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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ROLE
IN IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

BY

DEBORAH ANNE ROWLEY

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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Abstract

Considerable research has been conducted both in the area of educational change and in the role of the principalship. This research has produced an extensive amount of literature on educational change as a planned process; however, it has really neglected to illustrate change from the principal's perspective. As the principal is often the key individual responsible for implementing changes at the school level, it seems appropriate to examine change from the principal's perspective.

The primary purpose of this study was to ascertain the attitudes of four principals toward change and toward their role in initiating and facilitating change within their schools. The study also examined the skills and strategies the principals identified as being important for implementing change in the school environment.

This investigation was designed as a non-experimental, descriptive study intended to obtain a rich and comprehensive understanding of principals' perceptions toward their role in bringing about change. The four principals who participated in the study varied in their years of experience, and three of the participants were principals of elementary schools, while one was the principal of an elementary-junior high school. Extensive, semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect the data, and this allowed the researcher to probe for more detailed information from the four participants. Open-ended questions also enabled the researcher to attain thorough descriptions from each interviewee, and to develop greater insight as to how the four principals interpreted their role in relation to change. Data analysis was ongoing throughout the

study and follow-up interviews were scheduled to enable the researcher to confirm interpretations made from the interview data.

The four principal participants viewed change as a process involving the attitudes and personal beliefs of individuals involved. They viewed themselves as having to create a positive atmosphere that was receptive to change, and having to communicate their personal goals and beliefs to staff members. They viewed ownership as an important aspect in bringing about change, and they identified several strategies which they felt were helpful in implementing change, such as involving teachers in decision making, providing necessary resources, and providing instructional time for teachers to become more knowledgeable about an innovation.

Several themes were also identified from the descriptive findings. The interviewees expressed varied attitudes regarding the notions of timing, personal responsibility, decision making, and effective leadership. The research also highlighted the idea that some of the principals regarded change implementation as an integral part of living and learning, while others perceived it as being a responsibility within their administrative role.

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Chapter 1

Introduction and Statement of the Problem

Throughout the last two decades schools have experienced a number of changes in curriculum and instruction. Programs and practices have been modified or replaced with the intention of improving schools, or, more specifically, of improving student learning. Since a major educational goal is to help students learn, an effective school may be regarded as one that constantly seeks to improve student learning. A key person in this process is the principal. The principal can be an initiator of changes resulting from school-based goals and objectives, or she/he can be a facilitator of changes mandated at the provincial or school board level. The principal's vision for the school, and the goals held by the administration and staff, provide a foundation from which decisions for school improvement are made.

Given that principals are ultimately responsible at the school level for the instructional program, the supervision of teachers, the management of schedules and the communication between the school and community, they are in a powerful position to promote or inhibit change. Several researchers who have examined the relationship of leadership and change suggest that the principal is the key agent to influencing change within the school. Fullan (1982) refers to the Rand study supporting educational change and cites Berman and McLaughlin's conclusions that "projects having the active support of the principal were the most likely to fare well" (p. 135). The actions principals demonstrate to show support for new programs or projects may depend on how they view the

change process and regard their role in facilitating change.

Because principals are frequently faced with this responsibility, it seemed appropriate to discover how principals viewed this process and regarded their role in initiating and facilitating change. Such knowledge based on principals' own reflections should be helpful to prospective school administrators.

Justification for the Study

Although implementing change is one of the principal's many responsibilities, it is often a very demanding and time-consuming one. While there is an extensive amount of literature on change as a planned process, few studies have described change from the perspective of the initiator and implementor. Therefore, it seems worthwhile to examine the principal's role in initiating and facilitating change from the principal's perspective.

Purpose of the Study

The objective of this study was to examine the perceptions of four principals toward change and toward their role in initiating and facilitating change within their schools. More specifically, the study addressed the following questions:

1. How did principals view change?
2. How did principals view their role in relation to change?
3. What did principals do to implement change in their schools?

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions have been used:

Innovation: Refers to any program, process or practice--new or not --that is new to a person.

Change: Any alteration in the status quo which is intended to improve student learning.

Change Process: How the change or innovation is brought about.

Planned Change: Refers to the deliberate actions aimed at making change more likely.

Change Facilitator: Refers to anyone who supports or encourages a change within a particular setting.

Assumptions

The following assumption was made: The information provided by principals during the interviews was an accurate reflection of their ideas, opinions and feelings about change and their role in implementing change.

Delimitations

This study was delimited to the reactions of four principals in one school district, so that extensive and in-depth interviews would be possible with each participant.

Limitations

This study was limited in that the data were collected solely from interviews. The interview presents limitations in that it requires

respondents to use memory recall of previous events. However, since principals had time to reflect during the interviews and could use their transcripts to aid recall and confirm earlier statements, this was not considered a serious limitation.

Organization of the Thesis

Chapter 1 has introduced the problem and objectives of the study. The literature pertaining to change models, leadership, goal setting and moral judgment is reviewed in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3 the methodology, research procedures, and data-collection techniques used in the study are outlined. Chapter 4 provides a content analysis of the interview data relating to the research questions, and Chapter 5 highlights the themes that emerged from the content analysis. In Chapter 6, the final chapter of the thesis, a summary of the study is presented, along with personal reflections and implications for prospective principals.

Chapter 2

Review of Related Literature

Principals are faced with two very important considerations when they are attempting to implement change for school improvement. First, they must consider the nature of the change or innovation they are attempting to implement. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, they need to understand change as a process in order to plan for or lead the change successfully.

Prior to 1975 most of the research in the area of educational change focused on specific innovations or changes being implemented during this time. Innovations such as new mathematics programs, open-area classrooms and team teaching were some of the topics highlighted by researchers during the 1960s and early 1970s. More recent studies addressing change focused on the process of change rather than on the change itself. Researchers have developed models which outline and clarify the change process as they see it. Literature resulting from these more recent studies of change also suggests that the principal, as head of the school organization, is the key person in leading any organizational change. During the past decade an extensive amount of literature has been written on the process of change. However, a somewhat limited amount of information exists regarding the principal's role in facilitating change. Very few studies identify the strategies and skills that principals use to manage change in their school improvement efforts.

Because this study examines principals' perceptions of the change process and of their role in facilitating change, the purpose of this

chapter is to present a unified discussion highlighting four related bodies of literature. The first section of this review examines research on the change process by identifying various models of change and their components. The second section presents the leadership skills and strategies viewed as important for principals initiating or facilitating change. Research and theories related to goal setting and the principal's vision for the school are examined in the third section, while the fourth and final section highlights the influence of personal values and moral judgment on the principal's vision for the school.

Models of Change

In their efforts to understand how new educational programs can be put into practice, researchers have developed several models outlining the change process or certain aspects of it.

