bobby and some of the participants who had worked in other schools commented that they worked for many hours and performed extra responsibilities but were not paid extra allowances, but in state-operated secondary schools, they were remunerated.

6.8.5. Growing to Serve

The participants commented that their school motto: 'Growing to Serve' is derived from the three pillars: belonging, believing and becoming. They commented that the Hillway NSS motto had motivated them to achieve their goal to nurture students to grow spiritually, mentally, physically and socially.

Some of the participants reported that the purpose of establishing Hillway NSS was to train students to be instrumental in helping others to know more about Jesus. With this purpose, they commented that in the organised weekly Bible study programs in their respective small groups and combined bible discussions every Sabbath morning and in pathfinder clubs and youth groups, they had spiritual, social, physical and mental activities in which teachers and students were involved.. Those who successfully completed all the requirements received an award during one of the church services (Lucy; Ruth). The participants further explained that the programs and activities were aimed to mould the students to grow in the Christian faith and become leaders in their various local churches and organisations after leaving the school. They explained that these religious practices had strengthened and influenced them to be mindful of any introduced change in the school.

The participants referred to the growth in academic achievement of Hillway NSS by offering senior Forms 5, 6 and 7 despite the rural context. They also measured the school's growing academic achievements from its start as a junior secondary school to becoming a senior NSS within a few years of its establishment. The majority of the participants commented that the senior Forms offered at Hillway NSS have equipped the students with sound academic knowledge that either prepares them for university level education or equips them when they leave the formal education system to become resourceful in other areas of life, including their local churches in their respective village communities.

Remoteness and isolation have acted as a natural fence that keeps the students on the campus (Field Notes and Observations, 28/10/2015). All the participants agreed that the physical features of the school have isolated the teachers and students from external influences. For this reason, it is apparent that the teachers and students had more time to spend together on the school campus, interacting and creating cordial relationships and understanding each other better. As a result, they organised academic learning support and services that took into consideration the learning needs of average and slow learners. The participants reported that since the teachers and students had few external influences and entertainment, it was common that in their free time they voluntarily organised tutorial or discussion groups. Most students

spent their free time on private study either in the classrooms, under the palm trees in front of the classrooms or in their dormitories.

The next section presents the findings on the teachers' contributions to successful school change.

6.9. Teachers' Contributions to Successful School Change

The data presented on this sub-section provide the answer to research sub-question four: What are the teachers' contributions to successful school change?

6.9.1. Effective Leadership for Change

The teachers' responses to what they identified as change at Hillway NSS had contributed to improvements in school leadership. Previously, the school's usual practice was that teacher leadership positions were automatically filled by male teachers. Previously, female teachers were branded by male teachers and the education authority as incompetent and lacking the required leadership skills that qualified them to be appointed to teacher leadership positions.

It was clear that the appointment of three female teachers to school administrative positions and their outstanding performance in 2013 and 2014 met some resistance from some of the male teachers. However, the female teacher leaders proved to the education authority, teachers, students and parents they were effective leaders as demonstrated by school improvements in conformity with Word of Hope Church norms, the introduction of Form 7, and initiatives to review the curriculum and pedagogy. Female teachers were seen around Hillway NSS, actively engaged in leadership roles (Observation, 28/10/2014). This change made it clear that at Hillway NSS, leadership appointments were given with the desire to improve the school, regardless of the Melanesian belief and practice that males are born leaders. It was apparent that the female teachers were as competent in school administration roles as the male teachers. The female teacher participants and Max commented that the female teachers had gained momentum with the increased appointments and also found that they progressively gained leadership support from many teachers.

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Hellen and Lucy reported that after one year of performing leadership roles in the school, they gained and retained confidence from the Word of Hope Church education authority, the teachers, students and parents. It was apparent that this change motivated other female teachers at Hillway NSS and female teachers in other secondary schools within Word of Hope Church school institutions and the Western Province to pursue leadership positions in NSSs. The fact that female teachers are now in leadership positons may be a challenge to male teachers to further improve their leadership capacities.

6.9.2. Maintaining Word of Hope Church Spiritual Standards

It appeared that previously, there was an imbalance between the students' learning practices and their involvement in spiritual programs. The participants commented that the imbalance was the major causes of deterioration in the students' behaviour. The participants noted that it became a common practice in the school for students to wear unacceptable dress when attending Sabbath worship services and on normal days they often wore clothing that had writing and designs that did not reflect Word of Hope Church beliefs. The teachers saw this as failing to maintain Word of Hope Church standards in the school.

It was apparent that the teachers set spiritual standards that confirmed Word of Hope Church norms while maintaining academic learning practices, from which, the positive school culture of Hillway NSS emerged. The participants found that the students behaved better by wearing the recommended clothes, and being more committed to religious, academic and other organised school programs. It was an integral part of the school culture that students engaged in prayers in their classrooms before the first class period, after the last period and before and after study periods; a practice that reflected the Christian school environment. It was evident that the teachers set standards and examples so that the new teachers and students who joined the school community the following year continued to comply with the accepted changes.

6.9.3. Improving School Practice

Undoubtedly, the remoteness of Hillway NSS has posed regular challenges to the teachers in accessing hard copies of learning materials, resources, and new and updated information as the Internet connection had regular faults. However, in the midst of these challenges, collectively the school made a successful breakthrough by removing past limitations with regards to traditional ways of classroom teaching such as writing long notes on blackboards, strictly teaching an outdated curriculum and focusing on long-established procedures.

There was evidence that individual EC teachers successfully changed the LS teachers' perceptions and created strategies for change by taking students on on-site learning excursions, initiating departmental in-house training and maximising the use of the Internet for teaching and learning. These changes affirmed that the EC teachers took leadership roles to address, initiate and implement change at Hillway NSS. In other words, the young and energetic teachers established a platform for new teachers and students to use when they joined the school community..

6.9.4. Reshaping the School Culture

There was evidence supporting the roles the teachers played in reshaping the culture of Hillway NSS. Through the Word of Hope Church education authority and support of the school administration, the teachers had discarded and modified some old ways of doing things and embraced new approaches. The teachers' collective efforts established a platform for the school culture that encouraged school change. It was apparent that as in academic subjects, the teachers taught the students in different religious and social programs and activities the skills and attitudes they need in order to achieve desired behaviours and practices in the school.

It was clear that the teachers had aimed to reshape the school culture by breaking school community participation and involvement into small groups that were more socially interactive and manageable. Furthermore, in reshaping the culture of the school and improving students' behaviours, the teachers firstly learnt to improve their own skills, attitudes, perceptions and practices amongst themselves and within their teacher leadership teams, especially on issues related to gender equality in leadership and EC and LS teachers.

With collaborative efforts to reshape the school culture, the teachers set the standards and expectations and provided scaffolding that improved the students' behaviour and practices. For example, the weekend duty teachers had to visit students' dormitories and remind them to wear black and white clothes for Sabbath church services and mark the student attendance roll. The participants reported that behaviour and practice improvement scaffolds were withdrawn when the new behaviours and practices became part of the school culture. The participants reported that with improvements in teacher leadership, the new school culture became permanent as new teachers and students who joined the school community were acculturated and adapted to it.

6.10. Summary

This case study has presented what the participants identified as change and how they responded to the identified changes at Hillway NSS. The changes they identified and responded to were student behaviour, gender equality in leadership, changing learning needs of students, availability of the Internet to improve teaching and learning and school infrastructure. The teachers' responses to change were influenced by the principal, the style of leadership of the principal and the Word of Hope Church education authority who resided on the school campus. The Word of Hope Church beliefs, values, practices and ethos have had positive impacts on the teachers' responses to change. The school adopted the Word of Hope church ethos and together with the school culture, these have enabled the teachers to respond positively to the five identified school changes.

In the next chapter, the findings from case study four: Highway NSS are presented.

CHAPTER 7: CASE STUDY FOUR
Highway National Secondary School

7.1.   School Context- Setting the Scene

Highway NSS has reliable and regular public transport to Honiara, the capital city of the Solomon Islands. The availability of regular transport services has given Highway NSS and its teachers opportunities and advantages with respect to a number of school changes and also makes it easy for stakeholders, parents, the River of Life Church authorities, River of Life Church members and former students to reach the school.

Highway is a co-educational boarding NSS, established and operated by the River of Life Church. Since it was first established by the River of Life Church pioneer missionaries, Highway NSS has been moved to a number of different locations for various reasons. The school campus is built on low-lying land which is not far from sandy beaches. The beaches are exposed to persistent ocean swells, currents and waves which sometimes make sea transport to and from the school difficult. A river that runs behind the school campus often causes flooding of the campus during monsoon seasons.

Highway NSS was built on the present site in the early 1990s. Therefore, some of the classrooms and the administration building are still in good condition compared with other NSSs. Highway NSS has 20 staff houses and 16 classrooms. Except for the teachers' houses, almost all the buildings are in the centre of the school campus and connected by covered concrete pathways. The two largest buildings are the Chapel and the dining hall.

7.2.   School Enrolments and Staffing

The student enrolments in 2014 were 532, of which 265 were female students and 267 were male. There were 23 academic staff, of whom nine were female. Students are selected from Standard 6 in primary schools and Form 4 and Form 6 in secondary schools across the Solomon Islands. However, priority for student enrolment is normally granted to members of the River of Life Church.

The three main school administrative positions are principal, deputy principal administration (DPAd) and deputy principal academic (DPAca). The DPAd is appointed by the Solomon Islands government Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development (MEHRD) and is responsible for matters related to student welfare and the daily operation of the school, while the DPAca is appointed by the Highway NSS school board, based on the teachers' collective decision, to assist the principal in academic matters.

7.3. The Research Participants

The six participants in this study are briefly introduced. Their names have been changed to maintain confidentiality (see Table 7.1). The brief summary provides the information of relevance to this study.

Table 7.1

The Highway MSS Research Participants

No	Sex	Participant	Position
1	M	Matt Tau	Acting Principal
2	M	Luke Ngalavole	Deputy principal
3	M	John Galo	HOD
4	M	Rex Puisasa	HOD
5	F	Ruth Kabolo	Class teacher
6	F	Smith Kato	Class teacher

7.4. Highway: The River of Life Church-Operated NSS

The River of Life education authority, headed by the Education Secretary, administers its schools across the Solomon Islands, The Education Department is the body mandated by the River of Life Church to be responsible for the delivery of quality education and services and to monitor the spiritual aspects of all River of Life Church-operated schools in the Solomon Islands.

The education authority has entrusted and mandated its school leaders with the administration and operation of the school, including monitoring the practice of

the River of Life Church beliefs, values and practices, maintenance of school infrastructure, implementation of school curricula, school standards and teaching, lesson preparation and delivery, and teachers' professionalism, assessment and attendance. The EA also expects the principal and teachers to further develop and improve the school. In doing so, it provides land, advice and permission, and assists the school whenever required in various areas related to school improvements. The River of Life Church, through its education division, advises the school board, the principal and teachers on any major changes required in the school.

7.5. The Principal of Highway NSS

At the time of data collection, Matt Tau was acting principal of Highway NSS. He had worked as acting principal for only five months at the time of the interview. Prior to his appointment, he taught at Highway NSS for 15 years, and for three years was the deputy principal administration (DPAd). Before becoming a teacher, Matt had also qualified as a motor mechanic.

His career in teaching began when he taught as an unqualified teacher in two secondary schools including Highway NSS before he pursued further studies at the Solomon Islands College of High Education (SICHE) and obtained an Advanced Diploma in teaching secondary school Science. After successfully completing his teaching qualification, he was reposted to Highway NSS as a science class teacher and later promoted to a DPAd position. In mid-2014, he was further promoted to the acting principal position by the River of Life church education authority when the previous principal resigned. The acting principal commented that until the River of Life Church education authority advertised the position and appointed a new principal, his substantive DPAd position remained vacant.

Matt felt that he gained the acting principal position because of his seniority, long service as a teacher at Highway NSS, along with his experience as a spiritual teacher and as a DPAd. With his range of experience, he brought to the school the leadership, vision, values, practices, understanding and knowledge that were required for improvement, innovation and change at Highway NSS.

In 2012, the River of Life Church education authority appointed Luke Ngalavole to the deputy principal academic (DPAca) position based on the school's recommendations. Luke felt that the regular change of principals every year from 2010 to 2012 was due to the difficulties faced by these former principals in meeting the leadership expectations of the River of Life Church authority, River of Life Church education authority and the MEHRD. The previous principal was appointed in early 2012 and resigned in mid-2014, which meant that Matt Tau, the DPAd, was promoted to the Acting Principal position.

Luke commented in the Solomon Islands Pidgin English that "*staka tumas boss to wok uda so hard lelebet fo the principal fo meetm expecteson blo olketa*" which means the principal had too many bosses to work under, which made it quite difficult for him to meet expectations. The acting principal commented that he continued implementing plans and programs from where the previous principal had left off and also worked closely with the teachers.

The principal commented that his eight years' experience in industry as a mechanic had given him a sense of self-discipline, the ability to meet deadlines, willingness to obey supervisors, implement programs according to plan, and the ability to work with people of different levels and personalities. Many of the participants commented that as a qualified mechanic, the principal spent considerable amounts of time repairing and servicing school machines. This meant he allocated time in addition to his inside office work to repair and service school machines. Luke commented that "*the principal has repaired the school machines, like the lawn mower, grass brusher, outboard motors, tractors, and generators. Many of the machines have not been working for many years.*" Some participants reported that the principal devoted more of his time to repairing the school machines after his appointment to the principal's position.

7.6. The Principal's Vision That Was Shared With the Teachers

As a newly appointed principal without educational leadership and management qualifications, Matt Tau commented that "*I have something in mind to improve the school based on my teaching experiences but I also consulted our school*

development plans, the education authority and the teachers for advice and desired change." The principal went on to say that he has more experience in administration but on academic aspects of leadership, he consulted some of the highly qualified teachers. Besides his consultative approach that assisted him in forming and shaping his personal vision, the principal aimed to improve the school machinery, continue to follow up proposals for a new classroom, girls' dormitory and staff houses, and create a school climate that encourages good working relationships. The principal had good working relationships with the previous principal and the teachers while he was the DPAd. For this reason, the principal commented that he chose to continue the work of the previous principal as the previous principal had worked closely with teachers and maintained good working relationships with the stakeholders.

The principal and Luke commented that they continued to implement plans, programs, timetables and approaches set up by the previous principal, with very minor changes. This appears to be an indication that the previous principal, the acting principal and Luke had a good, close working relationship, shared their personal visions, discussed ideas and views in an open-minded way. They seemed to support each other with regard to school improvements in many ways.

Evidence of leadership support for school improvement was apparent in Luke's appointment as DPAca. Luke reported that "*I was appointed as deputy principal but received only a normal Science class teacher's salary. Only the deputy principal administration appointment was endorsed by MEHRD and paid according* [to the salary of] *a deputy position.*" Smith also commented that "*the acting principal appointed me to improve spiritual programs and activities for the school [without receiving extra responsibility allowance].*" Smith agreed with the acting principal (Luke) that there was leadership support despite not receiving an increment in salary.

The data presented in the remainder of this chapter are drawn from interviews with the participants at the school in 2014 and 2015, along with my observations as the researcher, field notes, and audio-visual recordings.

7.7. Identifying School Change and Teachers' Responses: The Highway NSS Teachers' Perspective

The data presented in this subsection provides the answers to research sub-questions one and two.

1. What do teachers identify as change in their secondary school?

2. How to teachers respond to the identified change?

When asked about what they identified as change in their secondary school, the participants gave a range of perceptions that represented their individual views. To manage and present the data in a more organised manner, I grouped the participants' related and similar views, thus condensing their perceptions into five main areas of school change.

The data is presented in two parts. The first section deals with what the participants identified as change in Highway NSS, and is followed by a section describing how they responded to the identified change.

The participants identified the following as changes at Highway NSS:

1. Student behaviour
2. Students' academic performance
3. Teachers' commitment to teaching and learning
4. Access to the Internet
5. School building infrastructure

7.7.1. Student Behaviour

Almost all the participants commented that, since 2012, there had been significant changes in student behaviour at Highway NSS. Prior to 2012, the participants reported that there were high levels of student punishment, and increasing numbers of students being either suspended or expelled as the result of a range of serious disciplinary matters.

Four participants commented that it was apparent that many students had not been concentrating during study periods because they were moving around and

telling stories. Luke (DPAca) and John reported that many of the students had gone to the city without permission and also many parents had picked up their children without reporting to the school. Three participants commented that there had been a lot of loud, unnecessary noise around the campus, especially from the dormitories during nominal 'quiet hours,' which caused disturbance, and that very few students had taken responsibility to help to control the situation or to report the culprits to the school administration.

The participants reported that by 2013 the number of students being punished had decreased. The incidence of bullying in the dormitories had declined and student punctuality had improved. Smith and John, the two school spiritual leaders, also reported that students were wearing appropriate clothes for church and around the campus and there had been no reports of students consuming alcohol or fighting in their dormitories.

Many of the participants also affirmed that the students' conduct had improved, as evidenced by increased respect for school property reduced unnecessary noise around the campus during quiet hours and at night, and better behaviour in the classrooms. Luke reported that "*nowadays, many students ask for permission before leaving the school, even when their parents come to pick them up.*"

Evidence of unacceptable student behaviour at Highway NSS had been identified by the teachers. In their responses to student behaviour, the teachers employed seven effective strategies for dealing with problems, as described in the following section.

7.7.2. Teachers' Responses to Student Behaviour

As a first response to improve student behaviour, the participants commented that together with the school administration they had discussed student behaviour improvement plans in staff meetings. Luke explained that in two staff meetings at the beginning of the first semester they discussed and listed what they thought would help to improve student behaviour. The plans outlined clear school rules and the responsibilities of the teachers to improve the students' behaviour.

Second, almost all the participants commented that they helped to lead spiritual programs because they believed that there were connections between the spiritual life of the students and their behaviour. Smith and John, the two school spiritual leaders, also reported that poor student behaviour at Highway NSS had been a reflection of weak spiritual practices in the school. For this reason, they were appointed by the previous principal to improve the spiritual aspects of the school. John explained that "*Smith and I organised more religious programs and activities that involved student and teacher participation. Programs like scripture union, bible quiz and question nights, prayer and singing groups.*" The majority of the participants affirmed that they were appointed by the school spiritual leaders to lead students in their respective spiritual groups.

The third response involved regular attendance at advisory and counselling meetings organised by the River of Life Church in the school and having regular talks with students on topics related to good behaviour. Also the participants reported that they normally used visiting River of Life Church clergy to conduct worship and talk to the school body. The principal affirmed that teachers cancelled their class periods whenever high ranking River of Life Church officers visited the school, in order to meet, discuss and share with them how best they could improve student behaviour. The participants acknowledged that the regular courtesy visits by the River of Life Church clergy to the school had positive impacts as these visits motivated them to strive to improve student behaviour.

All the participants reflected that students often misbehaved when they were bored and not engaged. For this reason, Luke, Rex and Ruth commented that like their other colleagues they engaged the students in meaningful ways, giving them group, pair and individual assignments and activities and organised sports like soccer, rugby, volleyball and netball. They added that they closely monitored students' involvement, participation and the level of individual teachers' contributions to the given tasks. It was apparent that when the teachers engaged the students with activities and were involved with them, the students' behaviour improved.

Another response was related to classroom management. Four participants mentioned the importance of classroom management in relation to improvement in

student behaviour. They explained that setting a code of classroom behaviour and working closely with the class captains was effective in addressing student behaviour. Five of the participants found that having close working relationships with the students gave the teachers an opportunity to know more about their students and provide early counselling when needed. Ruth commented that "*in my Home economics classroom, I have the code of behaviour on a sheet of paper and pinned on the wall. Many times, I used it to remind my students of expected behaviours and practices.*" She indicated that the code of behaviour was derived from the students' activities.

Another response related to monitoring the students who learned more slowly and disheartened students and providing them appropriate assistance. Luke reported that he advised the teachers to pay close attention to the slower learners and those who seemed stressed by their studies. Following Luke's advice, the participants reported that they were regularly available in the office and visited the classrooms after normal class periods for one-to-one tutorials. Some participants mentioned that they invited students who were identified as having learning difficulties to come to their offices for extra learning assistance. It is common in Melanesian classrooms that few students have the confidence to ask questions during class sessions or to contribute in large group discussions. Thus, many students seemed to prefer small groups or the on-to-one learning approach.

The final response was creating good relationships with the students. To create close working relationships with students, the participants reported that they had time to visit the students in their classrooms during free time, tell stories with them on the grass lawn around the school campus and even visited them in their dormitories. It is accepted that this practice is in-line with Melanesia culture. The four male participants reflected that during their duties, they visited the boys in their dormitories at night before lights out to ensure that the boys prayed, noise was controlled and the students were getting to sleep.

Five of the participants commented that student behaviour improved when they established close relationships with the students, not only in classroom teaching but also around the school campus and when travelling to the city. Highway NSS has a program in which students are invited to staff homes for social activities like having

dinner and watching movies. Almost all the participants noted that these interactions improved student behaviour.

7.7.3. Students' Academic Performance

The majority of the participants referred to overall school results in the national examinations when talking about their students' academic performance. The LS participants reflected that prior to 2012; the pass rate at Highway NSS in the national examinations in Forms 3, 5, 6 and 7 had been 74 percent and in Forms 6 and 7 about 75 percent. Apart from the national examination results, some of the participants commented that even in the unit tests and semester examinations, many students had performed poorly. Rex reported that many students found speaking and writing in English very challenging.

The participants reported that it was a successful change when Highway NSS academic results in the national examinations began to improve in 2012 with an increase in the number of students who passed. The participants gauged students' academic performance primarily in terms of their results in the Solomon Islands national examinations. In the Solomon Islands secondary school system, students sit national examinations in Forms 3, 5 and 6. Luke explained that "*results across Form 3, Form 5 and Form 6 in the national examinations in 2013 is about an average of 80 percent pass rate which is about a six percent increase from previous years.*"

They found a change had occurred when many students had improved to the point of being capable of carrying out many class activities correctly. Rex and Luke remarked that they found many students' writing, class participation and level of thinking in solving challenging class activities had also improved. Luke made reference to how many science students were able to solve difficult science equation problems while Rex found that many students improved at writing essays and undertaking creative writing.

The participants also commented that the academic performance of many of the female students was improved remarkably across the subjects in 2013, which was a big change. They found that the academic achievement of female students was increasingly on a par with the male students. The acting principal and Ruth, the two

longest-serving teachers at Highway NSS, reflected that in past years, the school results showed that male students always performed well and received academic prizes whereas female students tended to struggle academically and not perform well. This was now changing.