The Berman and McLaughlin model. In 1975 a nationwide study was conducted by the Rand Corporation to investigate the issue of change in schools. RAND researchers Berman and McLaughlin (1976) sought to identify what needed to be done for successful change to occur. From their study, Berman and McLaughlin viewed the innovation process as consisting of three stages: initiation, implementation and incorporation. Within the initiation stage those involved in the organization generate plans and make decisions regarding programs and resources. They emphasize that decision making is an inherent part of this stage because those involved in facilitating the change should decide which programs or innovations they will support. Berman and McLaughlin also hypothesize that "the support and commitments made in the initiation period affect what happens when project implementation begins"

(p. 349).

The second stage within their model which they identify as being crucial is the implementation stage. It is during this phase that the program or innovation is transformed into practice. Many educational innovations never shift totally into reality because they are not properly implemented. Within their model, Berman and McLaughlin (1976) regard implementation as a complex organizational process involving three types of interactions between the innovation and the institutional setting:

1. Adaptation of both the project design and the institutional setting; we call this mutual adaptation.
2. No adaptation on the part of either project or setting; this lack of change, which we call nonimplementation, typically occurred in instances where the district played an indifferent host or projects were overcome by implementation problems.
3. Project adaptation to the indifference and resistance to change on the part of project participants but no change by participants themselves; this one-way process could be called cooptation of the project by its host. (p. 352)

In their observations, Berman and McLaughlin point out that mutual adaptation occurred only in situations where opportunities for problem solving existed during initiation. This observation may imply that implementation is most likely to be successful when administrators and users are involved in decision making from the outset.

The final stage of innovation is labelled incorporation, which occurs when the innovation or change continues on after implementation. The innovation is no longer 'special' and becomes part of the routine behavior of members within the organization. In outlining these three stages of innovation, Berman and McLaughlin recognize that each is largely affected by the type of innovation itself, those involved in the change and the organizational setting in which the change takes place.

The Fullan model. Fullan (1982), who also views change as a process, presents a model which he entitles "A Simplified Overview of the Change Process." Figure 1, displaying Fullan's model of the change

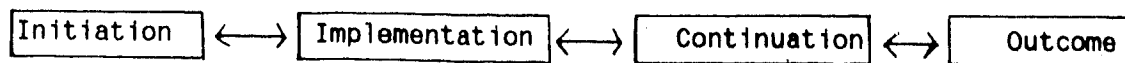


Figure 1. A simplified overview of the change process (Fullan, 1982, p. 40)

process, illustrates that change is not a linear process. Fullan explains the design of the model by stating that "the two-way arrows imply that it is not a linear process but rather one in which events at one phase can feed back to alter decisions taken at previous stages, which then proceed to work their way through in a continuous interactive way" (p. 40). Although Fullan's model does not make reference to the scope of change, those who initiate the change, or the time frame in which the change occurs, he expands on the model by stating that all of these factors must be taken into consideration when one is trying to facilitate change. Fullan emphasizes that the basic belief evolving from the model is that "change is a process, not an event" (p. 41).

The Lewin model. Like Fullan, Kurt Lewin developed a general model for explaining the change process. In their examination of change models, Blanchard and Zigarmi (1981) cite Lewin's theory of the change process. Lewin identifies three phases within the change process: unfreezing, changing and refreezing. During the first phase of unfreezing, the individuals in the organization are prepared for change. Blanchard and Zigarmi suggest that this phase of Lewin's model is

a thawing out process through which the forces acting on individuals are rearranged so that they now see the need for change. In brief, unfreezing is the breaking down of the mores, customs, and traditions of individuals--the old ways of doing things--so that they are ready to accept new alternatives. (p. 40)

Unfreezing, therefore, is a process of making the individual or the group involved in the change ready for accepting new alternatives.

The second phase that Lewin identifies is that of changing. This phase occurs once the individuals in the organization are ready to change. Changing occurs when individuals learn new behavior patterns exemplifying the change. In Lewin's view, changing requires that the individual identify with a model in order to learn new behaviors, and then successfully practice these behaviors to internalize them.

During the final phase of refreezing, the change becomes integrated into the individual's routine behavioral pattern. Blanchard and Zigarmi (1981) refer to Schein's explanation of refreezing. They interpret Schein's contention by stating that

if the new behavior is internalized while it is being learned, this automatically facilitates refreezing because the behaviour has been integrated into the individual's personality. If it has been learned through identification, it will persist only as long as the person's relationship with the original model persists. (p. 41)

Schein's belief supports the idea that it is important for individuals involved in a change to be in an environment that continually reinforces behavior complementing the change. In their interpretation of Lewin's model, Blanchard and Zigarmi suggest that the problem with most change attempts in schools is that the unfreezing and refreezing phases never occur. New programs or practices are sometimes introduced to teachers before they are ready or prepared for the change.

Change Strategies

Some researchers narrow their focus on the change process in order to identify change strategies. Benne and Chin (1969) recognize the following three strategies for changing: empirical-rational, normative re-educative and power coercive (p. 31). Within another model seven pure strategies for change are identified by Olmosk (1972). The strategies are as follows: fellowship, political, economic, academic, engineering, military and confrontation. Havelock (1973) also interprets the change process by categorizing strategies for change. His six-stage model entails the following stages:

1. building a relationship;
2. diagnosing the problem;
3. acquiring relevant resources;
4. choosing the solution;
5. gaining acceptance;
6. stabilizing the innovation and generating self-renewal.

All of these researchers emphasize strategies for change within their models and recognize that there is a need for assistance in implementing change.

Change as staff development. Other researchers regard change as being a process of staff development. Joyce and Showers (1980) state that there are five components essential for fundamental change. 'For individuals to internalize new behaviors and skills, they must be involved in training offering theory, demonstration, practice, feedback and coaching. Joyce and Showers state that whether we teach ourselves, or whether we learn from someone else, our training in the change can be categorized into several levels of impact. The levels they identify are:

1. Awareness - At the awareness level we realize the importance of an area and begin to focus on it. . . .
2. Concepts and Organized Knowledge - Concepts provide intellectual control over relevant content. . . .
3. Principles and Skills - Principles and skills are tools for action. . . . At this level there is potential for action --we are aware of the area, can think effectively about it, and possess the skills to act.
4. Application and Problem Solving - We transfer the concepts, principles and skills we have learned to the classroom.
(p. 380)

Joyce and Showers state that change really occurs only after the fourth level has been reached. The model created by Joyce and Showers recognizes the change process as being one of putting theory into practice.

Change as personal experience. Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, and Hall (1987) and Fullan (1982) view change as a highly personal experience. Hord et al. state that "effective change facilitators work with people in an adaptive and systematic way, designing interventions for clients' needs, realizing that these needs exist in particular contexts and settings" (p. 7). The Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) shown in Figure 2 illustrates the three components which they identify as being involved in the change process. These three components are Stages of Concern, Levels of Use and Innovation Configurations. Within the model there are interactive factors between the users and nonusers of the innovation, and the change facilitator.