7.7.4. Teachers' Responses to Students' Academic Performance

In their first approach to improving students' academic performance, the participants reported that they discussed academic issues in staff meetings and academic committees and produced a plan for student academic improvement. "*Under the leadership of the previous principal, in 2012, we discussed our strengths and weaknesses and drafted a plan that guided us to improve our students' academic performances*" (John). This was an indication that the teachers shared the previous principal's vision for academic improvement and kept this focus and determination to achieve their aims. They took ownership of the reform by volunteering, sharing responsibilities, and committing their time to the change. Four of the participants commented that in their initiative to improve academic performance, the school created a new administrative position in which Luke accepted the appointment as DPAca.

The second response was that the school appointed five teachers, to form the Highway NSS academic committee, chaired by Luke. It appeared that the appointment of the committee members was based on consensus with the teachers concerned because no remuneration was provided to the academic committee members, secretary and chairperson. Appointments to the academic committee were on a voluntary basis. The academic committee was responsible for planning and monitoring the teachers' and students' performance. With the teachers' cooperation, the academic committee collected simple data related to the teachers' and students' performances, analysed it and shared it with them. Some of the participants reported that the data was mostly from class activities, unit tests and internal and external examinations.

Luke and two other participants commented that they encouraged the teachers to pursue further studies at the University of the South Pacific (USP) Centre in Honiara. In addition, three participants alluded that one of the reasons they

transferred to River of Life NSS from schools in the provinces was to study at USP for higher qualifications. Some of the participants also expressed that being close to Honiara encouraged them to undertake more study for higher qualifications.

The third response involved creating a positive classroom environment that motivated students to strive for academic excellence. Some of the participants reported that they constructed good relationships with their students by spending time, getting close and knowing them well in their respective classrooms, communicating with parents to discuss their children's learning needs, giving clear instructions and as much as possible, attending to individual students' learning difficulties. They also mentioned that they changed their approach to students' learning to be more approachable and welcoming because some teachers' personalities created learning barriers between them and their students. Luke explained that as an initiative for change, the teachers took stock of their own good and bad qualities and created a working relationship that was built on trust with the students.

Another change was increased learning time. In this regard, Luke commented that "*previously, a normal compulsory study period was from 7pm to 9pm. Now we had a one-hour study period in the morning before breakfast and in the evening we started our study periods early at 6:30pm.*" From the new timetable, it was apparent that the teachers and students were also encouraged to organise one-to-one academic assistance and optional tutorial classes during their free time. More than half of the participants commented that they made themselves available for student consultations in their respective work stations until lights out at 9:30pm. The majority of the participants reported that they allowed students to visit them at their respective residences when students needed further explanations for their tasks and assignments but teachers were not available in their offices.

The next response to improve students' academic performance involved creating a positive school climate. The LS participants reported comparing the leadership of the past principals with the two most recent principals and finding that that the more recent leadership had created a positive school climate. The participants felt that their voices were heard in the academic committee, and that they were part of the decision making because all the committee members were

teaching staff. This feeling showed that they shared their visions and took ownership of improving the students' academic performances. Luke noted that teachers had developed a habit of remaining in the staff room after official working hours and having informal discussions to share new ideas, resources, advice, experiences and academic challenges.

The last response was the recognition of the students' academic performance. The participants commented that the highlight of students' academic improvements was when the school invited representatives from the MEHRD, River of Life Church representatives, some NGO representatives, parents of the students and the public to attend the ceremony marking the conclusion of the academic year, when the more academically capable students were recognised by being presented with prizes (Luke, Ruth and John). In 2013, 26 prizes for a range of achievements had been presented to the students.

7.7.5. Teachers' Commitment to Teaching and Learning

The principal and Luke reflected on the years when they were class teachers but had not been committed to their responsibilities because of frequent changes of principal. Ruth explained that frequent changes of principal at Highway NSS had affected the teachers psychologically, which in turn affected their work commitment. Some of the participants gave examples of the weakening of their work commitment in terms of failure to collect and mark students' work, prepare their lesson plans and schemes of work, monitor the students' academic progress and inform the principal and be committed to their duty rosters. Some of the participants admitted that after their class periods ended, they had not normally been available in their offices to assist students. The participants indicated another factor that demonstrated weak commitment to teaching and learning at Highway NSS had been that the early-career teachers who are more qualified had tended to leave the school after one or two years to take up appointments with other education authorities. (Luke; Smith)

Significantly, however, the participants reported that, beginning in 2012, they had started to become more committed to teaching and learning, to their leadership appointments and to improving the school climate. This was a major change for the school.

7.7.6. Teachers' Responses to Commitment to Teaching and Learning

Participants reported that this positive change was the result of their response to improving their commitment in five ways. In their first response to improve their levels of commitment, the participants reported that they collaboratively discussed, identified and shared the work improvement plan recommended by the academic committee. The evidence of their shared vision, values, goals and desire to take responsibility for improving their commitment to teaching was demonstrated in their discussions, and in the collective decision to recommend to the previous principal to appoint Luke as DPAca, form the Highway NSS academic committee and become voluntary members of the academic committee. The members of the committee were heads of departments. They committed to their responsibilities by asking the teachers to present their lesson plans for inspection every fortnight and produce department reports to the DPAca (Luke).

The next response involved regular monitoring of the teachers' level of commitment. The participants noted that in one of their staff meetings in early 2012, they discussed and agreed unanimously that the school should introduce a staff attendance register, in which all teachers were required to sign in in the morning and sign out in the evening. This was evidence of the positive response to monitoring teachers' attendance and their active involvement and participation in school activities. They added that unexplained and unreasonable teacher absences from school programs and other unacceptable behaviours, attitudes and practices were noted by the school, and the teachers concerned were given either verbal or written reminders from the school principal.

Another response was strengthening their working relationship with the River of Life Church authority. The participants found that a lack of good working relationships between the education authority and the teachers had also contributed to the weakening of their work ethic. After realising this, they included in the school yearly plan and program the River of Life Church's quarterly visit to the school. Three of the participants felt that the regular courtesy visits of the clergy from the River of Life Church to the school had built trust and good working relationships, which also boosted their commitment to improve teaching and learning practices. "*In*

their visits to the school, the clergy conducted prayers, meetings, discussions and talks with the teachers and students" (John).

Their final response to improving their teaching commitment was recognition and celebration of their colleagues' outstanding performances. The participants commented that they suggested to the previous principal several ways in which they could be motivated to meet challenges in the course of school change. They mentioned that they appreciated the tokens of appreciation in the form of money presented them during the closing ceremony at the end of the school academic year. Each teacher was given SBD$300 (AUD $42.85179) from the school fund. Secondary school teachers' salaries in the Solomon Islands are very low, which means additional financial support in recognition of teachers' outstanding performance goes a long way for the teachers concerned.

7.7.7. Technological Change: Accessing the Internet

The participants commented mainly on the Internet, mobile phones, computers, printers and photocopying machines when referring to technological change. This perception supported the view that these were the new technological devices that were available and used by the teachers in the school. The principal and LS participants reflected that the desire to install an Internet connection at Highway NSS emerged in 2007. In October 2014, Highway NSS had its Internet link connected. The LS participants reflected that prior to the Internet connection, their friends from Australia and the United Kingdom donated about 10 desktop computers to the school during their visit in 2005. They added that this donation had prompted former students of Highway NSS to donate a data projector and a laptop to the school, which boosted the teachers' morale to venture into technological change.

Prior to 2007, with the use of 10 donated desktop computers, the school had done away with manual type writers and a manual duplicating machine (John; Ruth). In the same period, the school bought a small electronic photocopier and a printer. Prior to 2012, the school had mobile connection coverage and until March 2014 the school community could access the Internet via their mobile devices and dongle modems. The participants reported that the school has Internet access but it was very expensive to connect and access Internet links using desktop computers. Luke

commented that Solomon Telekom (see Figure 7.1), the Internet provider, only allocated about 50 gigabytes of data for the school Internet per month.

Figure 7.1 The Internet satellite dish: Solomon Telekom installed a satellite dish for the Internet at Highway NSS

7.7.8. Teachers' Responses to Accessing the Internet

In their collective response to technological change, the participants commented that they embraced the River of Life Church's permission to connect the Internet and quickly organised staff fundraising. The LS participants at Highway NSS reported that the River of Life Church authority had fully supported in principle the idea of the school having the Internet available in the school office and staff rooms. Thus, with the Church authority's permission to install an Internet link in the school the LS participants reported that they formed an Internet committee and began with the first staff fundraising barbecue on the school campus in 2007 (Rex; Ruth).

The second stage of their response to technological change was inviting and involving the stakeholders. The LS participants reflected that after 2008, they included in the school program an annual fundraiser in December during the school closing ceremony, to which the school invited parents, River of Life Church members and the nearby village communities. Open invitations were extended to the public to participate in the fundraising events. The fundraising normally ran for two

days and the public from the nearby village communities and Honiara city were invited to the school to participate in various sports, games, competitions and fundraising events (Principal; Ruth). The participants reported that varieties of cooked and uncooked local food, local handicrafts and raffle tickets were also on sale and at night, the entrance fee for a video show was SBD $2.00 (AUD $0.28). They went on to report that parents and River of Life Church members donated many local items for sale. They highlighted that parental employment status is important in supporting the school in a variety of ways like provision of goods and financial contributions. Luke reported that *in one fundraising, the school raised about SBD $200,000.00.*

The participants reported that they even organised their students, former students and supporters of Highway NSS to push a wheelbarrow with posters across Honiara City one Saturday and asked for donations from the public. Some of the participants commented that the former students' committee in Honiara and the former students of Highway NSS in Australia helped to raise funds for the Internet project.

While waiting to connect the school to the Internet using a satellite dish, three of the participants reported that four teachers, the principal and Luke, who had private laptops, accessed the Internet using dongles and their personal smartphones. It was reported that the students of Highway NSS were allowed to bring their personal mobile phones to the school but were constantly reminded by the teachers to use them wisely for communication and learning purposes only.

In October 2014, the Internet link was finally connected at Highway NSS, which began another level in the teachers' response to technological change; the way they used the introduced technology. The LS participants commented that they were not properly prepared to use computers and the Internet. Four of the participants reported that the school had not organised basic computer and Internet training for the teachers. It was apparent that lack of teacher preparation for technical change created adverse teacher responses. Luke reported that:

> *Now we got Internet link connections a few weeks ago but it was under-used as the majority of the teachers in this school are old and they are not confident to use computers and the Internet. Also I did not see many teachers spending*

more time searching for information on the Internet. If this school was in town and the teachers were young, they would spend more time on the Internet.

Most of the participants expressed their desire to attend basic computer training as part of the staff development program but the school administration had not organised any. However, there was evidence that when some of the teachers offered computer training on a voluntary basis, a number of the LS teachers and the female teachers felt that they did not have the skills to do it.

From a female perspective, Ruth commented that "*I am not comfortable or brave enough to attend one-to-one training after hours when Luke is free because of our culture. Sometimes I attempted to use the Internet but some of the young male teachers did not always give me an opportunity.*" Her feelings of reluctance and her upholding of Melanesian cultural practice prevented Ruth from responding positively to technological change.

Some of the more experienced participants reported that they felt motivated to use the computer and the Internet when the young teachers posted on Highway NSS's Facebook page essential information about the school such as activities and events, plans, school fees, school requirements, examinations, staff postings and photos and as a result the school received much-needed donations, support and advice, even from overseas.

In 2015, with good teacher support, the school built a new computer lab and installed 20 computers (Principal). The computers were connected to the Internet for teachers' and students' use. Luke and John commented that because they lacked Information Technology (IT) expertise, they established a relationship with former Highway NSS students who were qualified in IT to assist the Science teachers to maintain the operation of the Internet and other technological devices in the school.

7.7.9. School Building Infrastructure

The participants had identified one of the desired changes as improving the school building infrastructure. The principal and the senior participants reported that Highway NSS was built to accommodate students from Forms 1 to 5. However, the participants mentioned that due to pressure and increased demand from parents and

students for higher Forms, the school opted to have intakes for Forms 6 and 7. The increase in school enrolment has forced the school to cram the students in the dormitories. Ruth and some of the male participants reported that the all dormitories were overcrowded, which forced some of the students to sleep on the floor while waiting for the school to provide more bunk beds. Three of the participants commented that Highway NSS urgently needed two new dormitories each for both male and female students, four staff houses and two classrooms.

Three participants reported that it was a change to see that not long ago some renovations were being done on their houses and two dormitories; only some of the buildings were now safe, secure, looked clean and provided more comfort for them. Some of the school buildings still need renovation.

The participants identified their desired building infrastructural changes and the need for improving some of the existing buildings. To achieve their desired building infrastructural change and renovate the existing buildings, they responded in five ways.

7.7.10. Teachers' Responses to School Building Infrastructure

The participants indicated that there was not much they could do in terms of building new dormitories, staff houses and classrooms. The principal explained that the River of Life Church determined the formal approval for any major building of infrastructure at the school. The principal and Luke mentioned that the River of Life Church had rejected their previous proposal for the new dormitories. "*The River of Life Church decided to maintain the existing number of buildings as it is working on the new site for the River of Life Church University in the Solomon Islands*" (Principal).

Furthermore, in their responses to the critical shortage of school building infrastructure, the participants reported that they pressured the school administration to adhere to the school enrolment policy of 35 students per class and a single stream for Forms 6 and 7. In addition, they reorganised class timetables to schedule the senior classes in the afternoon, reorganised the classroom allocation, used the school Hall as one of the classrooms for the junior forms, and adjusted school programs (Ruth; John). At Highway NSS, the students remain in their respective classes and

only the teachers moved to the next class for change in class periods. To alleviate shortages of accommodation on school campus, some of the students were allowed to enrol as day-scholars and four single teachers shared accommodation on campus while three others rented accommodation in nearby village communities and commuted to the school every day.

The participants commented that in response to their desire to renovate specific school buildings they organised similar fundraisings as for the school Internet. Most of the participants commented that while they continued raising money to build new infrastructure, the two Industrial Art teachers and some selected Industrial Art students in the senior classes worked on the building renovations (see Figure 7.2). The school renovation group installed new doors, new wooden steps, replaced walls and repainted the buildings. They worked on building renovation during normal school work sessions from 2pm to 4pm, Monday to Friday.

The acting principal and Luke reported that the two Industrial Arts teachers and the selected industrial arts students were not paid for school building renovation because they used the Industrial Arts class tools and worked during normal school work sessions. This meant that renovating the school buildings was part of their normal work Program.

Figure 7.2 A teacher renovates a classroom

The next section presents the findings on the influence of the school ethos and the school culture on teachers' responses.

7.8. The Influence of School Ethos and School Culture on Teachers' Responses

The data presented in this subsection answers research sub-question three: How do the school ethos and the school culture influence teachers' responses?

7.8.1. Responding to Change: The Influence of School Ethos and School Culture

It was evident from the participants' comments that they had strong feelings of fulfilling River of Life Church beliefs, practices and ethos, as expressed in the school motto 'Unity and Faith' and their shared purpose in their responses to change. It was also evident that the feeling of fulfilling their responsibilities to improve the school influenced and reminded them to ensure that the school, parents, River of Life Church members and stakeholders were united and working together faithfully for the greater good of all. The intrinsic feelings of improving the school culture and responses to change appeared to be driven by a positive school ethos. The collective responses indicated that as a faith-based River of Life Church NSS, the school ethos reflected the River of Life Church ethos.

The principal stated that the unwritten ethos of Highway NSS is based on River of Life Church beliefs, values and practices and the school motto and school vision, linked with school rules and procedures. He explained that as a "*Christian school, teachers in this school are expected to exercise their faith by establishing good working relationships and creating a learning environment that encourages teachers and students to maintain student behaviour and academic results.*" The principal and some of the participants explained that their shared vision is to establish and improve a God-fearing institution that upholds River of Life Church beliefs, values, practices and rituals. They reaffirmed that the establishment of such feelings, desires, ways of behaving and ways of thinking had shaped the positive culture of good relationships in the school and with the stakeholders, ensuring they were involved with and participated in school projects.

Most of the participants shared similar explanations that the ethos of Highway NSS is based on the notion of religion, sound learning and useful industries. This explanation confirmed that the ethos of Highway NSS is based on what one of the River of Life Church pioneers once declared that notion of religion, sound learning and useful industries are the ethos of River of Life Church-operated schools (White, 2002). Some of the participants further explained that just like other River of Life Church-run schools, the vision of Highway NSS is to develop the whole person through the practice of River of Life Church beliefs and faith, quality teaching and learning and practical activities for livelihood and self-reliance. They explained their similar view that these notions or pillars encouraged them to commit and respond positively to various school spiritual programs, sports, cultural activities, academic excellence and trade training that brought positive changes to the school.

7.8.2. The Notion of Religion

The participants reported that in addition to teaching in a River of Life Church-operated NSS, their close working relationships with River of Life Church authorities in religious programs had boosted their morale to improve the school according to the church's guiding principles. As the evidence indicated, they committed to school improvements because school developments and improvements are part of their roles in River of Life Church gospel commitment. For this reason, they responded to school change with a mission mindset, tolerance, and a loving and caring approach.

As a faith-based NSS, the school has a culture in which the River of Life Church clergy from the diocese make regular visits to the school community and support its members to grow spiritually and exercise their faith as they continue to serve the school. It was common practice that the River of Life Church clergy conducted regular visits (planned and unplanned) to the school for various reasons. Smith reported that the River of Life Church Bishops and fathers often visited the school and talked about the importance of Christian principles, conducted prayers and reminded teachers of the school's relationship with the River of Life Church and their various roles in Christian school development.

Two participants commented that the River of Life Church mandated them to ensure church beliefs, values, practices and rituals are upheld and practised by the teachers and students. For their initiatives for school improvement, the two spiritual leaders added extra time for church worship on Wednesday nights and Friday nights from 6pm to 7pm, in addition to normal Sunday worship services in which teachers actively participated.

The participants affirmed that their cooperation and the enormous support the school gained from River of Life Church members were part of their religious obligations to support River of Life Church-operated institutions. They also highlighted that their positive response to the call to be actively involved in church-related programs is part of the church mission to serve others. For this reason, many of the teachers, including Luke, accepted and worked in faith although they were not remunerated for taking extra school responsibilities. Luke commented that "*non-payment of my extra responsibility allowance as deputy principal academic does not affect my commitment to serve the school. I am only a steward and working for God.*" Almost all of the participants mentioned that their regular involvement and participation in prayer, communion services and worship had changed their behaviours and attitudes and motivated them to serve the school diligently.

7.8.3. Sound Learning

Four of the participants reported that the school academic committee, under the chairmanship of Luke, had regular meetings and discussed and planned how best the school could address weaknesses and continue to further improve their strength in relation to students' academic improvement.

More than half of the participants reflected that the evidence of their effort to improve students' learning was the creation of a school administrative position (DPAca), the formation of the academic committee, increased time for study periods and teaching and increased commitment to teaching. They reported that their desire to create sound learning, as expressed in their school ethos, had motivated them to be actively involved in school academic reform programs, which created the improvement in school academic results as from 2012.

The participants stated that several teacher monitoring mechanisms related to teaching and learning were introduced by the newly formed academic committee. They further explained that some of the monitoring mechanisms, which became part of the school administration process to improve teacher commitment and the students' academic performance, included marking of a staff daily attendance register and inspection of the teachers' work. Some of the participants reported that Luke collected their lesson plans and schemes of work either every two weeks or at the end of each month for inspection, enforced the signing of bond agreements with teachers who were on study leave at the University of the South Pacific (USP) and the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), and conducted teacher appraisals. This practice increased teacher commitment and accountability.

The participants also reported that the introduction of teacher-monitoring mechanisms encouraged them to develop the habit of being early for school appointments and increased their levels of performance. According to Luke's ongoing general observations, the teachers became more cooperative and did not resent or resist giving their work to him to check and comment on for further improvements.

7.8.4. Useful Industries

The participants reported that the intrinsic feelings of achieving and fulfilling the River of Life Church 'pillar' of useful industry which is part of their school ethos had influenced them to be more involved in school improvements outside their normal roles in classroom teaching and learning. It was apparent that in the setting and context of Highway NSS's attempts to improve the school and make successful changes, the teachers were expected by the school, River of Life Church and parents to be industrious.

In addition, with regard to useful industry, the participants gave the example that as a Church-operated boarding school, Highway NSS expected the students to work for their living in terms of providing their own food and maintaining hygienic standards in the school campus and their accommodation. With a collective sense of purpose, the teachers shared responsibilities, planned programs and supervised the

students in their respective working groups on the school farms during work sessions after class periods.

With a shared sense of what is important and essential for the school, there is a shared ethos of caring, concern, and collective staff commitment to helping and supporting each other in their collective responses to school changes. As Smith and Ruth explained, the two agriculture teachers advised and shared with other teachers basic agricultural concepts and provided on-the-ground practical support that resulted in a change in which the school produced increased food supplies for the school kitchen. This indicates a sense of doing what is right, goodwill and good practical judgement, which has created a culture at Highway NSS that has generated hope and support from the teachers.

The participants stated that it was their desire and aspiration for their students to learn in a healthy, appealing and encouraging school environment that promotes sound learning. They explained that creating a campus environment conducive to learning is the result of collective efforts by the teachers; for this reason, the school has a culture of recognising either individual teachers or groups of teachers who have made a difference in school improvements. In 2013, the school recognised the outstanding work of the two Industrial Arts teachers, who renovated six staff dwelling houses during normal school work sessions, by providing a cash reward of SBD$300 each (AUD $42.85). Two participants also commented that the Science teachers, who installed some minor electrical wiring in the school, were also given rewards. The acting principal and Luke found that using the teachers, together with students who had the required skills, abilities and knowledge to work for the school, had helped the school to become more productive and self-supporting in some areas.

The next section presents the findings on teachers' contributions to successful school change.

7.9. Teachers' Contributions to Successful School Change

The data presented in this subsection provides the answer to research sub-question four: What are the teachers' contributions to successful school change? There was evidence that the teachers' responses to the identified changes, already

described, and their contributions to the successful change across Highway NSS were influenced by the school ethos and school culture. This was apparent in the successful school changes that had positive ripple-effects across the school.

7.9.1. Influencing Decision-Making

It appeared that the teachers' positive responses in terms of their involvement in well-planned and coordinated programs resulted in an improvement in student behaviour, students' academic performance and teachers' levels of commitment. This led the River of Life Church authority to consider posting principals to Highway NSS for at least three consecutive years. It appeared that many positive changes in the school identified by the participants as successful were related to the principal's posting at Highway NSS. The participants reported that the previous principal, who left in early 2014, was one of the few principals who remained at the school for almost three consecutive years. They were optimistic that due to the success stories related to retaining the principal for almost three years, the River of Life Church would post future principals to Highway NSS for at least three years or even more depending on the quality of leadership.