The Stages of Concern component refers to the stages through which individuals within an organization progress as they adopt an innovation. Figure 3 briefly describes the stages, which are Awareness, Informational, Personal, Management, Consequence, Collaboration and Refocusing. Hord et al. (1987) refer to the developmental nature of concerns that exist within the Stages of Concern framework (p. 30).

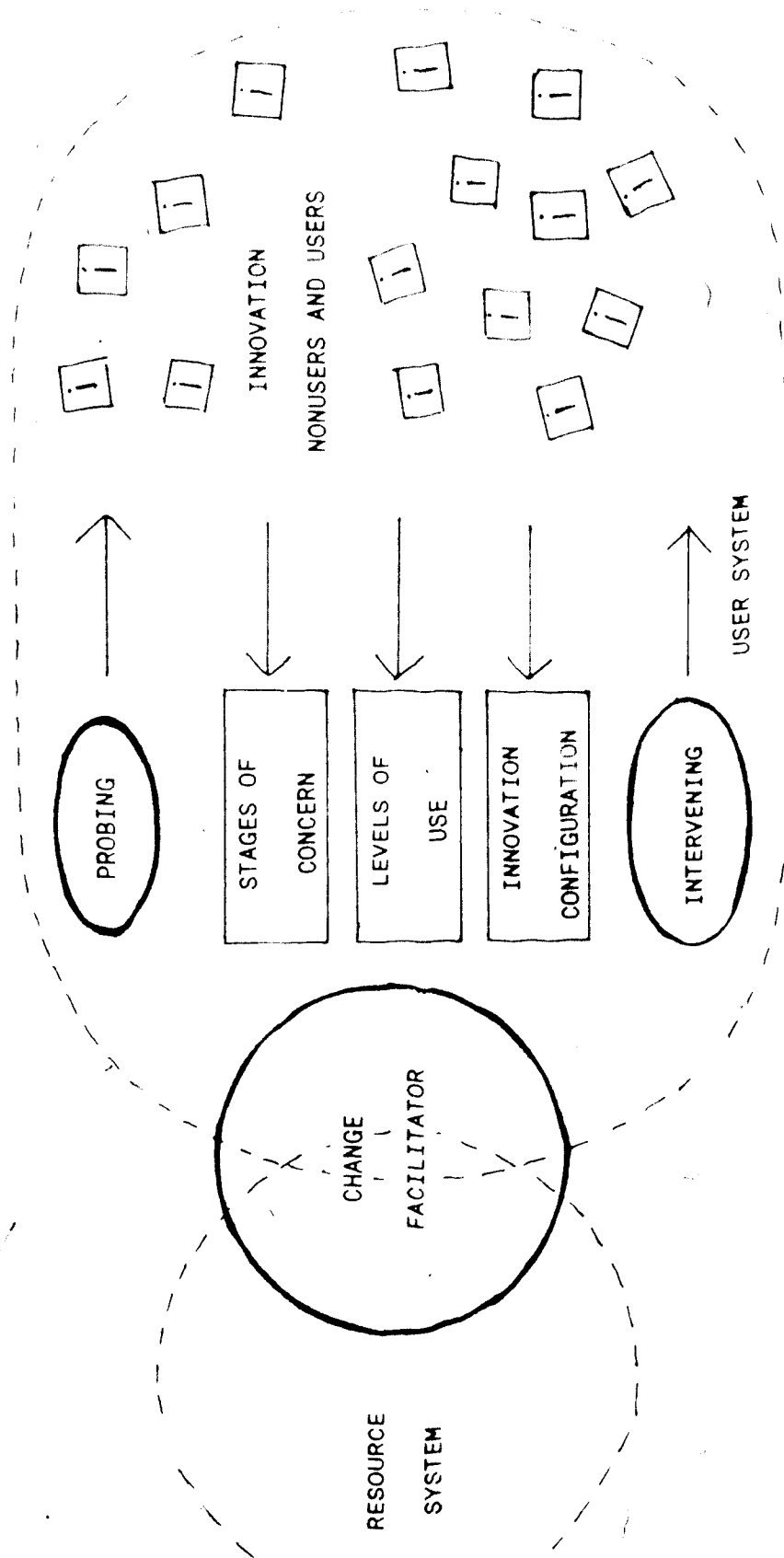


Figure 2. The concerns-based adoption model
(Horowitz, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall,
1987, p. 10)

	Stages of Concern		Expressions of Concern
I M P A C T	6	Refocusing	I have some ideas about something that would work even better.
	5	Collaboration	Am I concerned about relating what I am doing with what other instructors are doing?
	4	Consequence	How is my use affecting kids?
T A S K	3	Management	I seem to be spending all my time getting material ready.
	2	Personal	How will using it affect me?
S E L F	1	Informational	I would like to know more about it.
	0	Awareness	I am not concerned about it . . . (the innovation).

Figure 3. Stages of concern (Hord, Rutherford, Huling-Austin, & Hall, 1987, p. 31)

These three developmental concerns are "self, task, and impact." Self concerns exist when the individual is in the early stages of involvement with the innovation, and wants to know more about it. Task concerns arise as the individual begins to use the innovation and management concerns arise. Impact concerns evolve when the individual has used the innovation efficiently and has concerns about how the innovation affects others. As teachers progress through the change and impact concerns arise, they are already refining the innovation to produce better results with their students.

Another interactive component of the CBAM is the Levels of Use that individuals experience with a particular change. Figure 4 illustrates the levels of Nonuse, Orientation, Preparation, Mechanical Use, Routine, Refinement, Integration and Renewal.

0	Nonuse	No action is being taken with respect to the innovation.
1	Orientation	The user is seeking information about the innovation.
2	Preparation	The user is preparing to use the innovation.
3	Mechanical Use	The user is using the innovation in a poorly coordinated manner and is making user-oriented changes.
4a	Routine Use	The user is making few or no changes and has an established pattern of use.
4b	Refinement	The user is making changes to increase outcomes.
5	Integration	The user is making deliberate efforts to coordinate with others in using the innovation.
6	Renewal	The user is seeking more effective alternatives to established use of the innovation.

Figure 4. Levels of use (Hall, Wallace, Dossett, 1973; cited by Blanchard & Zigarmi, 1981, p. 45)

The third component of the CBAM is labelled Innovation Configuration. The basic meaning of Innovation Configuration is that it represents the various ways that individual users implement an innovation or change in their own settings.

Hall and Loucks (1978) view the CBAM as a "framework that staff

developers can use to aid in diagnosing, planning, delivery, and assessing the effects of staff development activities" (p. 39). The model clearly relates three aspects of change: the concerns that users express about the innovation, how the innovation is actually used, and the ways in which the innovation can be adapted to the needs and styles of particular individuals.

A common element within the literature related to change, then, is that change should be understood as a complex process and not as a single event. Many of the models presented in this section of the review attempt to explain educational change and provide a better understanding of how change occurs. The expectation, therefore, is that the principal can increase the likelihood of successful change implementation by understanding its complexity and by demonstrating appropriate leadership skills to facilitate the process.

The Role of the Principal in Change

School principals are regarded as having a key role in affecting individuals within the school community. Smith (1981) cites the research of Sarason:

the role of the principal may well be unique in the light it sheds both on the characteristics of the system and life in the classroom. . . . whether or not the principal likes the proposed changes s/he is in large part responsible for implementing those changes in fact and in spirit. (p. 5)

Sarason's statement illustrates the fact that principals have a unique responsibility in leading change within the school. In their research on school improvement, Leithwood and Montgomery (1982) found that principals' behaviors were crucial to the outcome of their change efforts. Although little research has been conducted on how principals

actually manage change effectively, the following paragraphs will highlight literature identifying several leadership skills and strategies applicable to principals who are initiating or facilitating change.

Effective communication. One of the most crucial leadership skills principals need to demonstrate when implementing change is effective communication. Virgilio and Virgilio (1984) state that "the principal must be a believer in open communication. He should recognize the diverse abilities of staff members and be able to assure their feelings of security and worth" (p. 348). In their research on effective principals, Leithwood and Montgomery (1986) also emphasize that effective principals facilitate communication by encouraging interactions among teachers about professional issues, and by establishing formal and informal occasions for these interactions. Principals are most likely to increase the success of an innovation if they relate information to teachers that is relevant to the change.

Effective principals are those who make a conscious effort to listen to staff members and to exchange ideas. Leithwood and Montgomery (1986) state that

Systematic Problem Solvers meet staff members on their own turf --they may walk around the school with the janitor, for instance. They meet staff regularly to keep up to date on school activities, make sure custodial staff are welcome in the staff room, and encourage staff to use each other for help. . . . Informal social occasions are arranged to foster open communication, and procedures are established to ensure communication of information needed by all staff on a regular basis. (p. 92)

In linking change theory to the principal's role of communicator, it seems crucial that all individuals involved in the change feel comfortable enough to express concerns and opinions. Principals must also clearly communicate what the change is about, and encourage those

involved to engage in formal and informal discussions regarding the change or innovation.

Building and maintaining interpersonal relationships. Closely related to the skill of facilitating open communication is the leadership skill of building and maintaining sound interpersonal relationships with school staff members. Principals who are effective in initiating and facilitating changes within their school consult and collaborate with teachers, and get to know their staff. They encourage teachers to make decisions on issues that directly affect them.

Blumberg and Greenfield (1980) imply that principals can build relationships when they work with teachers in a caring manner. Principals may listen to problems, but they have to follow through and take action in an attempt to solve problems. Blumberg and Greenfield also state that "caring is communicating in other ways, by involving teachers and students in decision-making" (p. 116). This viewpoint illustrates that as long as staff members are involved in the decision-making process, they will feel a greater sense of ownership with the school organization. By encouraging and facilitating more interactions amongst staff members, the principal is able to provide opportunities for building and maintaining relationships with those involved in the change.

Providing resources. A strategy that effective principals practice when facilitating change is that they ensure the necessary resources are available for those involved in the implementation. Whether the resources be equipment and materials or human support services, principals indicate their commitment to the change when they supply the necessary resources for their staff. When principals draw upon their own

resources to assist others, and they seek assistance from external resources, they build a support system for those involved in the change, and they demonstrate an active commitment to the innovation being implemented.

Participating in the implementation process. In addition to acquiring the necessary resources for teachers, principals can show their sincere commitment to the change by simply becoming more involved. Fullan (1982) cites Berman and McLaughlin by stating that "the principal's actions carry the message as to whether a change is to be taken seriously and serve to support teachers. . . . One of the best indicators of active involvement is whether the principal attends workshop sessions with teachers" (p. 135). Leithwood and Montgomery (1986) also support this view:

a common feeling of purpose, mutual understanding, respect and commitment is engendered among staff by highly effective principals, in part through their participation with staff. They participate in professional and some curriculum planning in order to appreciate the complexity of the task, ensure that realistic expectations are set, and provide leadership where it is needed. (p. 87)

These researchers indicate that when principals work with teachers as a team and they provide leadership when necessary, they demonstrate to others by their actions that they are truly committed to the change.

Proactive planning. A recurring concept within the literature on leadership and change is the strategy of thinking and planning ahead. Principals who are most likely to be successful in implementing change are those who are proactive in identifying potential concerns and problems that staff members may have. Based on research conducted at the Research and Development Center for Teacher Education at the University of Texas (RDCTE), Justiz (1985) suggests that principals need to keep

abreast of information regarding the change they are implementing. He believes that principals need to learn all they can about the change so that they can anticipate possible problems. Leithwood, Montgomery and Stanley (1983) cite Leithwood and Montgomery, who stated that "effective principals establish systematic procedures within their schools for addressing the central functions of schools and they continually monitor the nature of these procedures, refining them as needed" (p. 16). The principal's role as an initiator of change may differ from the principal's role as an implementer of mandated change. However, the research indicates that in either context, more effective principals have a systematic way of planning for the change by demonstrating some of the skills and strategies addressed within this section.

Goal Setting: The Principal's Vision and Change

As highlighted in the previous section of this review, change is most likely to occur when principals practice appropriate leadership skills and strategies to facilitate the process. These skills and strategies, however, must complement and reflect the philosophy of education held by the principal and school staff members. Principals who have a sense of purpose for their school or a vision of what they would like their school to be will most likely set goals which aim to fulfill the vision. Clausen (1985) states that high-performing principals "have a sense of purpose and direction provided by a well-developed, clearly stated set of goals. Effective principals involve moving schools toward a vision of what could be rather than maintaining what is" (p. 14). In Clausen's review of the research comparing average and high-performing principals, he suggests the high-performing principals have a clear

vision of their school, they have a clear vision of their role within these schools, and they have a vision of the change process. The principal's vision of the school is reflected in the types of long-term and short-term goals adopted by the administration and staff.

Leithwood and Montgomery (1986) state that "goals are the long-term aspirations held by principals for work in their schools. No other dimension of the principal's behaviour is more consistently linked to school improvement by current empirical research than goals" (p. 118). They suggest that highly effective principals set goals that reflect those set by the Department of Education, local school boards, and the needs of the community. With Fullan (1985), they support the finding that effective principals hold goals specific to the improvement of student learning and education. These principals also keep informed of innovations and select those that will likely enhance school goals.