7.9.2. Encouraging Ownership of School Change

The ripple-effects of the teachers' positive collaborations, cooperation and working relationships in the school had created a school culture that attracted various forms of assistance from donors both locally and overseas. In other words, the donors seemed to be willing to assist the school as the teachers had already demonstrated their efforts to help themselves. The enormous support from parents and former students of Highway NSS seems to be very effective in guiding, shaping and strengthening the teachers' commitment to their work. This means the desired changes are likely to persist in the school and be passed on to successive principals and teachers.

It appears that despite the fact that principals, teachers and students will leave the school, a sense of ownership of the school and its changes will remain. The onus is on successive principals, deputy principals and teachers to learn from written records and verbal testimonies and the experiences of former staff. Also, local donor

partners, especially parents and former students of Highway NSS, share the school's vision, aspirations and the ownership of school change for improvement.

7.9.3. Strengthening Partnerships

All the participants spoke highly of the change in local donors' attitudes towards assisting the school and described it as 'spiral assistance.' Former students have increased the amount and value of their assistance to the school and also continued working on the next project after completing the previous one. The assistance is ongoing. For example, first they donated a data projector, then two laptops, some desktop computers, cables for Internet connections and offered free labour to install the Internet connections. In January 2015, through their fundraising, they donated SBD$200,000 (AUD $28,572.42) to the previous principal of Highway NSS to build the new girls' dormitory (Principal). In this regard, the teachers had altered the previous practice of dependency and replaced it with creativity and self-reliance and established strong partnerships with parents and former students.

Because of the teachers' collegial relationships and close work partnerships with the stakeholders in a transparent manner, the stakeholders had trust and confidence in the teachers' leadership. It appeared that because of these good working relationships amongst the parties that support the school, the school has further established cordial partnerships with other individuals, groups and organizations. The participants highlighted the visits of friends from Australia and United Kingdom who donated seven computers and laser printers, and the involvement of Japanese volunteers who donated sports equipment as examples of growth in partnerships.

7.9.4. Improvements in School Leadership

The participants reported that previous issues with the weakening of teachers' commitment, poor student behaviour and declining academic results were due to poor leadership. They believed that this was rooted in ineffective school leadership from what they described as short-term principals. With their desire to improve school leadership throughout the school, the teachers changed their responses to school improvements. They depended less on the principal; instead they had meetings and mapped out plans that improved the school despite the regular changes

in principals. The teachers were successful in influencing the River of Life Church authority to change its approach to the appointment of principals. It was evident that the previous principal was posted at the school for almost three years. As indicated, posting of the principal in the school for three years encouraged and influenced the teachers to respond positively to school change.

7.10. Summary

This case study has presented what the participants identified as change and how they responded to the identified changes at Highway NSS. The changes they identified and responded to were student behaviour, improvement in student academic performance, teachers' commitment to teaching and learning, technological change and school building infrastructure. The participants' responses to the identified school changes were well planned, organised, strategic and creative. The teachers' responses to change were influenced by the principal, the style of leadership of the principal and parents and former students and the River of Life Church. The River of Life Church beliefs, values, practices and ethos have positive impacts on the teachers' responses to change. The school adopted the River of Life Church ethos and together with the school culture, these have enabled the teachers to respond positively to the five identified school changes.

In the next chapter, I discuss the cross-case analysis from all the four case study NSSs. What the teachers have identified as change in each of the four NSSs that have been presented in the findings were coded using colour code and four themes that emerged from the cross-case analysis were discussed.

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION
CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

8.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the main themes that have emerged from a cross-case analysis of the four case studies as were presented in the previous chapters. Four main themes for discussion have emerged in response to the research sub-questions.

The narrative flow chart as presented in Figure 8.1 outlines the process of developing the themes for discussion in this chapter. In the first stage of the cross-case analysis, the findings in each individual case study were summarised according to emerging initial themes in relation to what the teachers identified as change in their national secondary schools (NSSs) and their responses to the identified change. Once the emerging themes from each individual case study had been identified, the second stage of the cross-case analysis used colour codes and symbols to organise the emerging themes from each case study (see Table 8.1). Then each set of case study findings were organised thematically (see Table 8.2). The four main themes that emerged and are discussed were:

- recognition of using the Internet to improve teaching and learning;
- a range of changes related to students
- the impact of the principal and the principal's style of leadership; and
- the impact of the school infrastructure.

The last section of this chapter discusses the influence of the school ethos and school culture on teachers' responses to change.

The narrative flow-chart of the themes (Sub-question)

CHAPTERS FOUR, FIVE SIX AND SEVEN

CHAPTER EIGHT

Case studies individual case summaries | Cross-case analysis emerging themes

Mountainway NSS → Teachers' Identified change

Valleyway NSS → Teachers' identified change

Hillway NSS → Teachers' identified change

Highway NSS → Teachers' identified change

Initial coding across cases

Table of initial identified change

Recognition of using internet to improve teaching and learning

Changes related to students
- Changes in student behaviour
- Changes in student academic achievement
- Changes in students' learning needs

The impact of the principal and the principal's style of leadership

The impact of the school infrastructure

Teachers' responses to change

Influence of school ethos and school culture

Figure 8.1 The narrative flow-chart of the themes

Table 8.1

Initial coding of emergent themes across all four case studies.

Mountainway NSS		Valleyway NSS		Hillway NSS		Highway NSS	
Code	Identified change	Code	Identified change	Code	Identified change	Code	Identified change
1. ☐	Deterioration of school infrastructure that no longer meets the needs of teachers and students	1. ◊	Changes in leadership that encouraged socialisation and interaction of teachers and promoted teamwork, networking, and sharing of new ideas and new knowledge	1. O	Changes in student behaviour that did not reflect church beliefs, values and practices	1. O	Students improved their behaviour and increased prioritisation of education
2. V	Increased recognition of potential of using the Internet to improve teaching and learning			2. ◊	Changes in leadership so female teachers are recognised as effective leaders as evident in the increased appointment of female teachers	2. Θ	Improvement in student academic performance across all levels
3. Φ	The learning needs of students have changed but the curriculum has not changed	2. V	Access to the Internet with increased recognition of its role in enhancing teaching and learning			3. Θ	Teachers became more committed and dedicated to improving student learning
4. Θ	Development of new strategies for academic achievements	3. O	Students improved their behaviour and increased prioritisation of education	3. Φ	Unbalanced curriculum and pedagogy did not meet students' learning needs	4. V	Access to the Internet with increased recognition of its role in improving teaching and learning
5. O	Students improved their behaviour and complied with school rules and regulations	4. ☐	Recognition of inadequacy of buildings for teachers and students (Availability of space and condition of buildings)	4. V	Teachers using available Internet technology to improve teaching and learning	5.☐	Deterioration of school infrastructure and shortage of teachers' housing, student dormitories and classrooms
6 ◊	Changes in leadership that improved spiritual practices and the environment of the school			5.☐	Improvements in school infrastructure	6 ◊	Using of consultative style of leadership to get support and mobilise the teachers.

Key: ▲ **Impacts of the school infrastructure**   ◊ **Changes in leadership**   Φ O Θ **Changes related to students**   V **Recognition of using Internet to improve teaching and learning**

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Table 8.2

Emerging themes in response to the research sub-question: What do teachers identify as change in their secondary school?

Recognition of using the Internet to improve teaching and learning	Changes related to students	The impact of the principal and the principal's style of leadership	The impact of the school infrastructure
1. V - Increased recognition of potential of using the Internet to improve teaching and learning (Mountainway) 2. V - Access to the Internet with increased recognition of its use for enhancing teaching and learning (Valleyway) 3. V - Access to the Internet with increased recognition of its use for improving teaching and learning (Highway) 4. V - Teachers used available Internet technology to improve teaching and learning (Hillway)	**Changes to student behaviour:** 1. O - Students improved their behaviour and increased prioritisation of education (Highway) 2. O - Changes in student behaviour that did not reflect church beliefs, values and practice (Hillway) 3. O - Students improved their behaviour and increased prioritisation of education (Valleyway) 4. O - Students improved their behaviour and complied with school rules and regulations (Mountainway) **Changes in student academic achievement:** 1. Θ - Improvement in student academic performance across all levels (Highway) 2. Θ - Teachers became more committed and dedicated to improve student learning (Highway) 3. Θ - Development of new strategies for increasing academic achievement (Mountainway) **Changes in students' learning needs:** 1. Φ - The learning needs of students have changed but the curriculum has not changed (Mountainway) 2. Φ - Unbalanced curriculum and pedagogy not meeting students' learning needs (Hillway)	1. ◊ - Changes in leadership that encouraged socialisation and interaction of teachers and promoted teamwork, networking, and sharing of new ideas and new knowledge (Valleyway) 2. ◊ - Changes in leadership meaning that female teachers are recognised as effective leaders, as evident in the increased appointment of female teachers (Hillway) 3. ◊ Changes in leadership that improved the spiritual practices and environment of the school (Mountainway) 4 ◊ Use of consultative style of leadership to get support and mobilise the teachers (Highway)	1. □ - Deterioration of school infrastructure that no longer meets the needs of teachers and students (Mountainway) 2. □ - Recognition of inadequacy of buildings for teachers and students (Availability of space and condition of buildings) (Valleyway) 3. □ - Improvements in school infrastructure (Library, classroom and teachers' houses) (Hillway) 4. □ - Deterioration of school infrastructure and shortage of teachers' housing, student dormitories and classrooms (Highway)

8.2. Theme One: Recognition of Using the Internet to Improve Teaching and Learning

The Internet was introduced in the Solomon Islands in about 1996 and was initially used only by international and regional organisations in Honiara. The Internet became available to the public and schools through a European Union (EU) funded project called the People First Network, around 2002. The aim of the Internet project was to provide email and other Internet services to connect communities and urban centres in the peace process after the ethnic unrest in the Solomon Islands in 2000. The projects used a Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) network system using a dish. Some secondary schools had access to this Internet project but not the four case study NSSs in this study. In the same period, several public Internet cafes were started in Honiara. In 2009, the Solomon Islands Telekom Company made it possible for the public to access the Internet using Smartphones.

In two of the case study schools, their geographical remoteness made transport unreliable and created communication difficulties. The Solomon Islands Ministry of Education acknowledged that it was costly to reach and provide school resources to many schools in the remote islands in the provinces due to transport difficulties (Solomon Islands Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination, 2011). This placed the teachers in the two remote case study schools in a difficult situation in terms of accessing updated school teaching and learning resources and other materials for school development. Due to the communication difficulties, the teachers were often unable to be part of virtual communities to share and discuss important school matters, unlike the other two case study schools, located closer to Honiara, where teachers had the opportunity to access reliable transport to, and communication with, the city. For the two case study schools in the remote province, their school Internet has regular technical problems. However, they accessed the Internet on their mobile phones for research and lesson planning, which could improve teaching and learning and help to solve communication problems.

Some of the participants commented that their inability to access updated information for self-development had prevented them from changing their pedagogy and learning new ideas. However, they were certain that information provided via

the Internet would make positive changes in their lesson preparation and pedagogy. For the two case study schools located far from Honiara, accessing the Internet in the school saved the teachers time, money and avoided absence from classes to travel to Honiara to access the Internet. The teachers saved information on memory sticks to share with their colleagues in the school. Half of the participants at the two remote NSSs reported that it was not possible to ask someone in Honiara to provide the necessary information because it was difficult and expensive to access the Internet in Honiara. Internet connection in the provincial towns is poor, expensive and not enough Internet services are provided for public use. As indicated, the two remote case study schools access the Internet but the Internet connection was poor.

8.2.1. Teachers' Responses to Recognition of Using the Internet to Improve Teaching and Learning

It was apparent in this study that the teachers in all the case study schools recognised the value of the Internet in improving teaching and learning, so they responded positively.

Geijsel et al. (2003) point out that principals rely on teachers' knowledge, skills, experience and commitment for school change. This was true in this study, in which the early-career (EC) teachers were recognised as emergent leaders who took leadership roles in advocating the use of the Internet in their respective schools. It was evident in the study that the long-serving principals recognised and supported the EC teachers as Internet advocates and instructors in the school because they had some experience, basic skills and knowledge about the Internet. The recognition of the EC teachers was evident especially in three case study schools in which the long-serving principals, who had little knowledge, experience or skill in Internet technology, depended on the EC teachers for advice on the use of the computers and the Internet. Many of the participants reported that the EC teachers worked closely with the principals to promote and negotiate school Internet improvements with their authorities.

The study showed that the amount of assistance the EC teachers rendered to the long-serving principals, leading to the success of the Internet projects at Valleyway and Highway NSSs, was enormous. The EC teachers' commitment to

advocating the use of the Internet may be because the principals depended on them for computer- and Internet-related issues. This type of response is supported by Christophersen et al. (2011) who found that teachers worked collaboratively with principals when they knew that the principals trusted their knowledge and skills to be used for making a difference in school change. In one of the church-operated NSSs, the education authority advised the school not to install the Internet. Thus, the EC teachers worked closely with their principal in an attempt to convince their Church authority to allow the school connection to the Internet. The EC teachers were motivated by the principal's trust in their knowledge and skills to accept leadership roles to advocate for the introduction of the Internet in the school.

Initial connection to the Internet - The participants in three of the case study NSSs reported that the initial instalment of their school Internet had been externally funded. Possibly because the Internet projects were externally funded and the education authorities also recognised the positive impacts of using the Internet outweighed its potential negative impacts, in three case study schools approval to connect was granted. In the fourth case study school, the education authority instructed the school not to install the Internet. According to some of the participants, the church education authority instructed them not to connect the Internet because it might allow the teachers and students to access unacceptable materials and the students would spend more time using their mobile phones and the Internet than studying.

However, the study found that the EC teachers of each of the four case study schools worked with their principals to apply to the education authority to install school Internet access. The procedures the teachers undertook appeared to fulfill the administrative requirements for change; they believed that if the Internet was introduced, it would have great impact in the school. A similar procedure is supported by Evidence Based-Intervention Work Group (2005) and Wrigley (2013) where the authority and the recipient of change have to be informed of the required change before they make decisions to accept it or not.

After the education authorities granted the schools permission to connect the Internet, the long-serving principals of the three case study NSSs authorised some of

the EC teachers to work with the funding agents on behalf of the school to facilitate the instalment of the Internet.

Ongoing access and maintenance - Although computers, other Internet accessories and connection of the school to the Internet in the three case study schools were externally funded, financing the cost of ongoing access, maintenance and expansion of the projects were constant challenges the schools faced. Thus, the teachers responded to the ongoing access and maintenance of the Internet in several ways.

Around half of the participants in the three case study NSSs with access to the Internet reported that they were aware that the school depended on income collected from the students' school fees and government grants for operational costs. For this reason, the NSSs used two methods to raise funds to sustain the operation of the school Internet, which appeared to be in harmony with their respective Church beliefs and values. The teachers of Valleyway NSS and Highway NSS organised similar annual school fundraisers.

The study found that the EC teachers and the Science teachers in the four case study NSSs had some experience and technical skills in addition to their teaching qualifications which they used to assist the teachers. Their technical expertise was recognised by the principals and the other teachers because they did not have the necessary technical skills. Therefore, they were given the task of assisting the teachers when using the Internet. In their responses to Internet related challenges, they accepted the call from the principals to care for and supervise the use of the computers and the Internet in their schools.

Limited access to the Internet - The participants from the three case study schools with Internet access reflected that due to the small number of computers connected to the Internet, sometimes the teachers competed to use the Internet and other times they shared. This practice seemed to depend on individual teachers' personalities as some teachers might not feel comfortable to share a computer with their colleagues. The idea that sharing limited resources develops trust, teamwork and good working relationships agrees with the views of Christophersen et al. (2011), Fullan (2001) and Wagner and Kegan (2006) that the level of teamwork, respect and trust in

relationships in the school helps to drive forward change. However, this study also revealed that sometimes the teachers lacked teamwork skills in assisting other teachers to use the Internet. The schools faced a dilemma as the EC teachers normally dominated the school Internet, providing little opportunity for some of the long-serving (LS) teachers and, in particular, the female teachers to access it. The early-career teachers felt that the reasons why they dominated use of the school Internet were because the LS teachers felt uncomfortable about their incompetence in using the computer and also because they were about to retire from the teaching profession. This agrees with the views of Milteer (2010) that sometimes "we feel easily intimidated by those who seem to be more technically minded. Many times we refuse to learn about a new phone system or computer simply because we feel inadequate" (p. 9). For the female teachers, their responses to using the Internet indicated that they felt obliged to maintain the Melanesian cultural values that dictate males should be given more privilege than females. Akao (2008) and Malasa (2007) found that melanesian practice in the secondary schools continued to marginalise and discriminate against female teachers.

In-house professional development - According to the participants in the three Internet-enabled case study schools, some of the teachers were computer illiterate and the first time they had used computers was in their current school. The participants reported that during staff professional development, some of the EC teachers and the Science teachers volunteered to organise computer and Internet training for the teachers. Attendance was voluntary. There was evidence that there were no proper back-up support systems in terms of providing qualified information technology (IT) experts in the case study schools to provide basic computer trouble shooting assistance, maintenance, IT user support and computer training. The study found that lack of qualified IT staff to assist the teachers in the school had resulted in teachers using the Internet's technological devices by trial and error.

The EC teachers of Valleyway NSS, Mountainway NSS and Highway NSS reported that they were enthusiastic and showed increased recognition of using the Internet for teaching and learning. This encouraged the teachers to use the Internet to further improve their lesson preparations, teaching and learning. Some of the teachers cooperatively searched for and used opportunities to access the Internet

outside of the school campus. The participants at two case study schools had reliable transport to the city so they conducted research in training institutions, public Internet cafés and even provided information to their relatives and friends who had Internet access so they could conduct searches for them. They downloaded new and important information from the Internet in the city then shared it with their colleagues in the school. It might be inferred that if this is the kind of inspiration and vision of the EC teachers, then NSSs with increasing numbers of EC teachers might be encouraged to pursue how best the school could raise funds to maintain the operation of the Internet, improve the level of accessibility, and improve computer laboratories for the teachers and students. This is supported by Andrews and Crowther (2002), Whitaker et al. (2009) and Wrigley (2013) who all noted that inspiring teacher leaders ought to have high expectations and to see themselves as the persons who are agents of reform will bring change and hope to the school.

The finding of Booth (1993) in the Solomon Islands schools that many teachers have no desire or are reluctant to become involved in school change aligned with the way participants of this study responded to the use of the Internet. The study found that the LS teachers seemed unwilling and hesitant to use the Internet because they thought they were about to retire from teaching and new technology was only for EC teachers and most female teachers upheld the cultural practice of not taking the lead. Some of the EC teachers commented that when they organised voluntary computer training, some of the LS teachers made similar comments that new technology is only for young people.

Bovey and Hede (2001) and Morgan (2006) described their findings in similar situations, that links individuals with different personalities, views, behaviours and attitudes in the change stages, as a real challenge and change can be difficult. It was evident in the findings of this study that the EC teachers improved their pedagogy by organising various interesting class activities and class excursions, which were more student-centred learning approaches, compared to the LS teachers who still practised a teaching style of writing lengthy notes on the chalkboard for students to copy.

However, with some deviation from the general finding, the case of Hillway NSS was different as both the male teachers and female teachers had equal

opportunities to use the Internet for research. Some of the possible reasons were that the female teachers at Hillway NSS were highly qualified; many of them were appointed to school administrative positions and other teacher leadership roles, and the principal encouraged gender equity. This is congruent with the study of Milteer (2010) and Whitaker et al. (2009) who found that highly qualified teachers who have the required skills are not easily intimidated by complaints and professional jealousy. Therefore, it is posited that in the case of Highway NSS and Valleyway, the two disadvantaged groups of teachers, LS and female teachers, need scaffolds to give them courage, confidence, knowledge, and skills to use the Internet.

Accessing the Internet from mobile phones - Another interesting finding relates to how the teachers in all four case study schools used smartphones to access the Internet. The three Internet-enabled case study schools faced regular faults on the school Internet, but fortunately, they had alternative Internet links provided by the Telecommunication Mobile Company so they could access the Internet on their smartphones. The desire to search for information from the Internet on their smart phones motivated the teachers of Valleyway NSS to walk a few kilometres from the school to a particular spot to receive improved mobile reception in order to access the Internet. Interestingly, this could be an unpleasant experience, depending on weather conditions.

The Internet access provided by the mobile company seemed to be more reliable but the challenge the teachers faced was how best to fully use it, as it took the teachers many months of saving money to buy good smartphones that could access the Internet. Teachers are poorly paid in the Solomon Islands (Sikua, 2002). Thus, this scenario seemed to strengthen the school culture of sharing. The teachers of all case study schools commented that not all of them owned smartphones so they either borrowed or shared with their colleagues. As Donnelly (2000) and Markham et al. (2012) stated, the school ethos influences and shapes individuals in the school to share and commit to what is right and to help others. In spite of poor Internet connection in the Solomon Islands, the teachers attempted to link and create virtual communities with other teachers and educators in the Solomon Islands and overseas by accessing the Internet on their mobile phones. In some cases if the teachers have good relationships with or are related to students, they can either borrow or share

students' smartphones. It appeared that this sharing practice was acceptable in the Melanesian secondary schools as both the teachers and students wanted to share the benefits of using the Internet. Interestingly, this practice shows that the teachers sometimes depended on their students' Internet devices to improve teaching and learning. It is possible that not only sharing Internet devices but also sharing information and new ideas will create confidence that will make teaching and learning in all four case study NSSs more interactive.

8.3. Theme 2: Changes Related to Students

This study found that the teachers in the case study NSSs identified three significant changes related to students. These related to changes in student behaviour, changes in student academic achievement and changes in students' learning needs. It appeared that these changes were somewhat interconnected and interrelated. For instance, the teachers commented that in general, when students failed to uphold school rules, they misbehaved and did not commit to learning. Teachers identified changes in student behaviour, with increased numbers of disciplinary cases, and less time devoted to private study in the dormitories and classrooms. The teachers also identified that students seemed to have difficulty engaging in private studies after normal class periods because of almost uncontrolled noise from social activities in the dormitories, around the classrooms and on the school campus. The findings across all four case study schools shows that the students had gradually developed the practice of wasting valuable time pursuing leisure and luxury activities like listening to music and playing games, causing disturbances on the school campus and not using their free time to search for information in the library and in the internet or engaging in group and peer discussions. However, the study found that in all four case study schools, students' behaviour had improved during the years since 2012. Many of the participants reported that they now responded to student behaviour in more positive ways which resulted in students being more committed to study, and obedient of school rules like punctuality, neatness, respect for each other and school property.

What the teachers identified as changes in student behaviour, changes in student academic achievement and changes in students' learning needs are discussed separately, with their responses, in the following sub-sections.

8.3.1. Changes in Student Behaviour

Almost all the participants of the four case study schools reported that there were significant changes in student behaviours leading up to the time of this study which was evident in students wearing appropriate clothes, committed to their studies, faithfully attending school appointments and respecting other students, teachers and school property. Changes in more positive student behaviour was measured in relation to the inverse number of students expelled, suspended and punished in their respective NSSs.