However, principals need to do more than establish clear goals for their schools. They need to work toward achieving these goals through their planning and decision-making strategies. Decisions regarding innovative practices should always consider the learning and personal growth of students. Leithwood and Montgomery (1986) label the most effective principal as a Systematic Problem Solver, and they state that

Systematic Problem Solvers are bottom liners virtually all of the time; the bottom line is the goals for students by their schools. Systematic Problem Solvers are distinguished by their ability to see the relationship between the most mundane decisions and the growth of students. As a consequence, they are able to introduce unusually high levels of consistency into school decision-making. (p. 83)

Principals who work toward implementing change for school improvement, and, more specifically, to improve student learning, make decisions and create plans that are consistent with these goals.

Values and Moral Judgment: The Influence of the Principal's Beliefs in Goal Setting

When effective principals hold a clear sense of purpose or vision for their school, they make decisions or judgments that help staff and students work toward achieving the vision. The principal's vision for the school is largely influenced by his or her values and ongoing personal experiences. In his discussion of educational change and the nature of practice, Holt (1987) refers to Oakeshott's view that practical knowledge is most important in carrying out any change process successfully. He interprets Oakeshott's view:

But what can be written down--the technical knowledge--tells one no more about how to bring about change than a recipe tells a cook how to bake a cake. To carry out the process successfully--whether it is a matter of curriculum change, political judgment, painting a picture or baking a cake--one needs the practical knowledge associated with the 'idiom of the activity.' (p. 15)

Oakeshott's belief supports the idea that the nature of planned change cannot be viewed as a technical or procedural problem. Holt (1987) supports Oakeshott's view by emphasizing that the procedural approach of scientific management emphasizes technique while underplaying judgment. In his discussion, Holt also cites Midgeley's theory, which argues that thought is not merely

information-handling or abstract calculation, such as computers do, but [. . .] the process of developing and articulating our perceptions and feelings [. . .]. Thought is not primarily the sort of thing which is tested in exams. It is the whole organized business of living--seen from the inside. (p. 15)

Oakeshott, Midgeley and Holt support the view that the question of ethics, moral judgment and personal values all have a great impact on professional activities and living itself. Holt emphasizes that any inquiry into the field of educational change must expand to do justice to

these very important issues. It would seem that school principals therefore must be aware of their own personal values and of the values and beliefs held by the teachers they work with in their schools.

When engaged in the planning process of a particular innovation or change, administrators are often faced with goal conflicts arising from individuals affected by the change. Schwab (1978) addresses the fact that curriculum design and innovation cannot be achieved by following a set of procedures or a body of knowledge. He states that

theory by its very character does not and cannot take account of all the matters which are crucial to questions of what, who and how to teach; that is, theories cannot be applied, as principles, to the solution of problems concerning what to do with or for real individuals, small groups, or real institutions located in time and space-- Theories of knowledge usually ignore problems of personality. Yet all these matters (values, social and political structure, mind, knowledge) are involved in schools and schooling. (pp. 287-288)

Schwab's viewpoint has direct implications for the principal's role in facilitating change. Principals need to be fully informed of all aspects of the context in which they are working. Their understanding of the situation and of the values held by others with whom they are collaborating will provide them with insights to identify conflicting goals within the organization. When principals are aware of the differing values that exist within their schools, they can approach the question of change and innovation more accurately within the context. Reid (1983) suggests that principals facing uncertain procedural, prudential and moral problems might ask themselves kinds of questions:

"What must I do?"--we ask to be shown the procedure; in the second case, we would say, "What should I do?"--the "should" implying uncertainty about what the appropriate course of

action might be; in the third case, we would say, "What ought I to do?"--showing that a moral or ethical question is involved. (p. 4)

From Reid's viewpoint, decision making within the context of the change process requires the principal to be constantly analyzing and evaluating his or her own personal and educational beliefs, as well as the beliefs of those involved in the implementation process. Foster (1986) supports this view and states that administrators need to adopt a critical perspective of the change process. Foster (1986) cites Oakes and Sirotnik's theory that

taking a critical stance, we usually think of schools as neutral, non-political places that go about their business of educating children as well as they can. We assume they are eager for new practices that will enable them "to do better." . . . Little attention has been given to the examination of the values and beliefs on which school practice rests. (p. 165)

Oakes and Sirotnik's viewpoint illustrates a misconception held by some administrators that staff members are eager to adopt new practices and behaviors. Principals who take on a critical perspective toward change would most likely spend time reflecting on their own value system and deliberating with others to reach a solution. Schwab (1978) states that

deliberation is complex and arduous. It treats both ends and means and must treat them as mutually determining one another. It must generate alternative solutions. . . . It must weigh alternatives, and their costs and consequences against one another, and choose, not the right alternative, for there is no such thing, but the best one. (pp. 318-319)

The personal values and moral judgments of the principal, then, can be regarded as being the foundation from which the principal sets goals and develops a vision for the school. The final section of this review has emphasized research dealing with the question of moral differences within organizations. Research in the area of educational change has highlighted the importance of practice, knowledge and the need for

critical thought. Principals who take a critical perspective toward the change process are aware of their personal value system, as well as the values of others affected by the change being implemented. The literature suggests that principals who reflect on value differences and spend time collaborating to identify alternatives that are in the best interests of others are more likely to be successful in facilitating the change process.

Summary

In this chapter the literature related to change and leadership was addressed within four major dimensions. The first dimension of the review presented several models of change, each attempting to explain change as a process. The models basically represented similar concepts, but provided different formats for examining change implementation.

The second dimension of the review discussed various leadership skills and strategies applicable for initiating and facilitating change. Leadership skills within the area of communication and human relations were presented as being necessary skills for principals to exert when managing change. Strategies such as supplying necessary resources and getting involved with teachers were perceived as being crucial for change implementation.

The third dimension of the chapter addressed the aspect of school context and change. The principal's vision and educational philosophy were identified as having a direct impact on change initiation and implementation. The literature dealing with goals and the nature of goals was reviewed, along with the conclusion that clearly outlined goals and strategies for meeting these goals are essential components of the

school improvement process.

Finally, literature dealing with values and moral judgment relating to educational change was presented. This dimension of educational change was highlighted to illustrate that the personal values and beliefs principals have influence the goals they set for their school and the types of changes they initiate.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework displayed in Figure 5 illustrates the four related concepts addressed within the literature review. The principal's personal values and previous experiences are the basis from which the principal develops a vision for the school. This vision is the personal foundation from which the school administrator involves staff members in goal setting and decision making. The goals set for the school influence the principal's actions in working toward change. These actions become reality when the principal in turn integrates his/her own leadership skills and strategies with an understanding of the change process.