The study found that negative influences from the city had contributed to student misbehaviour in the two NSSs closer to the city, which contrasted with students' behaviour at the NSSs in the remote islands. The participants from Mountainway NSS and Highway NSS commented on improvement of student behaviour after they responded with a range of behaviour improvement strategies.

Because they were closer to Honiara city, their students had easy access to alcohol and other city-related bad influences. Surprisingly, no big differences were found in NSSs close to provincial towns, in which many of the male students consumed alcohol, smoked and behaved rowdily on the school campus. In one case study, the students had even consumed alcohol and caused disturbance and disorder in the classrooms. One unanticipated finding was that such bad student behaviour was practised in the same case study school where some teachers were reluctant to attend to students who misbehave in the school.

In all four case study schools, most of the participants reported that they had received many complaints of fighting, bullying and stealing in the dormitories, graffiti on the school buildings and furniture, and vandalism leading up to 2012. One female teacher reported that they had many cases in which male students trespassed into the female students' dormitory compound and disturbed them at night. This

behaviour would appear to demonstrate an erosion of respect and moral values, and weak enforcement of school rules. The participants reported that there were changes in student behaviour at Hillway NSS that did not reflect Church beliefs, values and practices. They made reference to students with unacceptable haircuts and who wore shirts that had pictures of heavy metal bands and skeletons. The participants believed that the students copied the fashion seen on the Internet, television and movies.

The participants from the Church-operated NSS close to the city also reflected that in past years, students were often absent from classes and other school activities and went to the city on public transport without permission. Similarly, many parents collected their sons and daughters from the school without the school having given permission. These practices clearly demonstrated deterioration in student behaviour, and parents contributed by encouraging their children to breach school rules. Parents' unacceptable practices made it quite challenging for teachers to address student misbehaviour. In one of the church-operated case study schools, half of the participants blamed the idea of students' assumed rights, which had encouraged students to confront and argue with them. This sometimes caused disrespect and contradicted Melanesian practice in the school.

8.3.1.1. Teachers' responses to changes in student behaviour.

On the question of teachers' response to school change, this study found, that in all four case study schools, teachers wanted their students to exhibit positive behaviour in their schools. Teachers reported that they used different approaches to encourage positive changes in student behaviour. The teachers of Mountainway NSS were able to respond to students' behaviour with a range of effective approaches and in an organised manner because they responded to change according to the recommendations from a school review report conducted by an overseas educator. It has been suggested by Chrispeels (2004); Murphy (2005) and Spillane (2006) that teachers have the skills, experience, and ability to respond to school change but the outcome depends on the standards set by the school and the provision of appropriate resources. It can be argued that the difference in the success of the teachers' responses at Mountainway NSS compared with the other three case study schools justified the need for similar school reviews in all the NSSs. The study indicated that

the Mountainway NSS teachers' responses to student behaviour were effective and strategic compared with the other three case study NSSs because their responses were guided by recommendations and suggestions in the school review report. The participants of Mountainway NSS reported that they implemented the recommendations on the review report because they valued it and chose to implement it as part of their vision for improving the school. They reflected that the external reviewer was the only qualified person who conducted the review of their school. Thus, they valued the findings and implemented the recommendations.

It was interesting to observe the different approaches teachers had taken to respond to students' behaviour. Very little was mentioned by the participants at three of the four case study NSSs with regard to proper planning, research and documentation of matters pertaining to their responses to change. Some of the participants at the three of the four case study schools reported their first response to change student behaviour was that they discussed student behaviour issues in staff meetings and decided on the best response. In one case study school, the school administrators – the principals, deputy principals and the registrar – identified some of the student behaviour problems and decided how the teachers should respond before informing the teachers. Some of the participants from these two schools raised concerns about not being involved in the early-stage planning of strategies to address student behaviour. They felt that they had the knowledge, skills and special talents to assist but the principal did not recognise them. In these cases the principal's approach did not appear to encourage the teachers to share and have a sense of ownership of their school vision for change. The action taken by the principal could mean that the principal was highly qualified, trusted his own knowledge and skills, or, on the other hand, had a lack of trust in the teachers' capacity to respond positively to students' behaviour.

Promoting Christian moral values and practices - Church-operated schools are guided by church beliefs, values and practices and are part of the mission of the church for witnessing (Adventist Schools Australia, 2016; Archdiocese of Hobart, 2012; Wasuka, 2006). This is the main reason why the participants from each of the church-operated NSSs regularly referred to their Christian beliefs when responding to students' behaviour and their responses to other changes.

One of the most obvious findings that emerged was that the church-operated NSSs   aligned their responses to change student behaviour with their respective church beliefs, values, practices and school ethos, while the teachers at the statedoperated NSS aligned their responses with the common religious beliefs, values and practices of Christianity, the major religion in the Solomon Islands, the school ethos and a set of common behavioural expectations. For example, at Mountainway NSS, biblical and religious statues were installed in selected buildings and locations on the school campus, while Hillway NSS introduced a school rule that student must wear black and white Church worship clothes as a means to change their feelings, behaviour, attitudes and reverence when attending Sabbath church worship services. The findings indicated that the teachers believed that biblical symbols and statues and wearing of specific clothes to church worship services would influence and remind the students to uphold and practice specific moral values and thus help to shape improved behaviour.

In addition, this study revealed that the teachers in all four of the case study schools sought to change student behaviour by organising and involving students in a range of spiritual activities that included teachers' and students' prayer groups, singing groups and increased time for spiritual programs. This response seemed to demonstrate the teachers' beliefs that deterioration in student behaviour resulted from a lack of commitment to religious programs and failure to involve students in church programs and activities. They claimed that if the students acted on Christian values and practices, it would help to produce a lifestyle that was acceptable in the school. This Christian belief led the teachers in one case study school to integrate communal meal times for breakfast, lunch and dinner in the dining hall with prayer and bible reading programs. Involving students in spiritual programs and activities in the Church-operated schools was encouraged because the vision of the development in Church schools is based on commitment to the gospel (Hill, 2010; Queensland Catholic Education Commission, 2014).

School discipline, punishment and counselling - Three of the four case study NSSs punished students as a way to change their behaviour. The participants believed that punishing students was an effective way of improving their behaviour. The findings showed that all three case study schools practiced student punishment by requiring

extra physical work of varying levels of difficulty, to be done around the school campus.

At the other case study NSSs, instead of using a punitive approach, the teachers introduced community service. They found that a new response to student punishment was very effective in changing student behaviour because the students thought that doing community service is like doing voluntary work to improve their school whereas punishment is where someone is forced to do the work because of their misbehaviour. Teachers worked with students by encouraging them to participate in different ways of addressing their unacceptable behaviour.

Student modelling approaches - It was apparent in all four case study schools that the teachers had improved their practices in dealing with student behaviour problems. Teachers, in general, now adopted the approach that students be called for more immediate attention to their misbehaviour through early correction or counselling.

According to the participants, having close relationships with the students had increased the students' feelings of being treated as someone important, so they behaved appropriately. The students could also feel that their teachers were fully aware of their behaviour. Similarly, close interaction gave the teachers opportunities to be informed and aware of practices they might not have been aware of if they had not visited their students. It was a common practice that the teachers and students had informal talks or story-telling on campus which aligns with Melanesian cultural practice as a way of maintaining relationships. Sometimes after classes and during weekends the teachers visited students in the classrooms to deliver private lessons to those needing extra help. In one case study NSS, the weekend duty teachers visited the students in the dormitories to ensure they wore recommended clothes and combed their hair properly before attending church worship services. In another of the case study schools, the teachers had a program in which they invited students to their homes for dinner and other social activities. These findings agreed with the view of Danielson (2006), that having close working relationships between teachers and students creates a sense of fairness and ownership of school change.

The findings showed that the participants, that is, the teachers in the four case study NSSs, responded to student behaviour by improving their teamwork; identifying and correcting mistakes that were weakening the school rules; and establishing monitoring mechanisms. They appointed and worked with student leaders: head boys, head girls, class captains, ethnic group leaders, dormitory leaders and spiritual leaders. These student leaders were answerable to the teachers with regard to matters related to students. It appeared that these strategies for change gave the students a sense of ownership of change and leadership roles. They were also motivated to be responsible for their own welfare and learning. These practices are in line with studies by Chrispeels (2004); Lieberman and Miller (2004) and Spillane (2006) that found teachers and even students are motivated to take leadership roles when there is division of responsibilities to perform different functions, when they work together in a collaborative approach and when they perform the same roles with no or minimal supervision from other leaders.

Rules and expectations - Another finding was that there was clear promotion of school rules, classroom rules and expectations in all four case study schools. A possible explanation of this good practice might be that teachers believed that displaying rules and expectations for students would remind them to behave well and focus on their learning tasks better. This study found that in the classrooms, classroom rules and expectations were displayed on the classroom notice boards, and some teachers had adopted the practice of asking students to recite the rules when there was evidence of increased misbehaviour and unacceptable practices in classrooms. Some school rules, including those reminding students to keep the school campus clean, respect school property and other students and to be polite, were posted on the school notice board in the administrative office, dining hall, classrooms, and chapel and dormitories.

8.3.2. Changes in Student Academic Achievement

This study found that the teachers in the four case study NSSs measured changes in student academic achievement by the number of students who passed in Forms 3 and 5 in the national examinations and Forms 6 and 7 in the University of

the South Pacific examinations. They also compared the number of students who received credible grades in each subject which showed a notable improvement from 2012 to 2014 at the time of data collection.

Several studies in the Solomon Islands (Akao, 2008; Beuka, 2008; Malasa, 2007; Sisiolo, 2010) have obtained similar findings to this study in relation to gender: that is, female students had always been labelled as academically incapable compared with male students in schools. The participants reported that such negative perception of female students has impaired their academic achievement. Across all four NSSs studied, there was evidence of female students in general performing at lower levels than the male students, both in school and external examinations. In three case study NSSs, very few female students received academic awards at the school speech and prize-giving day.

The study showed that after 2012, the teachers in all four case study NSSs employed some strategic and positive responses that improved students' academic achievements. The study found that from 2012 all four case study schools had new principals with more leadership experience and were more highly qualified. It was reported that they were intent on influencing the teachers' commitment to improved teaching and learning. For instance, in 2015, the pass rate of Mountainway NSS increased to 78 percent; Highway NSS 80 percent and Valleyway NSS 91 percent, and the female students were equally as academically capable as the male students across all subjects in all four case study schools.

8.3.2.1. Teachers' responses to changes in student academic achievement.

While there were some changes in student academic achievement leading up to the time of this study, the teachers at the four schools reported mainly on changes in student academic purpose at the time of this study.

Implementing the principals' vision for academic improvements - These findings may help to understand how the teachers responded to improve student academic performance in their schools. In this study, the principals of all four case studies each had a vision for improving students' academic performance, which they shared and

discussed with the teachers in many meetings, in addition to working closely with them throughout the whole process. Holmes et al. (2013) found that effective school principals are able to develop visions and goals for targeted school change and communicate them to their staff with clear responsibilities. The findings of this study showed that of the four NSSs, two formed a school academic committee in which the heads of departments planned and strategised how their schools would improve students' academic performance.

While the teachers at three of the case study schools referred to brain-storming ideas related to student academic improvement in their meetings without conducting proper studies, the teachers at Mountainway NSS based their attempts to improve students' academic performance on the school's review report. The report suggested a number of ways of responding to academic improvement. The participants reported that the school review report provided clear guidelines for school improvement which motivated them to commit to their response to school change. The motivation for collective responses to improve the students' academic performance was evident in activities including the formation of an academic committee, increasing compulsory study periods to three hours a day, providing extra classes during weekends, and offering tutorial groups and one-to-one assistance provided by the teachers. This study confirmed the assertion that clear directions make the most of teachers' motivation and commitment to school change and reform (Coleman, 2008; Geijsel et al., 2003; Leithwood et al., 2008).

Church school approach - Previous studies have confirmed that the influence of Church fundamental beliefs has transformed the behaviour of the school organisation and teachers in terms of commitment to what is regarded as proper and correct (Bragg & Manchester, 2011; Donnelly, 2000; Hannah & Jennings, 2013). The teachers of the Church-operated NSSs spoke of their belief that there was a relationship between their Christian faith in regard to putting God first in school programs. They aimed at first improving the students' spiritual commitments, then by default students would commit to improving their academic achievement performances. As a teacher at Hillway NSS explained: *"our school's success depends very much on our relationship with God. Once we forget and put God last in what we are doing then definitely it will show in our school's poor academic*

results and deteriorating student behaviour". At Mountainway NSS, the teachers reorganised the school program so that the students could pray four times a day, during meal times and before sleep, and at Highway NSS, students had class worship before study every evening, and the teachers worshipped with the students during the first and last class periods each day. The chaplain of the state-operated NSS was a River of Life Church priest, who introduced student interdenominational worship before students went to their study period.

Teachers' hands-on approaches and new strategies - Most of the participants in this study referred to responses related to the quality of their teaching and learning, provision of adequate resources, student behaviour and teachers' commitment to students' academic improvement. The study found that with this mindset, teachers believed they could make a difference to the students' academic performance. Teacher leaders have high expectations and see themselves as agents of reform who can bring change and hope to the school (Crowther et al., 2002; Vannest et al., 2009). The subject teachers at each of the four case study schools organized extra classes after work on a voluntary basis every day leading up to the week of national examinations in order to coach the students. These arrangements also clearly showed that the teachers considered ways to prepare the students, especially the slower learners, to sit the national examinations. In this approach, in all four NSSs the teachers, in their free time, either visited students in the classrooms to offer private studies or made themselves available at their workstations during study periods. Another response was to increase student engagement with learning activities like homework, individual, peer and group assignments to keep them occupied and not misbehaving, which also gave the students opportunities to spend time improving their learning. The level of the teachers' commitment was demonstrated in various responses to improve student academic performance and resulted in trust. The principal has to trust the leadership capabilities of the teachers; likewise teachers must have trust and respect for each other in order to be effective in their responses to school improvements (Cosner, 2009; Gillespie & Mann, 2004; Joseph & Winston, 2005).

Professional development and continuity - In addition to the range of responses that have been discussed, some of the teachers responded to student academic

performance through professional learning development. One of the reasons teachers embrace the professional learning community is that they feel empowered by having the opportunity to be supported "by colleagues in their leadership and new teaching strategies" (Pancucci, 2007, p. 63). The study found that the principal supported, motivated, inspired, and encouraged those teachers who wanted to pursue professional learning. Teachers and teacher leaders in schools have different beliefs, skills, interests and experiences and belong to different cultural groups; therefore, the choice of professional learning development is considered an individual teacher's decision (Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Song, 2012; Webb et al., 2009).

In their attempt to continue improving the academic standard of their schools, teachers at the two case study schools closest to Honiara pursued further studies through distance and flexing learning modes with the University of the South Pacific to obtain higher teaching qualifications. For example, at Mountainway NSS, five teachers undertook bachelor's degrees and postgraduate programs. In this study, comparing the teachers in the two case study schools who did further studies through distance modes with teachers in the two schools in the province, they said that the desire to complete further studies to gain higher qualifications and thus enhance their abilities to respond positively to school change had attracted teachers to transfer to schools close to Honiara. Some of the participants also alluded that being closed to Honiara what encouraged them to undertake further study.

The study found in all four case study NSSs that it was a challenge for the school to organise in-house professional training, although they acknowledged the need for it in order to respond to specific changes. The study also found that although the EC teachers in all four case study schools advocated for and provided in-house training in basic computer and Internet skills, other initiatives were less forthcoming. A possible explanation for this might be that the teachers knew that in their culture there were possibilities that their colleagues would negatively criticise their presentation, and had developed the mentality of depending on external training and workshops to enhance their knowledge and skills. Milteer (2010) found similar attitudes and responses, expressed as "we often fear we will look foolish and stupid during the learning process" (p. 42).

The findings indicated that the some of the teachers needed learning scaffolding to help them to meet the expected academic standards of the school. Mullen (2009) and DuFour (2005) explain the importance of professional learning communities (PLCs) from a school organisational perspective as a reform initiative for school staff, aiming at improving the school by transforming pedagogy and other (extra) curricular activities through community support programs. The authors explain that a PLC is important because it helps the teachers to collaborate and transform their pedagogy, knowledge and skills to meet the learning needs of the students. This study identified that the Mountainway NSS teachers' professional learning approach was effective in enhancing the teachers' knowledge and skills. For example, through their academic committee they together edited and moderated all tests and examinations. It might be concluded that the improved academic results at Mountainway NSS in the national examination over four consecutive years was reflective of the way in which teachers had engaged in these exercises to enhance their academic needs.

8.3.3. Changes in Students' Learning Needs

The students entered the case study NSSs from different entry points in Forms 1, 4, 6 and 7. They were selected from schools across the Solomon Islands based on their results in the national examinations and not necessarily based on their age. In general, therefore, the teachers were aware of the students' different levels of academic performance, prior knowledge, family background, ethnic attitude and the context of their home islands in relation to development and access to the Internet, communication and transport. In the context of the Solomon Islands, many of the students' parents were employed; either as primary school or secondary school leaders, low income earners and some middle income earners. Employment status influenced the strength of parental support for their children and contributed a lot to students' learning.

All three types of secondary schools in the Solomon Islands use the same national school curriculum despite variations in the school context. Many of the study participants reported that the world is changing in terms of education, technology, health, habits and behaviour but the school curriculum has not changed.

They noted that some of the changes created fear and anxiety and could affect the future of the students and the Solomon Islands. The majority of the participants at the four NSSs reported that the Solomon Islands secondary school curriculum needs to meet the learning needs of the students in order to address and confront head-on changes such as eLearning using the Internet and other technological learning tools.

The study found that factors including gender, socioeconomic background, and school context shaped individual students' learning capacities and learning needs, for which the school curriculum did not necessarily provide. The assumption is that students are expected to get good marks or grades at school. Another important finding was that different students' learning needs became apparent when they did not perform well at school. In a situation where a student had not performed according to expectations, the teachers identified possible strengths, talents, resources and changes needed to meet their learning needs. However, it appeared that due to lack of resources, time constraints and other work commitments, teachers often neglected slower learners and still depended on the available limited resources for teaching and learning.

Many of the participants explained that the learning needs of their students called for increases in teaching and study time, provision of updated teaching resources, changes in pedagogy, and improved classroom learning environments, but these factors were not properly addressed.

8.3.3.1. Teachers' responses to changes in students' learning needs.

As highlighted by the majority of the participants in all four NSSs, the learning needs of students have changed. This study identified a series of strategic responses teachers used to enable them to respond effectively to students' learning needs. It appeared that all four case study NSSs employed similar approaches when they initially responded to students' learning requirements. For instance, teachers shared plans and worked together with determination to find the best methods to address the students' learning needs, albeit often motivated by an individual teachers' personal initiative and creativity. In one of the four case study schools, it was obvious and supported by evidence that some of the highly qualified teachers requested to work

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with the long-serving principal to influence teachers to respond to individual students by providing teaching and learning resources, instructional strategies and assessments.

Teaching and learning resources - The most obvious findings that emerged from the data concerned the challenge the teachers faced in their response to the need for teaching and learning resources. It was observed that the principals of all of the four case study schools had done very little to support the teachers with regard to teaching and learning resources. The principals seemed to lack knowledge and skills but also failed to consult the teachers who had the knowledge and skills to produce resources. Lack of leadership support from the principals in supporting the teachers with teaching and learning resources left the teachers to find either groups or individuals who had the knowledge and skills to initiate and produce teaching and learning resources for their students. As discussed previously, the success of one participant's project and the changes it introduced contributed to the improvement in students' performance in a specific subject and was a landmark for other teachers and departments.

It could be argued that availability of the Internet, photocopying machines, computer, paper, toner and printers provide sufficient resources to enable teachers to respond positively to students' learning needs. Therefore, the lack of positive responses from almost all the teachers could mean that the teachers may need an enabling style of leadership from the principal in order to see the need to be creative, resourceful, innovative, and inspirational and to take the initiative to produce at least simple resources to supplement their out-of-date curriculum materials. Opfer and Pedder (2011) and Webb et al. (2009)explained that with freedom of choice, teachers normally opt for the professional development that guarantees options for personal advantage and further advancement. In a similar manner, in three of the case study schools, although the teachers had not produced teaching resources, they devoted their time and also allowed students to use the Internet in the school. On other occasions, the teachers who did not have smartphones depended on the students to search for information on the Internet.

Instructional strategies - The teacher's influence in leadership extends beyond the classroom and includes a range of different skills and knowledge (Ngang et al., 2010; Spillane, 2006). Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) and Vetter (2012) explained that teachers know the school's needs well and can give advice, share ideas and provide assistance to others to identify the areas that need improvement.

When the students' learning needs change, instructional strategies must, if possible, align with the change. It seemed in this study that the EC teachers in two case study schools advocated for and took active roles to improve their instructional strategies, beginning with the language of instruction used in the schools. Two case study schools enforced a school rule that both teachers and students had to use the English language in the classroom and even around the campus. Most people in the Solomon Islands use the national language, Pidgin English. Perhaps, the teachers believed that if the teachers and students know English, teachers will present good lessons and students will write well, speak confidently, read with understanding, and understand verbal instructions in English. It could be still argued that in the context of the Solomon Islands, improvement in other subjects hinges on and is determined by the level of the student's English competency, as all school teaching and learning materials in the Solomon Islands are written in the English language.

One of the teachers' responses to the students' learning needs was the improvement in pedagogical practice. While many of the LS teachers still practiced traditional ways of teaching, for example, writing notes on the chalkboard for students to copy and using textbooks, the EC teachers were more inclined to initiate class excursions, group and pair work, group discussions, and projects. For example, the Geography teachers at Hillway NSS took the students to visit a tuna cannery factory, and for their next excursion, they planned to visit a marine conservation island. The EC teachers at Mountainway NSS also organised regular debates and speech competitions with the aim of nurturing the students to become effective leaders. Meanwhile, the head of the Industrial Arts Department at Hillway NSS increased practical sessions for the Industrial arts class to teach the construction of small village houses. It might be concluded that the teachers' intentions were to enhance the students' knowledge and skills for more relevant life time learning.

It appeared that the EC teachers aligned their pedagogy to cope with change according to the needs of the students. When the students' learning needs changed, the EC teachers used the available resources and responded with on-site learning and practice sessions to enable them to support their living in the community. Possibly the LS teachers could learn from the EC teachers to align their pedagogy with the learning needs of the students. However, it might be noted that this could also depend on factors like the style of the leadership of the principal and the school culture.