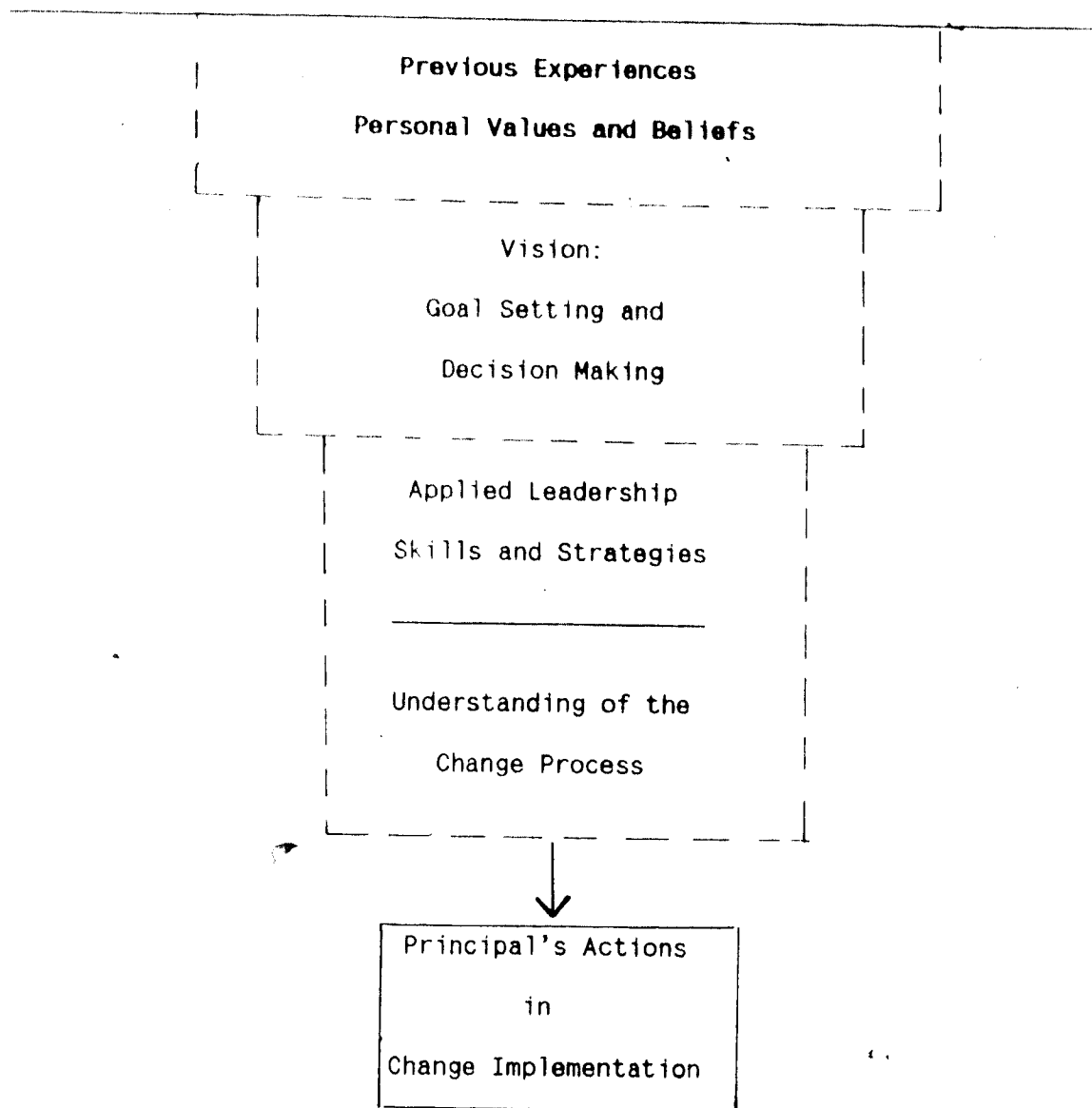


Figure 5. Conceptual Framework

Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

The research methodology used in this study was designed to seek out principals' perceptions of their role in implementing change at the school level.

This chapter provides an account of the methodology used to conduct the study. The content of the chapter is presented within five sections. It begins with a discussion of the research design chosen for the study, followed by a description of the research instrument used for data collection. The sources of the data and data collection process are then presented, followed by a discussion of credibility. The chapter concludes with a description of the data analysis procedures used throughout the study.

Research Design

The design of the study was interpretative in nature, with the intent of obtaining a rich and comprehensive understanding of principals' perceptions toward their role in implementing change. Semistructured interviews were the dominant strategy for data collection. These interviews were conducted with four principals in order to examine their perceptions more fully.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) state that "meaning is of essential concern to the qualitative approach. Researchers who use this approach are interested in the ways different people make sense out of their lives.

In other words, qualitative researchers are concerned with what are called participant perspectives" (p. 29). The purpose for using several interviews within the study was to probe for a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of how principals viewed themselves as initiators and facilitators of change. Bogdan and Biklen also state that "by learning the perspectives of the participants, qualitative research illuminates the inner dynamics of situations--dynamics that are often invisible to the outsider" (p. 30). In keeping with this description of qualitative research, this study attempted to provide the researcher with a deeper understanding of how four principals viewed their role in the change process. As the study regarded the meanings held by the participants as being most important, the research was intended to seek for understandings rather than arrive at conclusions and generalizations about the principal's role in implementing change.

Research Instrument

A semistructured interview schedule was used with four principals who participated in the study (see Appendix A). Issues that surfaced from the literature on change and from the principals formed the basis for the conceptual framework from which the research questions were derived.

The interview schedule was pilot tested and discussed with two school administrators, so that specific questions could be refined and/or changed. The pilot study also enabled the researcher to test her own interviewing skills, broaden her background in the area of change, and refocus the nature of the study upon the process of change. By completing the pilot test, the researcher also gained greater sensitivity

toward certain issues related to the topic of change implementation.

The interviews were semistructured so that it was possible to probe for more detailed information when necessary. Open-ended questions enabled the researcher to attain more thorough explanations from the principal participants and to develop greater insight on how principals viewed their role in implementing change. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) suggest that the interview is not a time to instruct the respondent. They state that the interview is best used to "gather descriptive data in the subject's own words so that the researcher can develop insight on how subjects interpret some piece of the world" (p. 135).

Data Collection

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Supervisor of the Field Testing Office within a large, urban school district in November of 1987. The principals chosen to participate in the study were selected on the basis of their years of administrative experience and their willingness to express themselves openly. The range of administrative experience within the group varied from that of a first-year principal, a second-year principal, a principal with five years of administrative experience, and a principal with ten years of administrative experience.

In early January of 1988 the principals selected to participate in the study were contacted initially by telephone to inform them of the purpose of the study and request their involvement. At that time data files for each principal participant were begun, so that pertinent information (regarding people, events, places, and conversations) could be documented for ongoing analysis. Following this, a covering letter

was sent to each individual outlining again the purpose and value of the study, and the time commitment requested of them for the interviews. The letter informed each principal that the interviews would be tape recorded and would be anywhere from one and a half to three hours in length. It also stated that the principals had the option to withdraw from the research project at any time throughout the study. The participants were informed that they would have the opportunity to clarify and review their interview transcripts, and that permission would be sought to use specific quotations. All principals were assured that the information provided by them in the interviews would be treated with confidentiality, and that they would remain anonymous.