Classrooms - The study found several ways in which the teachers encouraged and increased their contact with the students. They believed that having regular contact and close relationships with the students in the classroom would enable them to be aware of, discuss and respond to specific learning needs accordingly. Hence, they provided additional learning support by encouraging students to do private study in the classrooms during free times so that they could provide one-to-one assistance. At Mountainway NSS, one teacher reported that "*like other teachers in this school, I worked in my office until 12 pm so the senior male students in Years 10, 11, and 12 could visit me if they needed help*". It was also interesting to learn that the culture of the school influenced the teachers to accept students visiting them in their homes if they were not at their workstations in the staffroom.

8.4. Theme Three: The Impact of the Principal and the Principal's Style of Leadership

Effective school principals can develop visions and goals for targeted school change and communicate them clearly to their staff (Holmes et al., 2013). They establish work conditions that allow teachers to have clear directions, making the most of their motivation and commitment to school change and reform (Leithwood et al., 2008). According to Glover and Coleman (2005), principals act as managers, coordinators, and delegators. In a similar interpretation, Geijsel et al. (2003) discuss the role of the principal as someone in the school who is responsible for assuring that instruction is aligned with academic standards, maintaining and continuing improvement in the school infrastructure, and overseeing the school budget but also so much more.

The study identified various factors that influenced the leadership of the principals in relation to teachers' responses to school change. Firstly, the participants from the four case study NSSs commented that the relatively new principals with a clear vision had significant impact on school improvement when they encouraged the teachers to use their potential for school improvement. Then some of the participants identified that the use of more than one style of leadership is important to allow principals to enable teachers to respond positively to various types of school change. The findings showed that the principals of each of the four case study NSSs used more than one style of leadership that promoted teacher collaboration, enabling them to share and discuss the best responses to specific changes in the schools. For example, two principals, who recognised their lack of knowledge, used a strategic style of leadership to invite teachers into the decision making at some meetings. Andrews and Crowther (2002) explained that principals bring together teachers, school administrators, heads of departments and support staff in shared professional learning to sustain the focus and momentum of teachers' responses to school change, without being affected by changes in staff.

In the process of improving the school and introducing change, the teachers at three of the case study NSSs found the styles of leadership of the principals had developed deep trust and respect amongst the staff. Because there was trust and respect in the collegial team, there were good working relationships and good support systems in the school. Many of the LS teachers in the four case study schools reflected that the styles of leadership of the principals at the time of data collection had improved the school culture and further developed deep trust between and among the principal and the teachers that evolved over time and was passed on to new teachers posted to the school.

8.4.1. Teachers' Responses to the Impact of the Principal and the Principal's Style of Leadership

The range of teachers' responses to the impact of the principal and the style of their leadership varied across all four case studies. The variations in the teachers' responses were influenced by a number of factors.

The study revealed that one major influence on teachers' positive responses to change was their degree of trust in their perceived big picture of effectiveness of the leadership of the principal. Bryk and Schneider (2003) explain that the success of schools in achieving their desired goals depends very much on the school leaders and the degree of the teachers' responses to their principal's style of leadership. This study found that the teachers in the four NSSs trusted their principals based on the principals' leadership capacity, competence, experience and power to influence them to respond as a team. The EC teachers in two Church NSSs and the secular NSS were more responsive to a principal with high teaching qualifications and a good reputation for improving student academic achievement. Teachers can participate in school decision making and be actively involved in school change if they believe that a highly cooperative leadership team leads the school (Hulpia et al., 2011). In two case study schools, teachers trusted the leadership of the principals because their styles of leadership enabled them to change their behaviour and the students' behaviour to commit to teaching and learning. Some of the participants reported that they cooperated, collaborated, supported, promoted and worked together with their principals. In support of the leadership of the principals, they prepared lessons well, shared ideas and solved problems together, and devoted their time to helping the students.

The teachers in all four case studies responded to the principals and their style of leadership, showing that trust is a two-way phenomenon. Most of the participants in all four case study schools respected, honoured, and trusted their principals and their styles of leadership when they felt that their feelings, opinions, views and suggestions were considered. For example, in one case study NSS, the teachers gave their allegiance to the principal because he reconsidered his decisions and abolished a redemptive approach to student discipline. The action of their principal increased the teachers' trust in his leadership because they were part of the school's decision making. It appeared that they had a sense of ownership, which encouraged them to continue working with the principal.

Another interesting finding related to how Melanesian cultural practice influenced the teachers in their response to the leadership of the principals. Some of the male participants felt they were incompetent and demoted when female teachers

were appointed to deputy leadership positions. These discriminatory feelings generated some unprofessional responses from the male teachers regarding the leadership of a female deputy principal. This finding agreed with the work of Akao (2008) that in the Solomon Islands women continue to be marginalised by discriminatory actions and attitudes in schools. This study revealed that the unprofessional response of some male teachers who withheld and withdrew their leadership support created a working environment that provoked issues that appeared to be questioning the leadership competency of the female deputy principal. The male teachers' reactions were like a litmus test of the female deputy principal's leadership competency. Interestingly, the negative response appeared to inspire the female teachers to improve their leadership capacity to encourage positive responses from the male teachers. The principal appeared to use his leadership to support the leadership of the female teacher and also influence the male teachers to see the professional aspects of leadership while acknowledging the importance of Melanesian cultural practice.

An interesting perspective in the state-operated NSS was that the EC male teachers responded positively by supporting the leadership of the EC principal because they shared a similar approach through culturally accepted socialising practices. However, it was further revealed that the LS teachers and the female teachers appeared to reserve their responses with a wait-and-see attitude to the leadership of the EC principal. It might be concluded that the principal reconsider his style of leadership in order to be more inclusive of the female teachers and the LS teachers.

The study also found that there were significant differences in the degree of teachers' responses to the style of leadership of principals in church and secular contexts. In his study of Church school ethos, Hartwick (2007) found that the principal and leaders can be more successful in their assigned roles if their practices incorporate spiritual and religious beliefs and engage in spiritual activities and programs. Similarly, this study found that the teachers at the three church-operated NSSs perceived the principals as not only administrators as in secular NSSs, but also as spiritual leaders who provide spiritual direction in the school community. This perception influenced the teachers to respect and respond positively to the principal

even when the principal was not highly qualified. For instance, in one of the four case study schools, the LS principal had a diploma in teaching and only ten months experience in the principal's position but because he had outstanding spiritual characteristics and had established good working relationships with the teachers, the teachers faithfully attended staff meetings, cooperated in monitoring student behaviour, attended classes and engaged with the community for fundraisings. In three Church-operated NSSs, almost all the participants explained their belief that they worked for God, and thus, believed that they were obliged to respond positively to their school leaders. However, the study found that some teachers in Hillway NSS did not seem obliged to respond positively to the female Deputy Principal.

8.5. Theme Four: The Impact of the School Infrastructure

In responding to the interview questions on what they identified as change in their NSSs, all the participants' first answers concerned changes related to school infrastructure.

The participants from two of the case study schools reported that the deterioration and shortage of school infrastructure meant it no longer met the needs of the teachers and students. In the state-operated NSS, the participants recognised the inadequacy of buildings for teachers and students and the poor condition of the existing buildings, whereas the participants from the Church-operated case study school on a remote island identified significant improvements in the school infrastructure. In two case study schools, the participants also identified some of the desired infrastructure they thought was important to be built for the school.

The findings of this study showed that major physical infrastructure in each of the four case study NSSs was built a few years after the schools were first established. Hence, more than half of the participants in all four case study schools raised important concerns about the deterioration of the buildings, which created increasingly negative impacts on the learning environment. In one case study, the head of department participants raised significant concerns that the state of the buildings had an adverse affect on the quality of teaching and learning: there were expressions of staff and student demoralisation and threatened safety and security.

The participants from the two NSSs closest to Honiara expressed similar concerns and shared experiences with regard to the deteriorating state of many of the buildings, which were not safe for teachers and students and were vulnerable to burglars.

Some of the participants from the state-operated NSS and a Church-operated NSS reported mismatches between the increased numbers of teaching staff and student enrolments (school community population) and the available infrastructure, much of which was deteriorating. Evidence obtained in the study showed that the mismatch between the available accommodation and the school population justified the teachers' claims that unacceptable student behaviour could be triggered by overcrowding of students in their dormitories. Undoubtedly, overcrowding in the dormitories had the potential to create an environment for students to misbehave in ways including stealing, vandalising of classrooms and dormitories, and fighting. There was also a health risk in terms of the spread of disease in crowded conditions. This unfortunate situation had the potential to cause difficulties for the students to undertake private study in their overcrowded dormitories and possibly in the classrooms as well.

According to the participants at Hillway NSS, the school library no longer met the teachers' and students' learning needs because most of the books were old and out of date, there was a lack of study furniture and the building was deteriorating. This observation showed that the library was slowly losing its primary purpose as teachers and students still depended on school library books for their study, although they had begun to use the Internet to access information online. Books are very expensive to buy in the Solomon Islands, despite the fact that the school library is the main way for students to access information.

The participants from two Church-operated NSSs commented on their collective desire for infrastructural projects that would improve the standard of the school. In these projects, they identified the need to use available resources in the school for self-sustainability and to venture into cost-effective electricity through the use of renewable energy sources.

8.5.1. Teachers' Responses to the Impact of the School Infrastructure

This study established that the teachers from the four case study NSS placed considerable value on school infrastructure and their roles as teachers to improve it. The participants felt that it was ethical and their responsibility to maintain the values of the school, students and teaching and learning by providing adequate and safe school infrastructure. Therefore, they indicated that it is their moral obligation to support school infrastructural projects that contribute to valuing their work in the school. McLaughlin (2005) explained that ethos "relat[es] to the core values of the school and deep fundamentals in its life and work" (p. 310). Participants of this study explained how teachers raised funds to build school infrastructure because the national government and the education authorities have done very little with regard to financial assistance to support the schools to build new infrastructure. One of the participants reported "*we raised funds to build our staff office because the national government and the education authority only distributed and coordinated the external donor funded infrastructure projects*". The deep desire to have good school infrastructure influenced the teachers to take the responsibility to respond to the impacts of school infrastructure. The study found that the teachers at each school responded in different ways depending on the context. However, there were similarities across all four case studies showing that the teachers' strategic and sequential responses included:

1. Forming school development committees
2. Organising fundraising
3. Adjusting class-time and maximising use of available rooms
4. Facilitating shipment of second-hand books from overseas
5. Helping the students to work on the school infrastructure
6. Maintaining the condition of the available infrastructure

Teachers' responses to the existing infrastructure projects at the time of data collection - The teachers were strategic in their responses to the impacts of their schools' infrastructure. Firstly, the teachers at each of the four case study NSSs formed school development committees. Spillane (2006) explained that in distributed leadership, the differences between teachers and school leaders become smaller and teachers are committed to their leadership roles and responsibilities

when responsibilities are distributed amongst them. The committees were responsible for identifying and planning infrastructural developments as long term, medium term and short term projects, drawing up responsive plans and corresponding with relevant authorities and experts. The school committee was responsible for planning, managing, and coordinating infrastructure improvements. The involvement of the teachers and their close working relationship with the principals from the planning to the completion stages of the infrastructure was one of the strategies that attracted positive responses from the teachers regarding school change.

According to the participants from the four case study schools, two main sources of income to fund school infrastructure were money raised through annual school fundraisers, and donations. In the church-operated NSSs, fundraising was guided and conducted according to their churches' beliefs and values. Church school ethos is based on each church's fundamental beliefs and values (Archdiocese of Hobart, 2012; Hartwick, 2007; Hill, 2010). Thus, while the teachers of two church-operated NSSs organised fundraising in similar ways, the third church-operated NSSs responded in somewhat different ways.

The most obvious findings that emerged from the cross-case analysis was that teachers at two of the church-operated schools and the state school formed their school fundraising committees and subcommittees to plan, coordinate and organise a range of fundraising activities. This committee approach affirmed for church members, parents, former students and communities near the school, that the teachers were advocates of school fundraising. The teachers made decisions by using the Church network systems that included the clergy to inform communities, church members and former students and to encourage their participation in the fundraising activities. In one Church-operated school, because of church beliefs, the teachers only applied for project funding assistance from various local and international organisations and received annual church contributions from the church congregation throughout the Solomon Islands. Teachers "strive for education that is founded on Christian values of faith, hope and love" (Wasuka, 2006, p. 7). This belief influenced the teachers to involve the clergy and raise funds with faith that they would achieve their goals.

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The study revealed that the schools, despite their annual school funding, still needed external financial support from overseas counterparts and aid donors to fund major infrastructure. In all four case study schools, major building infrastructure such as classrooms, school libraries, dining halls and administrative buildings were externally funded projects. For this reason, the participants of the three Church-operated schools used their links with overseas organisations and institutions as a means to obtain financial assistance. For instance, Mountainway NSSs engaged the clergy in their fundraising and assisted in building and architectural design. Hillway NSS worked with church volunteers in Australia. One of the participants explained that "*the volunteers from Australia did funding and major construction work on the new classroom buildings*".

Another finding was that the teachers arranged classes in any suitable rooms and adjusted and stretched their class timetables to allow the classes to use available rooms. This initiative showed the multiple responses and the dedication of the teachers to ensuring that lessons were delivered, classes were not badly affected, and students' rights to learn prevailed. In one case study school, the teachers reported that they taught in one room while construction work continued in the opposite room. In another school, the teachers taught in the school hall without desks and in the dining hall. The teachers' responses, with the use of multiple strategies, showed their passion for teaching and learning, love for the students, loyalty to the authority and faithfulness and honesty to themselves. This feeling of professional self-worth, competence, and respect can give teachers a sense of accomplishment and encourage collaboration and work commitment (Whitaker et al., 2009).

Furthermore, the participants commented that while they recognised the use of the Internet to access much information for research, lesson preparations, teaching and learning, they still depended on the books in the library for most of their research and preparation. Thus, with a great desire to provide library books, the teachers of one rural case study school continued to import consignments of donated second-hand books from overseas. One teacher was heard to say: "*I was asked to raise money through the sale of Hillway NSS singing DVDs [sic] to fund the shipping costs of one container of donated library books from some secondary schools in*

Australia". It was clear that if it were not for the donated books, the libraries of the case study schools would have empty bookshelves.

It appeared that in all four case study NSSs, the school was not able to afford all of the costs incurred in labour. Participants of this study explained that teachers involved the students in various ways to work on school building infrastructure, including engaging them in work during normal work sessions, when students undergoing punishment were required to carry building materials, help construct some new small buildings and renovate old ones. This response was also influenced by their particular school ethos and school motto that students must be industrious and work for their education.

The teachers' responses to maintaining the good condition of the classrooms and dormitories remained a challenge because students vandalized and graffitied them. In addition to the renovation of buildings previously discussed, the teachers influenced the students to change their behaviour and attitudes and to value and respect school property. They advised the students through school announcements and notices on the notice boards to respect school property. Students were punished, counselled and cautioned, and fees they had deposited with the school were deducted if they were found guilty of graffiti and vandalism. In all four case study schools, the teachers made regular visits to the students in their dormitories, and in the classrooms during private study hours. In one case study, teachers inspected the students and the dormitories before they made their way out to attend worship services at weekends. Dormitory inspections and visitations also provided the teachers with the opportunity to be aware of the problems that sometimes made the students frustrated and led them to vandalize buildings. According to many of the participants at the four case study schools, these responses changed the students' bad behaviour as they learned to respect school property. The evidence indicated that students no longer wrote graffiti and there had been a significant decrease in vandalizing of school property.

Teachers' responses to the desired school infrastructure - The study found that one of the powerful motivators for teachers to respond positively to school change was when they felt that the school, principal, other teachers and the students valued

and trusted their knowledge, skills and special talents in school improvements. DuFour (2005) explained that in the professional learning community, teachers work together and support each other with shared visions, beliefs and values. The extent to which a teacher feels valued and trusted by the school motivates that teacher to decide on the direction to take for their development that leads to positive change for them and the school (Brooks et al., 2010; Opfer & Pedder, 2011; Stoll & Louis, 2007). Price (2011) also noted that teachers' commitment to share their visions with determination for accomplishment increased when they feel that they are valued and trusted to take leadership roles through power sharing.

This study found that some of the EC participants in three case study schools responded to the desired infrastructures by firstly bringing to the school mental pictures of infrastructure and benefits, and then working with and through the principals to pursue them. In some cases the desired change involved new technology, where the LS principal lacked the technical knowledge and skills to pursue the projects. Thus, it was encouraging to learn from the study that the EC teachers used their updated information and knowledge about the desired projects to advise the LS principal. They consulted the education authorities for permission and moral support and made applications to the available funding agencies.

Some of the EC participants commented that they responded by working with the principal, relevant organisations and consulting experts to produce a project proposal to be included in the development plans to ensure that successive principals and teachers would implement the projects. It is important for the principal and teachers to know how the projects will benefit the school in order to support the projects. For instance, in one of the rural case study schools, the teachers proposed an idea to use renewable energy – hydro or solar – as a main source of electricity in the school instead of using diesel generators. To influence the teachers and get collective support, one EC participant reported:

> I installed one 40 watts solar panel on my residence. The solar powered light in my house convinced and constantly motivated other teachers to support our proposal solar project by reminding the principal in some of our staff meetings to apply for the project.

8.6. The Influence of School Ethos and School Culture on Teachers' Responses to Change

The findings of this study showed that the four case study NSSs seemed to have common beliefs, values, and practices that influenced how the teachers responded to school change. It was evident that each school community upheld Christian beliefs and values, almost all the teachers were Melanesian, and in each school they seemed to interact and share views, ideas, and visions in similar ways as a means to achieve their common goals. However, these four case study case study NSSs also differed because of different Church beliefs, values, practices and expectations, and school contexts. The teachers' beliefs and values influenced ways of doing things, which developed into a school culture. The study also found that in addition to the ethos and culture of the school, teachers were also influenced by Melanesian culture, family upbringing, religion, teaching experiences, and interactions from within the society to which they belonged.

School ethos - Many published studies, including those of Glover and Coleman (2005), McLaughlin (2005), and Donnelly (2000), have stated that the concept of ethos is difficult to understand because there is no single 'correct' meaning but rather a range of meanings. For the purpose of this study, ethos is defined as:

> Inter alia to human activities and behaviour, to the human environment within which the enterprises take place (especially the social system of an organisation), to behaviour and activity which has already occurred, to a mood or moods which are pervasive within this environment, to social interactions and their consequences, to something which is experienced, to norms rather than to exceptions, and to something that is unique. (Allder, 1993, p. 60)

The participants of this study generally believed that their school ethos was based on common sense. It was not properly documented. It was apparent that they had school values and beliefs that guided their practices, actions and attitudes in the school community. Many of the participants in all the four case study schools indicated that they were Christians, and Churches have strong influences on the lives of school communities. It is widely accepted that the majority of the people in the Solomon Islands are Christians. This is why, even in a state-operated NSS, the principal and

the teachers introduced and implemented common Christian practices like organising prayers and bible readings similar to those adopted in the Church-operated case study schools. Wahlstrom and Louis (2008) found that the influence of a school ethos helps to improve school effectiveness, support teachers' professional learning and students' learning, and strengthen coexistence in civil society.

This study discovered that each of the three church-operated NSSs adopted their Church ethos but differed in practice because of their different Christian denominations. The difference was demonstrated in the school character. Some of the teachers at the state-operated NSS indicated that almost all the teachers and students were Christians so they were aware of different types of Christian ethos in the school but no single one was clearly expressed.

In the field observations, I noticed in each of the four case study NSSs that messages conveying the school ethos were displayed, constantly reminding the teachers and students to behave, act and respond in an acceptable manner in the school. Church-operated schools are obliged to respond to school programs and activities according to Church beliefs, values and practices because they are agents for church witnessing (Adventist Schools Australia, 2016; Queensland Catholic Education Commission, 2014). In two of the Church-operated case study schools, their beliefs and values were displayed in the form of biblical statues, religious posters and signs, forms of worship and prayer and their dress codes. One of the participants of Mountainway NSS reported that *the biblical symbols in the schools are always reminding us to honor our school and our leaders.* In one Church-operated case study NSS, the Church's fundamental beliefs influenced the teachers to be more conservative, cooperative and faithful in school work. For instance, changes were introduced in which students had to wear only black and white clothes to Church worship services; it was compulsory to attend all worship services; and teachers and students were encouraged to be involved in religious programs but not in organising fundraising events that involved bazaars and sports.

The majority of the participants from the three church-operated NSSs commented that providing a safe learning environment, being committed to teaching and learning, improving school discipline, establishing good working relationships

and providing good leadership were all part of their Christian duty. Some of the participants at two of the Church-operated NSSs stated that it was their Christian duty to engage and work closely with church members, communities, former students and other church agencies for fundraising and other school improvement activities. In other words, the teachers linked the gospel with the daily life and activities of the school. This practice shows that the school change the teachers introduced was driven by external influences and their responses were guided and measured by their school ethos.

The study found that the school ethos of the three Church-operated case study NSSs meant that prayer had a positive impact on the teachers' responses to school change. Many of the participants of the three Church-operated NSSs commented that teachers who usually prayer were more co-operative, supportive, patient, and faithful in doing the assigned duties in their schools. The teachers of the three Church-operated NSSs appeared to see their roles as church missionary workers as well as teachers. Most of the participants from the three church schools commented that it was their Christian duty to worship and pray because it connected them with God and in turn this connected them together to respond as a team in school programs and activities. They reported that the degree of cooperation, collaboration and commitment in school depended on their connection with God through worship and prayer. An example of this belief is that one of the three church-operated schools had prayers three times a day, during breakfast, lunch and dinner, involving duty teachers and the student body. In another case study school, the deputy principal commented that, "*we live a life of prayer*". Thus, it was a school rule that prayers had to be offered before they worked on any organised school programs and activities, before the first class period and the last class period.

Most of the participants from this particular church school believed that if they did not respond positively to school improvement they had neglected their spiritual connections with God. With the notion of Christian duty, the school encouraged spiritual growth and the exercise of faith through the teachers' commitment to their teaching roles and leadership. As one of the participants commented "*I am only a steward and working for God*" so non-payment of his salary as a deputy principal had not compromised his work ethic. Teachers' collective positive responses to

school change were regarded as fulfilling their gospel commitment. Similarly, in the literature, the Christian teachers' responses to change in the Christian schools were faith oriented and highlighted each church's distinctive characteristics (Hill, 2010; Oncescu & Giles, 2012).

While the teachers at the secular state NSS in this study had similar beliefs and values related to a Christian ethos, their school ethos was mainly centred on fulfilling their civic responsibilities. As Rex commented, "*the school prepared the students to build the nation*". With a desire to fulfill their civic responsibilities, along with their desire to maintain professionalism and academic achievements in the school, the teachers reported that they would like to reflect on and maintain the value and status of the state NSS. This motivated them to respond constructively to school change as a way to create a good school.