All interviews took place in the respondent's school and were scheduled at times that were convenient for each interviewee. Initial and follow-up interviews with each participant were conducted over a two-month period. Once the initial interviews were conducted, transcripts were returned to each participant highlighting possible quotations and preliminary interpretations. Follow-up interviews were scheduled so that the researcher and interviewee could discuss statements identified within the interview transcripts. At this time the principals had the opportunity to confirm or clarify the preliminary interpretations made by the researcher, and they were available to answer additional questions or elaborate on specific issues that may have been highlighted in the transcripts.

Credibility of Data

The procedures described above were followed to address the matter of credibility. Guba and Lincoln (1982) emphasize that in naturalistic

or interpretative research, the researcher has an obligation to find out, "Do the data sources (most often humans) find the inquirer's analysis, formulations and interpretations to be credible (believable)?" (p. 246). They also suggest that the researcher can safeguard against the loss of credibility by doing "member checks" (p. 247). This is a process whereby the researcher's data and interpretations are continually checked with those individuals from whom the data originated.

To ensure that the interpretations were credible, the researcher used the process of triangulation and member checks. The data was presented to other principals in order to determine the accuracy of the data and to check for unique characteristics. Member checks with the four participants also made it possible to check the accuracy of the interpretations throughout the analysis process.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data was ongoing from the time of the initial telephone contacts with the principals. The data files compiled for each of the four principals consisted of journal notations, abbreviated notations and interview transcripts. All of the data were considered in relation to the research questions addressed in the study. The respondents' interview transcripts were color coded for easy identification and the answers were then categorized according to the three research questions. As member checks occurred the data collection expanded and comments made by participants were analyzed.

Once the content was categorized using the research questions as a guide, the data were analyzed again to identify various themes. These themes emerged from meanings beyond the written words of the content

analysis and were general in nature. The themes were identified with the intent of providing further reflection and insight into the data being described.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the methodology used to conduct this study, which was designed to identify the perceptions of principals about their role in change implementation.

Extensive semistructured interviews were conducted to pursue the major research questions of the study. Member checks were utilized in order to ensure the credibility of the data interpretation. Data collected from the interviews were the descriptions, opinions and feelings of principals toward the change process and their role in implementing change. These data were categorized within the research questions of the study and are presented in this format in the following chapter.

Chapter 4

Analysis of the Interview Data

Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of the interview data gathered from the four principal participants in the study. The analysis is presented in three parts in order to address each of the three research questions in the study. Various categories are presented within the framework of each research question, to highlight the issues surfacing from the interview data.

The intent of this chapter is to provide the reader with a descriptive analysis of how the principal participants perceived the concept of change, their role in relation to change, and their actions in attempting to implement change in their schools.

How Did Principals View Change?

When I asked each of the principals who participated in the study how they viewed change, I discovered many varied perceptions and opinions regarding the concept of change. The principal participants discussed change in relation to time and school context, and their descriptions frequently related change to the values and beliefs of those involved or affected by the change. The following passages describe the major issues which surfaced from the interview data relating to how principals perceived change.

Change as a process. All of the principals regarded change as a process rather than a single event. One principal I spoke with commented

on this notion: "I think change to me involves some kind of a process, whereas often a mandate--there's no change there. If there's a change, I don't think it really uses the word appropriately." This interviewee suggested that a directive or mandate to implement a particular innovation is not an example of change. She suggested that change is a process by which individuals are involved in new experiences and interactions. Another principal expressed a similar viewpoint, but elaborated on the idea and stated that change has no end result; rather, it evolves over time:

I don't know if you ever end any of it, because if I look at the kinds of things where we have initiated change in the school, we're certainly not finished with the articulation process; we certainly could do a lot more with whole language--we're still growing; learning centers can always be extended; school climate will always succeed and collapse throughout the year. And so, I really don't know if you ever come to the end.

The principals who expressed the comments highlighted in the above example continually emphasized the notion that educators have a moral responsibility to improve the learning environment for students. This obligation requires educators to refine or expand upon techniques used within the classroom.

Change as a means of improving the learning environment. All of the principals felt that change was important in their schools if it related to improving the learning environment for students. From this viewpoint, all of the participants also expressed the opinion that change most often involved philosophical issues. For example, three of the principals referred to their initiatives in implementing a whole language program in their schools, and stated that they were pursuing it with their teachers because they felt it was an extremely effective way for young children to

learn language skills. The principals also indicated that it was often difficult to bring about changes related to teaching styles and strategies, because these were philosophical issues that were very personal in nature.

One principal participant stated that a change is worth supporting if it enhances student learning:

All of the change that we've been involved with in the school is all in the learning process. I don't think it ever stops, so you just keep spinning it on and keep getting better. I always say you're polishing it. . . . I think we were able to handle all the changes because, number one, it's good education, it's good learning.

The principals emphasized the fact that if they did not view the innovation as working toward a better education for their students, they did not attempt to implement it within their school. The participants also made it very clear that they felt it was important to involve teachers in the process of defining "good learning."

Change in view of the principal/teacher relationship. The manner in which the four principals attempted to initiate change reflected how they viewed their staff. All of the interviewees suggested that it was extremely important to recognize people's strengths and abilities in order to work co-operatively toward the vision for the school. One participant said that she felt that a "trusting relationship" amongst teachers and the administration was an essential element in working toward any type of change. She suggested that building such a relationship took time:

Yes . . . I think part of knowing your timing is also knowing the people that you're working with. Like, I don't think even ten years from now, if I were to go into another school, I don't think I would go in and bulldoze again. I'd know a little bit more about what I wanted of a school, but I still

think you have to develop a relationship with others and really get to know the situation before you can go in and do things.

The same principal also acknowledged the fact that timing was critical in initiating and facilitating change.

In our discussions about staff relations in respect to change, one of the principals said that a certain "comfort level" was necessary for implementing change. She expressed the opinion that interactions between teachers and administrators must exemplify mutual respect. Her opinions were illustrated in the following analogy: "I try to show respect for them, just as I would do with the students. . . . They deserve respect in our working relationship, and that is how I expect them to treat others." These remarks emphasized this principal's belief that the comfort level in a school is enhanced by the manner in which individuals relate to one another. I sensed that this principal valued a friendly, supportive atmosphere within the school environment.

The same interviewee stressed that it was important for her to act and make decisions with the integrity of students and teachers in mind:

The whole idea of integrity--that's why I don't like to impose a lot on teachers. I try to be conscious of how much I ask. I try to keep them informed of what is going on in the district, especially if it concerns them--for example, after I have gone to a principals' meeting.