School culture - The literature has provided various definitions of school culture (Prosser, 1999; Gaziel, 1997; Terrence, 2002). This study adopted the view of Prosser (1999) who referred to school culture as "values, beliefs, norms of behaviour, social structure, social systems and social groups" (p. 12) that are shared in the school.

-In all four case study schools, Melanesian culture, Christian beliefs, improvement and change in teaching and learning approach, use of the Internet and other information processing technologies and improvement in communication systems shaped and influenced the teachers' responses to school change. As indicated, participants from each of the four case studies shared their vision, and their ideas about expected practice and educational professionalism that shaped the way they operated the school and the whole daily school routine. These complex patterns formed the basis of their school culture, which was not static.

The study showed that the process and pattern of school characteristics influenced the effectiveness of the teachers and the way they contributed to change. The values, beliefs and the social structure of a school influence how the teachers behave and do things (Prosser, 1999). In two of the case study schools, it appeared that changes in the school culture had changed and reshaped the teachers' attitudes to

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their commitment to teaching and learning by creating a supportive working relationship, encouraging socialisation, and enhancing physical and spiritual developments in the school. In describing similar changes that finally developed into a school culture, Gaziel (1997) explained that school culture "reflected its patterns of values, beliefs and traditions that have been formed over the years" (p. 311). As in Melanesian culture, the school culture encouraged social and informal group meetings, home visits and other social activities that encouraged teacher interactions. With close social and cultural bonds, the study found that teachers were more cooperative, shared decisions, and were more open to new ideas, but these had to be in harmony with Christian beliefs and Melanesian culture. The teachers' cooperation, combined with the style of leadership of the principal, gave them opportunities to use their knowledge, skills and special talents in their responses to various school improvements. The culture of recognising teachers as emergent leaders was prevalent in all four case study schools. In particular, the EC teachers were respected as emergent leaders to supervise the use of computers and other electronic appliances and to advocate for the use of the Internet.

Melanesian culture - Being Melanesian NSSs, dominated by Melanesian teachers and students in a Melanesian context, Melanesian culture has a strong influence on school culture and is also practised in the schools. Embedded cultural groupings with and in school professional groupings, as occurred in three of the case study schools, reinforced the upholding of cultural practices. These elements guide and create teachers' expectations, style of behaviour, beliefs and the way they perceive and respond to school change. The study indicated that the teachers' responses to change were gauged against Melanesian cultural values, norms and socialisation. It is important to know, in the context of the schools in the Solomon Islands, that teachers will support change and respond positively if the desired changes are in harmony with the Melanesian culture that is the dominant culture in the Solomon Islands (Akao, 2008; Malasa, 2007; Sanga & Maneipuri, 2002). It was determined that this is where sometimes professionalism and Melanesian cultural values and practices clashed and caused division in teachers' responses to change in the school. For instance, in one case study school, the teachers reported that they withdrew and withheld their leadership support from the previous highly qualified principal because he instructed the female teachers to attend to their professional duties late in

the afternoon and at night, as the male teachers did, which sometimes breached cultural practices. The participants indicated that it was cultural practice that female teachers should stay at home at night looking after children and do other domestic chores. Also, some teachers did not like the promotion of a female deputy.

Melanesian culture is dynamic and evolving. It is changing, but not consistently. The change in culture was evident in the NSSs closest to Honiara city compared with NSSs out in the provinces. It was interesting to observe that a lot of programs advocating gender equality were promoted in the city but the study showed that only the case study NSS in an outlying province applied such approaches. Many of the female teachers in the school were appointed to leadership positions, including the positions of deputy principal, school registrar and heads of departments. This case showed that in this particular case study school, the culture of the school upheld professional practice with regard to teacher leadership appointments while acknowledged, recognised and respected the influence of Melanesia cultural practices. Furthermore, in all four case studies, the extent of the influence of Melanesian culture on how teachers respond to change was changing at different rates due to school locality, changes to Christian practice, campaigns on gender equality, access to the Internet, and the strength of the desire to cope with changes that are happening in the world.

8.6.1. The Influence of School Ethos and School Culture on Teachers' Responses to Using the Internet to Improve Teaching and Learning

The findings of the study showed that there were several ways in which the school ethos and school culture influenced teachers' responses to recognition of the use of the Internet to improve teaching and learning. The study showed that teachers believed that they were stewards of the students and valued their roles and responsibilities to improve teaching and learning. Thus, they developed various patterns of behaviour, attitudes and practices that enabled the teachers and students to use the Internet.

In the three Church-operated NSS, the influence of Christian beliefs and values that united the teachers to work as a team was observed in their collective responses

to the use of the Internet to improve teaching and learning. Christian beliefs and values led the teachers to be very cautious in the use of the Internet as the Internet could provide potentially damaging material to the school. For this reason, some of the participants from Mountainway NSS reported that the education authority had advised the school not to install the Internet and discouraged the teachers and students from using the Internet on campus. In contrast, three case study schools encouraged the teachers and students to use the Internet but with some rules and user guidelines. In one of the case study schools, the rules included registering the students' mobiles, not bringing or using mobiles inside the church and prohibiting students from accessing the Internet on Sabbath days.

The findings revealed that across all four case study NSSs, the teachers respected the roles of the EC teachers as advocates for the Internet. When the teachers recognised, valued and respected EC teachers' roles as advocates, it motivated the EC teachers to continue providing voluntary training and IT support services. In addition, almost all the participants highlighted their passion and zeal for teaching, driven by their collective desire, cooperation, collaboration and effort to ensure that teachers and students could access the Internet. Close community bonds encouraged their positive response to the recognition of the value of the Internet for teaching and learning. As commented by many of the participants from the state-operated NSS, the school culture allowed them to have regular meetings and informal discussions even on the grass lawns around the school campus and in private homes to discuss school improvements, and use of the Internet was one of them. This practice agrees with Sanga and Maneipuri (2002) and Sanga and Walker (2005), who noted that the Melanesian practice of socialisation is more open and public.

One of the successful school cultural practices that most of the teachers commented on with regard to the use of the Internet for teaching and learning was the sharing of information collected from the Internet, along with sharing of limited numbers of computers and mobile phones to access the Internet. The culture of sharing had encouraged many of the teachers to commit to using the Internet. They developed the practice of returning to the staff room at 6 pm to search and share

information from the Internet until the generator went off at 9 pm. This practice was evidence of their response to achieve their shared vision.

The female participants from one of the three Church-operated schools commented that while they were aware of the expected professional culture in the school, their school culture as influenced by Melanesian culture had some negative impacts on their opportunities to use the Internet. For example, Jacinta commented that "*we, the female teachers could not attend the training and still depended on the male teachers to search for our information on the Internet*". Clarish reported that "*I asked my husband who is [a] head of department to collect my information from the Internet*". It was evident that while the schools had a working environment that encouraged the teachers to use the Internet, when combined with Melanesian culture, using the Internet for teaching and learning was not properly planned, so the LS teachers and the female teachers were often given fewer opportunities to use the Internet.

8.6.2. The Influence of School Ethos and School Culture on Teachers' Responses to Changes Related to Students

As has been discussed, the school ethos and school cultures of the three Church-operated NSSs were derived and guided by their respective Church beliefs and values. For this reason, to address student behaviour, many of the participants reported that they used and applied Christian principles. For example, Mosese reported "*we changed the term punishment to community service, counselled and prayed with the students after they were punished*". This practice, based on Christian beliefs and values, allowed the teachers to create an environment and school culture in which the students have a feeling of being cared for by the teachers, and belonging to a school community in which the teachers know the students well and encourage them to build on their strengths to improve their weaknesses. The participants from the Church-operated schools reported they used early intervention strategies by engaging teachers and students in church programs to help them value themselves, learning and the school.

The study found that the school ethos and the school culture of the state-operated case study NSS were more academically and professionally oriented, unlike

the Church-operated schools that emphasised Church beliefs and values. The state operated case study NSS's school ethos and the school culture were focused on meeting the students' needs rather than reacting to their behaviour. Some of the participants reported that with the style of the leadership of the principal, they created a social environment in the school which they found encouraged the majority of the teachers to be actively involved and maintain high standards of student behaviour. They commented that they responded to improvement in student behaviour by creating a close working relationship between themselves and the students, and discouraged inappropriate behaviour. The participants at two of the three Church-operated schools reported that they allowed students to visit their homes to ask questions and also provided extra tutorials in the classrooms if needed after normal classes. This school culture is based on the Melanesian culture. The Melanesian culture that was practised in the school thus created more opportunities for students to seek help from the teachers.

This study found that in each of the four case study NSSs, the influence of the school ethos transformed teachers' behaviour and attitudes towards change. It inspired the teachers to work together to design programs, activities and new approaches that improved the academic performance of the students. In one of the three Church-operated NSSs, the school ethos, which emphasised 'sound learning' in the school, had influenced and redirected the teachers to change their behaviour to organise various social programs that improved the students' academic performance. For instance, at the school social night programs, instead of dancing as in the past, they organised class debates, speech contests, quiz nights and pick-a-box contests.

Some of the teachers at two of the case study NSSs made similar comments that they respected and were obliged to cater for the learning needs of the students although the curriculum had not changed and was unbalanced. This indicated that they encouraged each other and treated each other with dignity and respect in their initiatives to provide for the learning needs of the students. The sense of caring and ownership motivated some of the teachers to initiate creative and innovative ideas.

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8.6.3. The Influence of School Ethos and School Culture on Teachers' Responses to the Impact of the Principal and the Style of Leadership

There was congruence in all three Church-based case study schools that the teachers supported the more spiritual principal and their leadership that encouraged and supported a spiritual environment, which connected the school with God through prayers and worship, improved students' academic performance, promoted social and spiritual programs and interaction in the school. It was important for the teachers to support the leadership of the principals because they found that the styles of leadership of the principals generated teachers' cooperation and collaboration, established good working relationships, improved the school and importantly satisfied the Church ethos.

In one of the Church-based NSSs, the ethos of the school that encouraged trust, respect and honesty had impacts on Melanesian beliefs and cultural practices so that many female teachers were appointed to school leadership positions and were recognised as effective leaders. Although their leadership conflicted with traditional Melanesian practices, which had negative impacts on some of the male teachers' responses to the leadership of the female teachers, the study showed that there was still evidence of allegiance to the leadership of female teachers because they were believed to be God's appointed workers. The study also showed that seniority and a personal sense of spirituality, together with consultative styles of leadership, developed teachers' trust and created positive responses to the leadership of the principal.

Unlike the Church-operated NSSs, the ethos of the state-operated NSS was implicit. The teachers valued the leadership of the principal because of the enormous improvement in students' academic performance. The teachers supported the leadership of the principal because his style improved academic performance, student behaviour and brought the staff together through social programs.

8.6.4. The Influence of School Ethos and School Culture on Teachers' Responses to the Impact of the School Infrastructure

Many of the teachers in the four case study NSSs reported that as stewards in the school they were obliged to ensure the safety of the teachers and students through adequate infrastructure. They felt that the school, through the teachers, is accountable for providing the required facilities to boost and improve teachers' working morale and students' learning. The feeling of being responsible for improving safety needs of the school and students motivated them to raise funds, to build new houses, use students to renovate the old buildings without demanding remuneration from the education authority. Thus, instead of waiting for the education authority to improve the school infrastructure, this feeling had driven the teachers to improve the school infrastructure. As Slavin (2009) stated, people are motivated to respond positively to their assigned tasks if their safety needs are provided. In the findings of this study, the teachers responded positively to the school infrastructure as a means to provide the safety needs of the teachers and students in the school.

As previously discussed, the education authorities of the four NSSs and the national government had provided very little funding support for school infrastructure. Little support from the education authorities and national government for school infrastructure improvements had motivated the teachers to raise funds and apply for project funding from external funding agents in order to build new classrooms and teachers' houses and renovate existing school buildings. The influence of school culture in such situations was supported by Wahlstrom and Louis (2008), who commented that the influence of school ethos helps to improve school effectiveness, support teachers' professional learning and students' learning, and strengthens coexistence in civil society.

The participants at one of the three Church-operated NSSs commented that as stewards they fulfilled their school motto 'Unity and Faith' to respond positively to improve the school infrastructure. They also indicated that students should be industrious and also responsible for their learning facilities and accommodation.

Participants at three of the case study schools reported that the deteriorating state of the school infrastructure had affected their work performance and students' academic performance and wellbeing, demanding their collective response. The school ethos of all four NSSs emphasised safety and a friendly, caring and conducive working environment. Thus, they indicated that as stewards, they had an obligation to respond to improve the school building infrastructure.

Many of the participants from the state-operated NSSs commented that the poor state of the school infrastructure did not reflect the expected standard of a state-operated NSS, did not meet increasing demands for teaching and learning, and denied the rights of the students to have better learning facilities. Tom commented that "*our school in 2014 is striving for academic excellence*". It appeared that the idea of the school infrastructure reflecting the national status of the school and valuing and respecting the students' learning motivated the staff to fundraise for classroom renovation.

8.7. Summary

This discussion chapter has helped in identifying and clarifying each of the themes that emerged from data gathered in four case study national secondary schools in response to the overarching research question and sub-questions. In the cross-case analysis, four themes which are the identified changes that have emerged are: recognition of using the Internet to improve teaching and learning; changes related to students; the impact of the principal and their style of leadership; and the impact of the school infrastructure. The study has highlighted the significant influence of the school ethos and school culture on teachers' responses to school change; in particular, how school ethos and school culture influenced the teachers' responses to each of the four identified changes which were discussed under the four themes.

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

9.1. Introduction

The overarching question in this research asked what can be learned from how teachers responded to change in four Solomon Islands National Secondary Schools (NSS). This question is now specifically addressed in the final chapter of this study. Drawing on the detailed individual case studies of the four NSSs and the subsequent cross-case analysis, a framework has been developed to capture the understandings that have emerged from the study. The framework, with the aim of enabling teacher response to school change at its core, presents the factors that influenced how teachers responded to change, and, importantly, how these factors influenced teachers' abilities to respond positively.

This final chapter answers the overarching question, using the framework for enabling teachers' responses to school change that have emerged from this study. This framework is firstly presented in its entirety and then each part is discussed in turn. The learnings captured in the framework then form the basis of the recommendations for enabling teachers to respond positively to school change. It is anticipated that the recommendations might indicate to the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Education Authorities and principals how they could enable teachers to respond positively to school change. Next, this chapter provides information and suggestions for future research in similar studies in the NSSs in the Solomon Islands. The limitations of this study are acknowledged and final reflections highlighting some of the significant findings of this study are offered.

9.2. Enabling Teachers' Responses to School Change Framework

The Enabling Teachers' Response to School Change Framework, now presented, (Figure 9.1) captures what has been learned from this study. While the framework is intended to be used by schools to better understand and improve their change efforts, it acknowledges that individual school contexts need to be recognised and taken into account. It is anticipated that the Enabling Teachers' Responses to School Change Framework will be of broad relevance in the Solomon Islands and of

particular interest to teachers (both practicing and pre-service), aspiring principals, principals, communities, education authorities and the Solomon Islands Minister of Education.
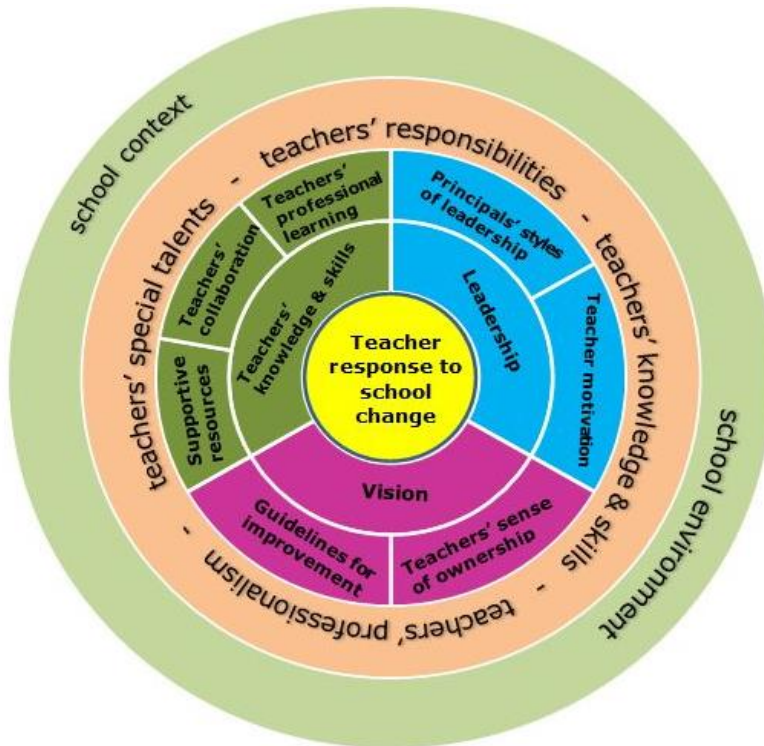

Figure 9.1 The Enabling Teachers' Responses to School Change Framework

The framework shows the relationship between the core and the components, sub-components, teachers' qualities and school context in relation to enabling teachers to respond to change in their school. It identifies that leadership, vision, and enhanced teacher knowledge and skills are important factors in enabling teachers to respond positively and constructively to changes within the school.

Presentation of this framework begins with describing the core. The core of the framework is about enabling teachers' responses to school change. Next, the three components that have a significant influence on the core of the framework are described. These components are Leadership; Enhancing Teachers' Knowledge and Skills; and Vision. Their sub-components provide a richer understanding of each of these three components. Each of these components and their sub-components are presented in turn. The next layer of influence addresses teachers' qualities and focuses on their special talents, responsibilities, knowledge and skills and professionalism to explain how they influence the core to enable teachers to respond

positively to school change. This layer also includes factors such as gender, and the differences between early career teachers and long-serving teachers. The final layer of influence is the school context and school environment. All the different parts of the framework: the components, sub-components and core of the framework are located within the school context. In the school context, teachers are influenced by school ethos, school culture, Melanesian culture, school locality, the relevant education authority and the different Christian denominations. Many of the elements in this framework are interconnected and interrelated.

9.2.1. Core of the Framework: Teacher Response to School Change

The core is the focus of this study. The study revealed the key factors enabling teachers to respond positively to change in the four case studies involving NSSs. It is recognised that teachers bring teaching expertise, professionalism and other talents to the school to provide quality teaching and learning for the students. They are also expected to deal with changes in the school. The increased rate of change in schools demands that teachers improve their abilities to enable them to respond positively to this change. For example, the teachers of this study faced challenges in responding to issues related to increased demand for and use of the Internet and other technologies, which also influences changes in students' behaviour and in teaching and learning approaches. The evidence discussed in the cross-case analysis showed that there were a number of areas identified that influence teachers' abilities to respond to change in their NSSs. These areas as indicated in Figure 9.1, are termed the components: leadership; enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills; and vision. Then for each of these components are the identified subcomponents.

9.2.2. Leadership

The study showed that the leadership of each principal in the four case study schools shaped and influenced the motivation of the teachers to accept and lead change. The leadership of the principal also influenced how the students and the community engaged to collectively respond to specific changes in their NSSs. In addition, the leadership of the principals enabled teachers to initiate, share and implement ideas by organising programs and activities as a way to improve student achievement.

As the researcher during the data collection, I found that the principals aimed to enable teachers to respond positively to school change by influencing them to value teamwork, encouraging Christian values and practices, promoting teacher consultation and maintaining good working relationships within the school and in the wider community. It appeared that the leadership of the principals in the three church-operated NSSs encouraged the involvement of members of their Church denomination in some of the major school improvement projects, which reinforced teacher motivation.

Teachers in each of the case study schools held the expectation that the principal would use their knowledge, leadership experience, personality, spiritual practices and ability to influence the teachers to cooperatively respond to school plans and programs for change. The long-serving principals who had diploma and bachelor degree teaching qualifications had identified the need for change but recognised that their level of qualification may not be sufficient to enable other teachers to respond to school change. Therefore, they identified the teachers with postgraduate diplomas and master's degrees and invited them to support their leadership to respond to some of the academic issues and technological changes. In contrast, the early career and more qualified principals used their leadership qualities and their position to confidently set goals. They tended to invite and consult teachers and support them with resources and new ideas, and to organise professional group meetings, discussions and programs that improved the teachers' responses for school improvements.

Key learning: Each principal used knowledge of their own professional experience, qualifications and personal qualities to identify and invite teachers to complement their principal leadership position and to enable other teachers to respond to specific school change.

9.2.2.1. Principals' styles of leadership.

The study found that length of service, level of qualification, gender, and the spiritual life of the principal influenced the quality of their leadership and how the teachers responded to them. The principals faced complexities when dealing with different groups of teachers to enable them to respond to change. These complexities

related to teachers' length of service, gender, level of qualification and personalities when responding to school change. The principals of this study have exhibited notable predominant styles of leadership: two of the principals used an invitational style, one was consultative and the other was strategic.

As has been stated, in each of the schools teachers' responses to school change were shaped and influenced by the principal's approach and style of leadership. In three cases, the principal was in regular communication with teachers, supporting the improvement of their knowledge and skills, and involving them in decision-making. In one of these schools, the principal used staff social programs to break barriers that had previously hindered the teachers and was able to establish strong collegial teamwork. In this school, the principal initially won their support of the early career teachers and through them was able to influence other teachers to support the school's initiative for change.

Principals appeared to understand their teachers' behaviour, attitudes, and special characteristics. They were aware of Melanesian culture and the general behaviour of Melanesian people, the school culture, and the dominant ethnic group within and around the NSS locality. Knowing these factors put the principals in a better position to employ appropriate styles of leadership that drew the teachers together to work collaboratively and cooperatively as a team and address their professional needs to enable them to respond appropriately to school change. For instance, one principal invited teachers who were reluctant to support the leadership of the female deputy principal by involving them in spiritual programs to get their support before involving them in academic and professional matters. This strategy was successful because their Christian beliefs reminded the teachers to be loyal to their principal because he is God's chosen leader.

The major aim of the schools is to provide quality learning for their students. Therefore, as leaders highly concerned about the academic achievement of students those principals who had diploma and bachelor's degree qualifications consulted with and invited the teachers who had postgraduate qualification to set goals and promote activities like managing the curriculum, monitoring teachers' lesson preparation and presentation and providing resources to promote effective growth in student learning. One of the four principals invited all the teachers to discuss and

understand a whole school external review report, in particular the recommendations, and gained the teachers' responses before the recommendations of the review report were implemented. This leadership approach was successful because the teachers had a clear direction in their response to change.

> **Key learning:** The principals' invitational, consultative and strategic styles of leadership drew the teachers together to work collaboratively and cooperatively as a team of professionals to enable them to respond appropriately to school change. Where principals adopted enabling styles of leadership this encouraged teachers to support the principal, to willingly accept leadership responsibilities, and use their knowledge, skills and special talents to respond positively to school change.

9.2.2.2. Teacher motivation.

As already indicated, the extent of teacher motivation to respond to change in their NSS was influenced by the principal's leadership style. As an example, when teachers were consulted by their principals, they felt proud because they felt they were valued. The feeling that the principal had recognised and valued their knowledge, skills and special talents developed enthusiasm to work in teams and look for opportunities to enhance their ability to respond positively and faithfully to their assigned responsibilities. The highly qualified teachers suggested to the principals how to improve the academic performance of the students. In response to the consultative style of leadership of the principal, the early career teachers devoted their efforts and free time to organising extra tutorial classes after school ended at 4pm, organised extra formal classes on weekends and were faithful and honest to themselves in lesson preparations and teaching and learning.

The study also found that teachers demonstrated trust in the leadership of their principals when the principals invited them to contribute to decision making. An invitational style of leadership in the school motivated teachers to cooperate with the principal and other teachers, and established trust and mutual respect. Furthermore, such leadership motivated the teachers to investigate other possible responses to address changes in the schools. Because they were motivated, they tended to think creatively and were willing to try out new ideas. For example, in one of the case

study schools, to address student behaviour, the teachers in collaboration with their principal changed the students' negative perception of the term 'punishment' to a term that was acceptable: community service. The participants in this church-operated case study NSS reported that students responded to community responsivity better than to punishment.

The style of leadership of the principal could also impact on gender considerations in the school. In one case, the principal trusted, consulted and invited the participation of the female deputy principal on matters and issues related to school change because she was more highly qualified. In one case study school, a young female teacher was invited to use her singing talent to lead the whole school to successfully produce a singing recording. This is one example of how invitational leadership influenced the teachers to break down cultural perceptions of gender and barriers that sometimes undermined professionalism and female teachers' responses to school change. In one case study school, the participants reported that the information, recommendations and clear guidelines provided in detail from their whole school review motivated them to work cooperatively with their principal and to devote time and effort to act on the recommendations. In addition, the success of the school as a result of the change the teachers introduced by implementing the recommendations in the school review report motivated them to be involved in the next school review. There is evidence in the findings that teachers were motivated and willing to share ideas and leadership, and strengthened their Christian beliefs and practices. In the church schools, teachers organised extra classes and undertook extra responsibilities without demanding extra payment. They were willing and open to trying new ideas and gave more recognition to the leadership of female teachers.

> **Key learnings:** That teacher motivation for embracing school change is directly influenced by the style of leadership of the principal. In the case study schools, motivated by enabling leadership styles, teachers become increasingly intrinsically motivated to seek opportunities to work collaboratively to improve the school, and become more open to new understandings of teacher professionalism.

9.2.3. Enhanced Knowledge and Skills

The study found that in each of the case study schools a whole range of people, including the education authority, principals and heads of departments, identified the need to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills. In the schools, with the leadership of the principals, the teachers identified the change needed and discussed the areas of knowledge and skills that were required to respond to the change. In the course of collaboration, teachers who needed extra help were identified and the principals appointed the more qualified teachers, who had the required knowledge and skills, to assist them on a voluntary basis.

It appeared that only one Church education authority has conducted knowledge and skills enhancement programs for its teachers on an annual basis and this training was focused on church belief and value. The finding revealed that no professional development was initiated and organised by the principals of the four case study schools for the teachers in the school level. The principal and the teachers know the need for professional development in the school to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills but almost all the teachers have not organised any in-house training in the school.

Key learning: Teachers need to increase their knowledge and skills to enable them to respond to school change positively. The principal is obliged to facilitate initiatives that enhance teachers' knowledge and skills and encourage teacher collaboration by involving the more qualified teachers.

9.2.3.1.   Teachers' professional learning and development.

There was evidence of the need for ongoing professional development in all of the four case study NSSs. The teachers reported that their knowledge and skills need to be updated to allow them to respond effectively to a range of school changes. For example, how to use a computer for planning and lesson preparation and to search for information on the Internet. The study found that some of the teachers needed to acquire relevant knowledge and skills to equip them to address and contribute effectively to programs and activities for school change. For example, leadership knowledge and skills to enable them to address a variety of school issues. In

addition, they needed appropriate knowledge and skills to address issues related to change and perception of gender, which is an ongoing issue.

There are a number of ways in which professional development can be achieved. For example, it can be done through further study on an individual basis to gain a higher qualification. Alternatively, a group of teachers, in conjunction with others, can undertake professional development. As individuals, teachers who participated in this study, who had diploma-level teaching qualifications and undergraduate degrees expressed their interest in pursuing higher qualifications either through full-time training or distance and flexible learning modes in programs at the University of the South Pacific, the University of Goroka, or other recognised institutions. In three of the schools, some of the teachers had previously been enrolled at one of the two universities. However, at the time of data collection, only four teachers were still involved in this training; others had discontinued their enrolment because of lack of sponsors, remoteness, and in the case of female teachers, commitment to family chores. The study found that many of the teachers who had higher qualifications were in better positions to contribute effectively to school change. They advocated for school change in many ways, including organising collaborative teamwork and offering in-house training. A group initiative for professional development involves attending workshops, conferences and in-house training; these are all avenues by which teachers can reflect, discuss and share ideas, solve problems and assist other teachers. The new knowledge and skills they acquire through professional learning and development enable teachers to be more professional, resourceful, creative, and innovative and encourage collaboration, which further improves their influence and motivation in responding to school change.

Of the four case study NSSs, only one case study had an academic committee, which consisted of the more highly qualified teachers. They identified the areas of teachers' knowledge and skills that needed improvement via moderation of their class examination and test results, and arranged for the more qualified to teachers to assist them. The arrangement to scaffold the teachers was compulsory and the principal followed up on progress and measured the outcome in the next moderation of class examinations and tests.

Evidence also revealed that gender equity in the Melanesian culture needs to be considered in teachers' professional learning and professional development. To enable all teachers to contribute positively to school change teachers need be given equal opportunities for professional learning, regardless of gender. Female teachers of this study expressed motivation and courage to respond to school change along with the male teachers. They recognised that if they were given the same opportunity for professional learning, they would be better positioned to positively respond to school change.

> **Key learnings:** Ongoing teacher professional learning and development enables teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills so that they can respond to ongoing changes in their schools. Female teachers need to have the same professional learning opportunities as their male colleagues if their professional potential to contribute to school change is to be realised.

9.2.3.2. Teachers' collaboration.

Professional teaching teams allow teachers to collaborate to solve problems, share knowledge, create collective solutions, and respond with a range of approaches that enables them to implement successful change. It was indicated in the study that the teachers at the four case study NSSs recognised the importance of collaboration. They made the most of formal and informal collaborations. Besides formal collaboration in staff meetings and professional groups, some of the departments had meetings in which the teachers shared, asked questions, presented and clarified views and built strong working relationships. One of the Church-operated case study schools formed an academic committee, not only moderating examinations, texts and teachers' lesson preparation and delivery, but also allowing teachers to bring their questions and academic-related problems for other teachers to discuss and provide answers. In one of the four case studies, the participants reported that they also invited the church clergy to conduct regular visits to the school to collaborate with the teachers. The presence of the clergy helped to strengthening their collaboration.

In terms of informal collaboration, the study found that many of the teachers held story-telling sessions in the staff room. They developed the habit and practice of returning to the staff room and sharing experiences and reflecting on their

experiences, performance and challenges from when the school generator started in the evening until the power went off at 9:30pm. An interesting finding was that these meetings attracted many of the teachers and because they were informal, the teachers opened up and were motivated to contribute. They reported that they used the opportunity to visit and discuss problems with colleagues and it was also an opportunity for the early career teachers to organise voluntary computer training for teachers.

Collaboration allowed teachers to share the workload related to the implementation of school change. Sometimes some teachers could not respond effectively to school change because they were overloaded with other school responsibilities. Collaboration also allowed them to identify and assist other team members who were otherwise passive and could learn from the more experienced and highly qualified teachers. In the course of teacher interaction, teachers built trust in their teamwork, which in turn created a supportive working environment.

Professional teaching teams allow teachers to collaborate to solve problems, share knowledge, create collective solutions, and respond with a range of approaches that enables them to implement successful change

> **Key learnings:** In each school context, teachers' collaboration enhanced their knowledge and skills, as they sought to solve problems and respond with a range of approaches to school change. Through this collaboration, trust was developed that influenced them to take on leadership responsibilities to support and mentor other teachers both formally and informally, to enable them to respond effectively to school change.

9.2.3.3. Supportive resources.

Teachers reported that they needed resources to support their knowledge in responding to change. Equipping teachers with appropriate resources would increase their success in the school. The study found that teachers at the case study NSSs were supported with limited resources in two ways. The participants of the four case study NSSs referred only to tangible materials provided by the Ministry of Education, aid donors through the Ministry of Education, and the education authority when they explained supporting resources. These resources include school text

books, learning equipment, computers and Internet access, and they reported many of them were out of date and inadequate. Secondly they referred to resources the school provided like money, stationary, advisors and information they retrieved from the Internet which were also inadequate in the school.

The teachers in the four case study schools depended on the Ministry of Education, aid donors and the education authorities for most of their teaching and learning resources. In addition to the national curriculum, other relevant textbooks and resources, along with computers and access to the Internet, help teachers to impart their knowledge and skills effectively to students. Teachers reported that the national school curriculum had not been reviewed for more than ten years and no longer enabled them to meet the learning needs of the students. Thus, the schools needed to consider ways to supplement the resources that were relevant to improving their specific knowledge and skills.

Resourceful teachers are also important. In this study, a resourceful teacher means a teacher who uses his or her knowledge and skills and special talents to produce additional resources. The findings showed that many of the teachers had the knowledge, skills, talent and desire to create additional resources, but they needed to be motivated and provided with appropriate support. The study indicated that the Internet could provide teachers with a rich supply of information and knowledge about how to produce further resources. This was demonstrated by the teacher who had collected information from the Internet and other sources and produced a Business Studies booklet that supplemented the school curriculum business textbook for NSSs. Other departments of that school and departments in other schools could do likewise to produce similar resources to help contextualise their teaching and learning in a rapidly changing environment.

School are also able to take advantage of resources from outside. This study revealed that almost all the library books in the four case study NSSs were donated. The teachers commented that although many of the library books were out of date, they were the only available books for preparing their lessons and pursuing self-development.

Key learnings: If teachers are provided with appropriate resources, they will add value and be motivated to respond positively to school change. With support, training, information and advice about resource-making, teachers are able to use their knowledge, skills and special talents to produce additional teaching and learning resources. And providing teachers with opportunity to access the Internet would enable access to a wide variety of resources.

9.2.4. Vision

As the Roman philosopher Lucius Anneaus Seneca stated, *"If a man knows not what harbor he seeks, any wind is the right wind"*. A school's vision guides the school, providing a clear direction and effective steps and strategies for school change. It is important for the principal to have an enabling style of leadership and that the teachers' knowledge and skills are enhanced to enable them to respond positively to school change, but it is equally important that they have a clear and shared sense of direction.

The school's vision enables the teachers to see the bigger picture of school change. It influences them to think strategically and respond to school change positively with common goals in mind. A shared school vision influences and guides the principal to implement a style of leadership that provides the teachers with the opportunity to engage in processes that will enhance their ability to respond effectively to school change. As evidenced by the data, a school vision can enable teachers to focus their priorities, and can inspire them to collaborate and cooperate while working with the local community in their response to change.

Key learnings: Having a clear school vision enables the principal and the teachers to focus on what they identify as desirable change in their NSSs. The school's vision gives teachers a clear understanding of the purpose of the intended school change, which helps to inspire, motivate and encourage them to cooperate and persevere to respond to school change positively even when they encounter challenges.

9.2.4.1. Teachers' sense of ownership.

The study indicated that the teachers were committed to achieving their school vision in cases where the principal had deliberately shared this with them. The principals discussed the school vision with their staff in many meetings in relation to school change for improvement. In implementing programs and activities for school change, the principals worked with the teachers and continued to remind them about the school's vision. The study also found that sometimes the principals recognised the highly qualified teachers and gave them power to take on additional responsibilities as a means to fulfil the school's vision. With this engagement and good working relationships with the principal, the teachers felt that they shared ownership of the school's vision. The feeling of ownership of the school's vision motivated the teachers to promote the school vision, plans and programs to the community through word of mouth as a way to create mutual understanding and influence the community to support teachers' responses to school change. In two of the three church-operated national secondary schools, the teachers visited church congregations and announced the school's plans and programs. Their ability to articulate the school's plans and programs in the community is an indication that they had clear understanding of the purpose of school change.

The study found that the principals of all four case study schools brought their vision to the school and shared it with teachers during staff meetings at the beginning of the first semester each school year. To plan their responses to changes, the principals and the teachers discussed these in school development committees and staff meetings. Three of the case study NSSs had a school vision but it was not properly documented. Therefore, many of the participants reported that they were not familiar with their school vision. They suggested that the school vision should be documented so that individual teachers were able to refer to and be guided by it. This was especially important on in difficult times and during changes of leadership.

Key learning: Where teachers had a sense of ownership of their school vision, it motivated and influenced them to share responsibilities, pool resources and team up to respond to school change. It motivated and gave teachers confidence to collectively take charge of deciding how they could best work

together to support each other in school activities and programs for school change.

9.2.4.2. Guidelines for school improvement.

Of the four case study NSSs, only one had a well-researched, well documented, school review report that guided the teachers in various aspects of school development and change. The education authority had initiated the school review thought its church networks. An experienced overseas educator had conducted the school review and produced a detailed report complete with recommendations for change. This motivated the teachers to take charge and ownership of school improvement. The school review report gave the teachers opportunities to reflect on their practices and plans and to set priorities for their responses to school change. With this guideline, each teacher knew and executed his or her responsibilities with less supervision and avoided confusion. Using the school review report, for example, the teachers adjusted and changed their school programs, including increasing the number compulsory study classes.

It can be inferred from the evidence of this one case study, that having a clear understanding of the purpose and guidelines for school improvement gives teachers self-confidence, proper planning and appropriate coordination and delegation of responsibilities. In contrast, the study found that the teachers in the other three case study NSSs depended on staff announcements in meetings and notices on the school notice board to guide them in some of their responses to school change. This highlights the benefits of having a thorough school review, with explicitly documented recommendations for change. This is a finding with broad implications for education authorities wishing to scaffold and enhance teachers' responses to change. Guidelines could be developed and schools could be provided with a template for conducting their own school review. It could be further inferred that changes of leadership and challenging times would not have as much negative impact on their collective responses if teachers had written guidelines for their response to school change.

Key learnings: Providing teachers with clear guidelines for reviewing the school and documenting the desired changes would enable them to have a clear

understanding of the purpose of and approaches to school improvement. It would give them self-confidence, proper planning and appropriate coordination and delegation of responsibilities.

9.2.5. Teachers' Knowledge, Skills, Special Talents, Professionalism, and Responsibilities

Individual teachers bring to the school knowledge, skills, special talents, professionalism and experience. These individual qualities have a significant influence on the core of the framework via the sub-components and components. Individual teachers' opportunities to use their knowledge, skills, talent, professionalism, and responsibilities were different in each case study NSS. This was influenced and shaped by various interrelated factors that included the school context, the principal's leadership, the school's vison and the availability of resources.

The study found that many of the early career teachers in all four case study NSSs used their knowledge and skills to take responsibility for organising in-house training in the use of computers and the Internet and related pedagogy, and producing teaching and learning resources; in one school they introduced departmental training. Many of the participants reported that their principal often consulted the highly qualified early career teachers for advice on how the school would respond to school change. In the Church-operated NSSs, the principals consulted the long-serving teachers for spiritual advice and wisdom about their responses to some of the aspects of school change. Most of the long-serving teachers were spiritual and knew their Church doctrine well compared with many of the early-career teachers. Interestingly, some of the LS teachers used their prior knowledge, skills, talents, professionalism and responsibilities to resist some of the school change. However, with their individual qualities, the EC teachers were advocates of school change. They initiated creative ideas, designed strategies, provided training, identified individual teachers' potential and shared responsibilities.

The study indicated that teachers with a variety of knowledge, skills, and special talents are willing to accept school responsibilities and become proficient in

various responses to change. Knowing the teachers' individual qualities had guided principals' to delegate teachers with appropriate responsibilities to respond to particular changes. In other words, most of the teachers accepted a call to take leadership responsibilities to respond positively to school change because they had prior knowledge, skills and talents that were required for the response, and this had been recognised by the principal.

> **Key learning:** Teachers' experiences, skills, special talents and prior knowledge about education and Melanesian cultural practices, enabled them to solve problems and find ways to respond to a particular change in a particular way. With their individual qualities, they initiated creative ideas; collectively designed strategies to reach solutions, provided training, identified individual teacher's potentials and shared responsibilities that would enable them to respond positively to school change.

9.2.6. School Context and School Environment

In the Enabling Teacher' Responses to School Change Framework, the core, components, sub-components and teachers' personal qualities are situated in a school context. The school context, and the physical school environment, includes teachers and their relationships, the school geography, Melanesian culture, school culture, school ethos, Christian church denominations and community connections, all of which influence teachers' styles and degree of response to school change. The influence of Melanesian culture and ethnic practices enabled teachers to influence each other and the wider community in their own ways, for example, as witnessed by the high levels of participation in annual fundraising events.

School context and school environment contribute significantly to shaping teachers' work experiences, expectations, behaviour and attitudes in relation to their responses to school change by shaping responses. Thus, teachers are influenced and guided to respond to programs and activities within the boundaries of the school context. For instance, in one of the case study NSSs, teachers withdrew from responding to change because a previous principal, although a highly qualified and experienced school leader overseas, had ignored Melanesian culture when trying to respond to changes related to teacher professionalism.

In the four case study NSSs, the school context helped the teachers to understand other teachers, their students and communities before designing appropriate approaches to school improvement. It is common practice for teachers to have informal meetings and storytelling sessions around the school campus. This cultural practice strengthens teachers' sense of community and their collective response to school change. Also, a positive school context helps teachers to easily identify the background and context that teachers and students bring to the school, and to learning and to thus decide the best response to address school change.

> **Key learnings:** School context and school environment set expectations that shape teachers' mindsets, work experiences, expectations, behaviour and attitudes in relation to their responses to school change. They enable teachers to focus their responses to school change in particular ways. They influence and inform teachers about the kind of responses that are effective and applicable in their NSSs.

Summary of the Key Learnings

The Enabling Teachers' Responses to School Change Framework (see Figure 1) was developed from the findings of this study. This framework provides the answers to the research overarching question and sub-questions for this study and how teachers' responses to school change could be enhanced. This framework, through its components and sub-components, has further synthesised a variety of ways and areas that have to be considered to enable teachers to respond effectively to school change. All the knowledge and understandings that emerged from the study and that are contained within each component and sub-component were synthesised and presented as key learnings (see Table 9.1). These key learnings are the culmination of this study which has identified the key areas that need to be considered and enhanced to enable teachers to respond positively to school change. Moreover, the key learnings provide an evidence based and substantial foundation for making recommendations on specific areas to the responsible authorities in the Solomon Islands and for future research.

Table 9.1

Summary of the Key Learnings influencing teachers' responses to school change

THEME	KEY LEARNING	SYNTHESIS
9.2.2 Leadership	Each principal used knowledge of their own professional experience, qualifications and personal qualities to identify and invite teachers to complement their principal leadership position and to enable other teachers to respond to specific school change.	Synthesised key learnings about leadership

The principals have ability to know teachers and identify the knowledge and skills that need to be enhanced to enable teachers to respond to school change. The three style of leadership that encourage collaborative and cooperative response are invitational, consultative and strategic. In addition, the principal's enabling style of leadership draws teachers together and motivates them to respond to school change with open mindedness. |
| 9.2.2.1 Principals' styles of leadership | The principals' invitational, consultative and strategic styles of leadership drew the teachers together to work collaboratively and cooperatively as a team of professionals to enable them to respond appropriately to school change. Where principals adopted enabling styles of leadership this encouraged teachers to support the principal, to willingly accept leadership responsibilities, and use their knowledge, skills and special talents to respond positively to school change. | |
| 9.2.2.2 Teacher motivation | Teacher motivation for embracing school change is directly influenced by the style of leadership of the principal. In the case study schools, motivated by enabling leadership styles, teachers become increasingly intrinsically motivated to seek opportunities to work collaboratively to improve the school, and become more open to new understandings of teacher professionalism, | |
| 9.2.3 Enhanced Knowledge and Skills | Teachers need to increase their knowledge and skills to enable them to respond to school change positively. The principal is obliged to facilitate initiatives that enhance teachers' knowledge and skills and encourage teacher collaboration by involving the more qualified teachers. | Synthesised Key learnings about Enhanced Knowledge and Skills

The principals have the ability to know the teachers and the required knowledge and skills for school change. Through ongoing professional learning and development, teachers enhance their knowledge and skills. Teachers' collaboration draws teachers together and provides opportunities for teachers to share their knowledge, skills and resources to enable them to respond positively to school change. |
| 9.2.3.1 Teachers' professional learning and development | Ongoing teacher professional learning and development enables teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills so that they can respond to ongoing changes in their schools. Female teachers need to have the same professional learning opportunities as their male colleagues if their professional potential to contribute to school change is to be realised. | |
| 9.2.3.2 Teachers' collaboration | In each school context, teachers' collaboration, enhanced their knowledge and skills, as they sought to solve problems and respond with a range of approaches to school change. Through this collaboration, trust was developed that influenced them to take on leadership responsibilities to support and mentor other teachers both formally and informally, to enable them to respond effectively to school change. | |

9.2.3.3 Supportive resources	If teachers are provided with appropriate resources, they will add value and be motivated to respond positively to school change. With support, training, information and advice about resource-making, teachers are able to use their knowledge, skills and special talents to produce additional teaching and learning resources. Providing teachers with opportunity to access the Internet would enable them to access a variety of resources.	
9.2.4 Vision	Having a clear school vision enables the principal and the teachers to focus on what they identify as desirable change in their NSSs. The school's vision gives teachers a clear understanding of the purpose of the intended school change, which helps to inspire, motivate and encourage them to cooperate and persevere to respond to school change positively even when they encounter challenges.	Synthesised Key learnings about Vision Clear school vision gives teachers a sense of purpose and direction for intended school change in their NSSs. Sharing of school vision with clear guidelines for school change increase the teachers' sense of ownership which in turn motivate them to collaborate, support each other and response to school change with confidence.
9.2.4.1 Teachers' sense of ownership	Where teachers had a sense of ownership of their school vision, it motivated and influenced them to share responsibilities, pool resources and team up to respond to school change. It motivated and gave teachers confidence to collectively take charge of deciding how they could best work together to support each other in school activities and programs for school change.	
9.2.4.2 Guidelines for school improvement	Providing teachers with clear guidelines for reviewing the school and documenting the desired changes would enable them to have a clear understanding of the purpose of and approaches to school improvement. It would give them self-confidence, proper planning and appropriate coordination and delegation of responsibilities.	
9.2.5 Teachers' Knowledge, Skills, Special Talents, Professionalism, and Responsibilities	Teachers' experiences, skills, special talents and prior knowledge about education and Melanesian cultural practices, enabled them to develop to solve problems and find ways to respond to a particular change in a particular way. With their individual qualities, they initiated creative ideas, designed strategies, to reach solution; provided training, identified individual teacher's potentials and shared responsibilities that would enable them to respond positively to school change.	Synthesised Key learnings about Teachers' Knowledge, Skills, Special Talents, Professionalism, and Responsibilities Teachers bring to their school individual qualities which enable them to understand the context of their school and accept responsibilities and use their skills and special talents to respond positively to school change.
9.2.6 School context and school environment	School context and school environment set expectation that shapes teachers' mindsets, work experiences, expectations, behaviour and attitudes in relation to their responses to school change. They enable teachers to focus their responses to school change in particular ways. They influence and inform teachers about the kind of responses that are effective and applicable in their NSSs.	Synthesised Key learnings about School context and school environment School context and school environment influence teachers to reframe their mind sets about school change in their NSSs and the way they respond to the identified change. It sets expectations in which teachers are expected to work towards.

In the section which follows, the recommendations arising from the key learnings are presented.

9.3. Recommendations for Enabling Teachers' Responses to School Change

Seven recommendations emerged from this study based on the evidence in four selected NSSs in the Solomon Islands. These recommendations are proposed as ways of enhancing teachers' abilities to respond positively to school change.

9.3.1. Professional Learning and Development

The education authority and principal should prepare the teachers to engage in whatever change is introduced into the school. Teacher preparation should be in two phases. The first is to identify the key teachers who are capable of pursuing the required knowledge and skills to support them in further studies. Teachers who have diploma teaching qualifications should be encouraged to upgrade to undergraduate degree qualifications and principals should have at least educational leadership or administration and management qualifications in addition to teaching qualifications. It is recommended that having appropriate qualifications will equip teachers and principals with knowledge and skills so they are in a better position to initiate and execute change successfully with minimal supervision. The relevant preparation depends on the type of change and the school's needs. Secondly, when change is introduced to the school, the relevant authority and organisation should provide professional learning development at appropriate stages during the change process. This professional support includes the provision of backup plans and support systems for continuity.

Recommendation 1

It is recommended that:

a) the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development consider the recommendations of the education authorities in their planning for in-service teacher training;

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b) the education authorities support the staff development plan of the school by providing funds for teachers to enrol in distance and flexible learning modes;

c) principals encourage their teachers to enrol for further studies;

d) principals provide and seek funding to support teachers in completing their ongoing studies;

e) principals, in consultation with teachers, identify priorities and provide the relevant resources for school professional learning; and

f) principals organise relevant in-house professional development.

9.3.2. Information Technology Support Service

The excitement of introducing computers and the Internet in the schools to improve teaching and learning is often short lived because of reasons related to a lack of qualified expertise to ensure ongoing supervision and maintenance of the devices. Thus, considering the financial constraints and context of schools in the Solomon Islands, a developing country, the national government and education authority should consider establishing a national information technology (IT) mobile support service in which qualified IT professionals provide backup services to repair computers, maintain Internet connections and provide basic computer training.

Recommendation 2

It is recommended that:

a) the Ministry of Education and Human Resources and Development organise basic computer and Internet training for selected teachers in each school;

b) principals identify teachers to attend professional development in computer training offered by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource development;

c) education authorities, through consultation with principals, organise basic computer training and use of the Internet for teachers in the school; and

d) principals organise time for computer and Internet training for their teachers in the schools.

9.3.3. Whole School Review

The Ministry of Education should provide for school reviews and a school review template for the education authority and the NSSs. The NSSs would best be reviewed by external reviewers who have in-depth knowledge of relevant research and school review experience of NSSs, in collaboration with school principals and teachers. Subsequent reviews of each school should be determined by recommendations from the previous school review report. The aim of the school review is to provide a well-documented report of the changes required for school improvement, with recommendations for teachers' responses.

Recommendation 3

It is recommended that:

a) the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development provides a school review template for education authorities and schools;

b) education authorities organise whole-school reviews in consultation with the Ministry of Education and the schools;

c) education authorities provide funds and connect the teachers with external school review experts; and

d) principals involve teachers in the school review, so that teachers also have ownership of the process

9.3.4. Style of Leadership

The Education Authority should consider the principal's style of leadership, in terms of how it encourages teachers to respond to school change, when appointing the principal. The principal needs to have a leadership style that can advance school improvements and enhance teachers' responses to change. Enabling, consultative, visionary, strategic and invitational leadership are some of the effective styles that encourage teachers to respond to school change. These styles of leadership also allow emergent teacher leaders and other teachers to use their knowledge, skills and experience to take leadership roles to advocate for positive change. In addition, these styles of leaderships should be encouraged in NSSs because they are in harmony with Melanesian cultural practices.

Recommendation 4

It is recommended that:

    a) the Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development continue to organise in-service training on educational leadership programs for principals;

    b) education authorities seek funds and authorise the schools to fund principals to enrol in further studies through distance and flexible learning modes;

    c) principals organise in-house professional development in leadership for teachers; and

    d) principals consult, invite and involve teachers, based on their merits, in school activities and programs.

    e) education authorities should work towards increasing the appointment and promotion of female teachers into school leadership positions as they are equally as competent as male leaders in response to school change.

    f) education authorities should encourage the appointment of female teachers to principal and deputy principal positions.

9.3.5. Regular Meetings

The principal should organise regular staff meetings and encourage heads of subject departments to organise regular departmental meetings. Having regular meetings provides opportunities for principals and teachers to collaborate and develop their shared sense of purpose and discuss school change and how they would respond positively to the identified change. It also creates an understanding of other teachers and encourages togetherness and collaboration. Teachers who have difficulties in adopting and adapting to change could be easily identified and provided with relevant assistance. In church-operated NSSs, teachers should have daily worship sessions, because teachers believe that prayer strengthens their spiritual beliefs and values, connects them together for a common purpose, and improves their collegial relationship. Worship sessions for staff provide an avenue by which teachers are reminded of the school ethos. Therefore, in addition to their

involvement in other organised prayer groups, attending regular church programs and worship services, teachers in Church-operated NSSs should organise daily worship sessions for the staff in the morning before they engage in other school activities and programs.

Recommendation 5

It is recommended that:

a) education authorities encourage principals and teachers to organise regular staff meetings;

b) principals organise regular staff meetings and encourage and monitor teachers' departmental meetings and other school-organised meetings; and

c) Church-operated NSSs have morning worship sessions for the staff.

9.3.6. Using Available Resources

The principal should encourage the teachers to use and share available resources and information that are deemed important and relevant to school improvements and change. Using available resources and sharing information would encourage teachers to be creative, self-reliant, and engage in reflective practices to improve their collective responses to change. In addition, using available resources would help alleviate financial constraints, foster self-worth and provide opportunities for teachers to learn from each other and share with those who have no opportunity or resources to access much-needed information. The culture of sharing in schools is important because it helps to create teamwork and build collegial relationships. In addition, teachers have a share of information and resources and can spread effective practice in the school.

Recommendation 6

It is recommended that:

a) the education authorities support teachers with appropriate and adequate resources required for teaching and learning and to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills and

b) school principals encourage and provide teachers with professional advice, funds to enrol in professional learning development and profession development programs to enhance knowledge and skills and provide them opportunities to use available resources.

9.3.7. Appointment of Principals to Schools

Appointment of principals and teachers to the NSSs should be based on merit, leadership quality, good character and school needs and not influenced or dictated by, example politicians, groups, or individuals as a means to achieve their personal interests and agendas.

Recommendation 7

It is recommended that:

a) the education authorities appoint school principals who have context specific vision and leadership qualities, who can work with teachers to serve the needs of the NSSs; and
b) principals be encouraged or required to declare all conflict of interests.
c) appointments are based on merit and suitability for the particular school context.

9.4. Future Research

This study provides information about how teachers respond to change in four Solomon Islands National Secondary Schools, which can add value to similar research and the literature relating to NSSs in the small developing countries in the Pacific. The results of this study also narrow the gap in the literature relating to teachers' responses to change in secondary schools. This study had boundaries as it related only to the selected four national secondary schools, the selected teachers and principals at the time the study was conducted. However, there are some similarities across all secondary schools in the Solomon Islands, which could also be helped by the findings of this study.

There are only eight NSSs in the Solomon Islands. Four of the eight NSSs were involved in this study. Thus, similar research could be conducted in the other

four NSSs to complete the study of how teachers respond to change in the NSSs in the Solomon Islands. Also, this study focused on what the teachers identified as change across the four selected NSSs, but future research could focus on one particular change across all eight NSSs, in greater depth.

The study clearly shows how styles of principal leadership have influenced how teachers responded to school change. Therefore, future research could focus on the leadership of the principal. Similarly, study could focus on how head of department and the department teachers responded to change within the jurisdiction of the department.

9.5. Limitations of This Study

Reflecting on this study and any other similar studies, a common feature is that the boundary system limited the ability to generalise to other schools. The boundary in this case study was only related to the four selected NSSs and the teachers and principal participated in this study. Therefore, there is a need to conduct similar studies with other NSSs in the Solomon Islands.

Data collection for this study was conducted during the period leading up to the national general election of the Solomon Islands government. At this time, politicians had great influence on the availability of the limited public transport to the islands and the NSS communities, thus causing delays in public transport. This factor affected appointments with teachers for data collection, and as a result of transport difficulties, some of the teachers at two of the four case study NSSs were not able to participate in the study at the time and date that had been proposed for interviews. Therefore, some of the interviews had to be either delayed or rescheduled.

There are eight NSSs in the Solomon Islands with an average of 24 teachers each, including the principals and deputy principals in each school. However, this study was only conducted in four NSSs, with an average of eight teachers participating in each case study. Thus only a small number of teachers represented each of the four case study NSSs. One of the variables not properly covered in the selection of the participants was equal gender representation as many of the female

teachers were not available to engage in the study. The study was also limited by the geographical location of the schools. These factors influenced the number and range of the participants. While I could not control the limitation of this study, I made some important choices with regards to the number or the participants, methodology used and the interpretation of the data.

9.6. Final Comment

In reflecting on this study, there is no doubt that low funding support, lack of ongoing professional support and resources and leadership issues are some of the stumbling blocks that have impaired teachers' positive responses to change in the NSSs. However, the teachers' sources of strength and intrinsic motivation has continued to drive and influence them to respond positively to change. Christian beliefs, values, and Melanesian culture also played essential roles in binding teachers together to focus their responses towards school visions for change. Although school changes are inhibited by lack of resources, funds and qualified people, the advantage of the case study NSSs is that they are rich in natural resources, parental and community support and a sense of community that only needs effective teacher leaders to utilise them to enable the teachers to respond positively to school change. The teachers can identify various types of change in the schools and know which type of response is best to address the identified change. Using their professional judgment, they can decide whether the response should be a collective one or conducted by individual teacher leaders.

Early career and more qualified teachers are active in responding to change. They are emergent leaders who gain trust from long-serving principals, long-serving teachers and female teachers in advocating and promoting the use of the Internet, responding to changes in student academic achievements and changes in students' learning needs. However, an ongoing challenge is to also consider the long-serving teachers and the female teachers who, historically have been overlooked in some of the school changes.

9.7. Personal Reflection

At the completion of this study, I reflect that it has changed me in many ways. Undoubtedly, the knowledge, skills and experience I have gained during the course of this study are the springboard that will take me to a higher level in my contributions to and involvement in various educational fields in the Solomon Islands.

In this study, I gained knowledge, skills and experience, and developed specific talents in my discipline. This has improved the way I see and interpret ideas and different views, and opened my mind to a more global view of knowledge. It has shaped and improved my personal vision and thus helped me to visualise my position as both a practitioner and an academic in the field of education. Furthermore, it has given me the desire and the courage to continue to conduct similar research and to work with academics, principals, teachers, educational institutions and communities to generate new knowledge in this area of research.

The Solomon Islands is a small developing country, where very few of the local population have a Doctor of Philosophy qualification, and little research has been conducted in the area of education. Hence, I feel that the wealth of knowledge, skills and experience gained in this study can be used to contribute to enhancing the training of teacher-trainees and my work colleagues at the Solomon Islands National University, to help them to respond positively in improving education in the Solomon Islands. Only two lecturers have PhD qualifications in our School of Education. This is an indication that I have a lot of work ahead of me as a lecturer, academic and mentor to contribute to in-house training to enhance the research knowledge and skills of my colleagues (lecturers) and thus influence and encourage a research culture in our five-year-old Solomon Islands National University.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Solomon Islands Research Application Form

SOLOMON ISLANDS

FORM RA

RESEARCH APPLICATION

1. NAME

2. ADDRESS (es) (if more than one give all)

3. Curriculum Vitae

4. Subject(s) to be studied.

5. Areas/locality where research work is to be conducted.

6. Funding

a. Who is funding this Research?

b. What is the level of funding?

7. Method of Research

8. My Research will involve …………………….. Please tick

Filming		Collecting Sample/Specimen	
Recording			
Photographing		Others (Please specify)	x

9. Arrangements for Accommodation in the place(s) of Research

10. How will the research results be used? List

11. List benefits of Research to Solomon Islands.

12. Name and Address of any person/organization/institution who is willing to assist you while you are doing your research. (A letter from local host will be useful).

13. How long will the research take? Specify dates if possible.

14. Any additional specific information you consider useful for our perusal of your application may be described below.

15. Give us two referees certifying your research application and background (Two separate statements expected) refer to references or support letters attached).

1. Name:

Address:

2. Name:

Address:

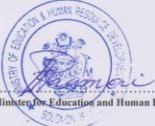16. Applicant's Signature _____Date_____

Appendix 2: Research Permit

Appendix 3: A Letter to the Education Authority

6/14 Uniplaza Court Kearneys Spring, 4350, Toowoomba Australia
Phone: +61415441009
Email: JohnLenga.Sisiolo@usq.edu.au

May 13, 2014

Education Director

Dear Sir,

Application for permission to research at...

I am John Lenga Sisiolo, a lecturer at the Faculty of Education in the Solomon Islands National University. I am currently on study leave undertaking Doctor of Philosophy studies at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia.

As part of my Doctor of Philosophy research thesis, I am required to complete a research project in education. I would prefer to conduct my research in ....for about one (1) week only. This would be sometimes from the first week of August to the last week of September, 2014.

The title of my research is on Teachers' response to school change: An investigation into the views and practices of teachers of the four secondary schools in the Solomon Islands. It will be focused on what teachers identify as change in the secondary, how they respond to the identified change, how school ethos influences teachers' responses and teachers contributions to successful school change.

This information should bring some light on teacher leaders' response to change in the four selected secondary schools in Solomon Islands.

Research will involve semi-structured interviews, documentation analysis and field notes.

The research will not interfere with school activities, conflict with religious belief, and the participants' official duties. Interviews of eight selected teachers including the principal and the deputy principal will take approximately 40 minutes to one hour each during the participants' free time.

All the procedures for this research have been designed in accordance within the ethical guidelines of the University of Southern Queensland. The study would not harm the participants, disadvantage the schools, and discredit the Church in any manner. The schools and the participants will be coded to conceal their true identity. Since the interview will be also recorded and will be transcribed. The participants have a right to withdraw from the study but for any withdrawal, they will be asked to inform the researcher or supervisor. Their rights will be fully respected.

My supervisor of this study is Marian Lewis and Joan Conway, Faculty of Education, University of Southern Queensland, Australia. They can be contacted on: Phone +61 7 46312330 and email: Marian Lewis: Marian.Lewis@usq.edu.au Joan Conway: Joan.Conway@usq.edu.au

Thank you for accepting my research application.

Yours faithfully,

John Lenga Sisiolo

Appendix 4: A Letter to the Principal

6/14 Uniplaza Court

Kearneys Spring, 4350, Toowoomba

Australia

Phone: +61415441009

Email: JohnLenga.Sisiolo@usq.edu.au

May 13, 2014

The Principal

Dear Sir,

Application for permission to research at...

I am John Lenga Sisiolo, a lecturer at the Faculty of Education in the Solomon Islands National University. I am currently on study leave undertaking Doctor of Philosophy studies at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia.

As part of my Doctor of Philosophy research thesis, I am required to complete a research project in education. I would prefer to conduct my research in ....for about one (1) week only. This would be sometimes from the first week of August to the last week of September, 2014. You would be informed of the actual date.

The title of my research is on Teachers' response to school change: An investigation into the views and practices of teachers of the four secondary schools in the Solomon Islands. It will be focused on what teachers identify as change in the secondary, how they respond to the identified change, how school ethos influences teachers' responses and teachers contributions to successful school change.

This information should bring some light on teacher leaders' response to change in the four selected secondary schools in Solomon Islands.

Research will involve semi-structured interviews, documentation analysis and field notes.
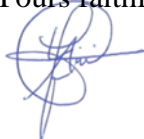
The research will not interfere with school activities, conflict with religious belief, and the participants' official duties. Interviews of eight selected teachers including the principal and the deputy principal will take approximately 40 minutes to one hour each during the participants' free time.

All the procedures for this research have been designed in accordance within the ethical guidelines of the University of Southern Queensland. The study would not harm the participants, disadvantage the schools, and discredit the Church in any manner. The schools and the participants will be coded to conceal their true identity. Since the interview will be also recorded and will be transcribed. The participants have a right to withdraw from the study but for any withdrawal, they will be asked to inform the researcher or supervisor. Their rights will be fully respected.

My supervisor of this study is Marian Lewis and Joan Conway, Faculty of Education, University of Southern Queensland, Australia. They can be contacted on: Phone +61 7 46312330 and email: Marian Lewis: Marian.Lewis@usq.edu.au Joan Conway: Joan.Conway@usq.edu.au

Thank you for accepting my research application.

Yours faithfully,

John Lenga Sisiolo

Appendix 5: Participant Information Sheet

USQ
AUSTRALIA

U n i v e r s i t y   o f   S o u t h e r n   Q u e e n s l a n d

The University of Southern Queensland

Participant Information Sheet

HREC Approval Number:

Full Project Title: Teachers' responses to school change: An investigation into the views and practices of teachers at four national secondary schools in Solomon Islands

Principal Researcher: John Lenga Sisiolo

I would like to invite you to take part in this research project.

1. <u>Procedures</u>

As part of my Doctor of Philosophy in Education research study at the University of Southern Queensland, I am required to complete a research project in education.

My two supervisors are monitoring the progress and quality of this study. They provide academic guidance, advice and professional support for this research. If you have questions about this research, please feel free to ask me. If there are any questions about the research that I am unable to answer, I will contact my supervisors for clarification.

The aim of this study is to explore how teachers respond to change in national secondary schools (NSSs) in Solomon Islands. Therefore, it is conducted with the teachers and school leaders of four selected NSSs in Solomon Islands.

As part of my study, you will be invited to participate in a semi-structured interview (meeting) with me to discuss your opinions about a number of topics relating to school change. These topics will include how you identify and respond to whole school changes, the opportunities this provides, the successes you have experienced

and the challenges faced. I would also like to explore what you see as the influence of leadership, school culture and ethos on whole school change

Before the interviews, there will be a briefing meeting with all the participants about the study and their participation. This will give you the opportunity to ask questions and to clarify information. It is expected that the individual interviews will take 40 minutes to one hour. The interview will be conducted in Solomon Islands pidgin and in private so no one else will hear what is discussed in the interview. You will be invited to sign an informed consent form prior to the interview and return it to me.

I am aware that teachers are very busy and will only arrange the interview at a time that is suitable for you and does not conflict with your other duties. We can reschedule the interview if you have urgent or essential appointments to attend at the time we originally agreed

To ensure confidentiality, all data will be coded and your contribution will not be able to be identified. Your contribution will not directly be discussed with other staff members.

With your permission, the interview will be digitally recorded and will be transcribed by me. Both your identity and the recorded interview will be kept confidential and protected at all times. I will only use the recorded interview for its intended purposes, that is, as re-identified data contributing to my PhD thesis.

As the researcher, if possible, I would like to visit and see actual changes you mention in the interview. Prior to any such visit, arrangements will be made with the responsible person in-charge.

Photographs will only be taken with your written consent.

It is hoped that both teachers and the school will benefit from the results of the study by improving effective response to school change. A two page summary of the results of the findings will be given to you and the school. In addition the school will receive a summary of the overall findings of the study.

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2. **<u>Voluntary Participation</u>**

Participation is entirely voluntary. **If you do not wish to take part you are not obliged to.** If you decide to take part and later change your mind, you are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. Any information already obtained from you as an individual will be destroyed. You are not obliged to give your consent, if you do not wish to be photographed. However if you do consent to be photographed, as part of a group, it will not be possible to later withdraw that photograph without the permission of the other group members

Your decision whether to take part or not to take part, or to take part and then withdraw, will not affect your relationship with the University of Southern Queensland or your school.

Please notify me if you decide to withdraw from this project.

Should you have any queries regarding the progress or conduct of this research, you can contact the principal researcher:

John Lenga Sisiolo
Faculty of Business, Education, Law & Arts
School of Teacher Education and Early Childhood
PO Box 7547, Toowoomba South 4350, Queensland, Australia.
+61415441009/ +61449567190

If you have any ethical concerns with how the research is being conducted or any queries about your rights as a participant please feel free to contact the University of Southern Queensland Ethics Officer on the following details.

Ethics and Research Integrity Officer
Office of Research and Higher Degrees
University of Southern Queensland
West Street, Toowoomba 4350
Ph: +61 7 4631 2690
*Email: **ethics@usq.edu.au***

Appendix 6: Consent Form

University of Southern Queensland

The University of Southern Queensland

Consent Form

HREC Approval Number:

Student Researcher: John Lenga Sisiolo

TO: The Participants

Full Project Title: Teachers' responses to school change: An investigation into the views and practices of teachers at four national secondary schools in Solomon Islands

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.

- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.

- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.

- I understand that I will be audio recorded and maybe photographed during the study.

- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential.

- I understand that the recorded audio will *be stored in a locked cabin in a secured room that is not easily accessed by other people. Only the researcher has the key of the locked cabin where the recorded audio will be stored. After the translation of the recorded semi-structured interview is completed, it will be erased permanently.*

Name of

participant…………………………………………………………......

Signed……………………………………………..**Date**………………………

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If you have any ethical concerns with how the research is being conducted or any queries about your rights as a participant please feel free to contact the University of Southern Queensland Ethics Officer on the following details.

Ethics and Research Integrity Officer
Office of Research and Higher Degrees
University of Southern Queensland
West Street, Toowoomba 4350
Ph: +61 7 4631 2690
Email: *ethics@usq.edu.au*