This principal seemed to value the professionalism of the teachers she worked with, and this was exemplified by her attempts to consult teachers individually. She stated that it was sometimes necessary to consult with each teacher individually, in order to make them feel more comfortable to voice their opinions.

She also emphasized the importance of socializing with the staff on occasion, in order to get to know the teachers and let them get to know

her. Treating the staff to lunch or organizing an evening out as a group were her ways of meeting with staff members in an informal way.

Change involves the attitudes of individuals. When I asked the participants what role personal attitudes played within the change process, they hesitated and seemed to find the question a difficult one to answer. All of the principals alluded to the idea that when change occurred within their school, it often required those involved to refocus their attitudes and to "take risks" in practicing new behaviors. One principal described her attempts to encourage teachers to share what they were doing in their classrooms with other teachers, including herself. This was a practice that had never really occurred within the school before, and she recognized that it was threatening to some: "I would like for somebody to say, '_____, I'm doing a really neat lesson on such-and-such; would you like to come in and see it?' . . . I think they always think it has to be a performance." The interviewee who shared the above comments recognized that a certain mind-set toward classroom visitations existed amongst the staff. She expanded on the above comments and suggested that she would like to have changed the existing attitudes regarding classroom visits, but she realized that it took a fair amount of time to help teachers see the value in classroom visitations.

Another principal I spoke with felt that when staff members have been in a school for a long time, it may be even more difficult to encourage teachers to practice new behaviors:

It's not a young staff. Personally, I had a lot of fears and misgivings, because I felt that it would be harder to get people to change who had been here a long time. . . . and people who were older than me, which is all of them!

In this discussion the principal seemed to be most concerned that he would not be able to get people to change. On several occasions throughout the interview, he made statements similar to the following: "I was concerned that I wouldn't be able to get people to change, or that the changes that I thought were important they wouldn't see as being important." Both principals quoted in the above examples alluded to the idea that it is often difficult to involve teachers in the change process because they have a "mind-set" that bears attitudes conflicting with the innovation being implemented. The fact that both principals mentioned the importance of involving teachers in a process in order to expand upon or change existing attitudes indicated that they viewed change as being a very personal and complex issue.

Change involves the personal beliefs and values of others. All of the principal participants stressed the view that change involved the belief systems of staff members. They commented on the fact that staff members had to see the value of an innovation if they were going to implement it and personalize it to any extent. One principal mentioned the idea that teachers may not put forth their greatest efforts in implementing something they did not believe in. She reflected on her own behavior to illustrate this point:

They must see the value, or they are not going to buy it, in the same way that I wouldn't buy a District plan if I didn't see the value of it unless it was mandated and I had to do it. But I bet, even then, I wouldn't do a good job of implementing it if I didn't believe in it.

The interviewee also implied that the school district should consider the values and beliefs of others when initiating change:

So I think the District has to be careful when they're initiating change, that they go through and sell their product, and just don't lay it on the table, in the same way we can't do it in the school, because that's why it gets defeated.

The principal also referred to the idea that in too many instances administrators think they can implement new programs simply by providing the appropriate resources. She described in great detail her beliefs to illustrate this point:

One of the things I learned really quickly in it is that you can't get a classroom going just by providing resources; you can't just say, "Here's the listening center; here it is, everybody, and now go set it up and use it," because there's more involved than that. So I learned rather quickly that you can have all the resources in the school, and you still might have people not using them or knowing how to use them, or seeing the value.

Another principal reinforced the idea that personal beliefs played an extremely important role within the change process: "I guess what happens is, is if you don't believe in it, if it's going against your philosophy, or if you don't feel it's educationally sound, you're not going to do it." In reflecting back over the interviews with each of the participants, it was evident that all of the principals held strong feelings toward the importance of values and beliefs within the change process.

In conclusion, I found that the principals viewed change as a very complex, personal issue. Their responses within the interview data almost always emphasized the importance of positive staff relations and existing beliefs and value systems held by those working together within the school community. The following research question examines more closely how principals view their role in the change process.

How Did Principals View Their Role in Relation to Change?

The four principal participants in the study viewed themselves as having a wide range of responsibilities in bringing about change. The following passages highlight the areas they perceived as being inherent to their role as implementers of change.

Establishing a positive relationship with others in the school community. All of the interviewees expressed the opinion that their change efforts had greater success in instances where they had really worked at building a relationship with those involved. One principal commented on the idea that building a relationship with teachers involved the delicate task of becoming aware of the norms and values of the entire staff. He reflected back upon his attempts to initiate major changes within the school, and suggested that he would spend more time getting to know the staff and the situation:

If I went to a bigger school, I think I would have just a touch more of wait-and-see, and I'd get my feet wet first and see how things are going. . . . You have to keep everybody's personality in mind when you want to get something going.

The principal's perspective that "you have to keep everybody's personality in mind" suggested to me that a school administrator would have to know staff members before initiating changes. During the interview he centered on the idea that he came to a better understanding of others as he interacted with them on a daily basis.

Another principal who stated that it was important to establish a good working relationship before initiating changes emphasized the idea of mutual trust. She said that it was easier for her to initiate changes once the staff recognized that she was supportive and that they could trust her judgment. She felt that if they could trust her judgment

they would be more receptive to new ideas. All of the principal participants in the study stressed the idea that a sound working relationship with teachers was a solid basis for implementing change.

Communicating personal goals and beliefs. I sensed that most of the participants felt that a very important part of their role in bringing about change was to communicate their own personal goals and beliefs with other staff members. They suggested that, by sharing a few of their goals with staff members from the outset, they gave teachers a clearer understanding of the vision they held for the school. One principal offered the following:

I think I would do things pretty much the same. I think that going in ahead and telling them where I wanted to go with the school, what my ideas were, or at least a couple of them, and keep them fairly small but let them know ahead of time that this was what was coming.

Later on the same interviewee added the following comments regarding his responsibility of communicating personal values: "I think going into a school you have to have an idea of some of the things you want to do, and you have to be up front with some of them and withhold some of them."

Another principal suggested a more subtle and indirect way of revealing her intentions for the school. She described her method in the following manner: "If it comes from them, so much the better. If someone says something related, I pick up on it and build on it and lead them to where I want them to go." When I spoke with this particular principal, I sensed she had a lot of patience in working with others, and I thought that this type of approach seemed to be a natural characteristic of her personality and leadership behavior.

The question of whether the principal should communicate values and beliefs generated a lot of discussion regarding the notion of compromise.

All of the interviewees stated that it was necessary to compromise a few of their own beliefs when recognizing the beliefs and values of others. Their statements indicated that the principal must be willing to become involved in a "give-and-take relationship" in the change process. One principal said, "I would have to modify my expectations to meet teachers along the way." Another principal reinforced the same idea in much greater detail:

I don't think that an administrator could last in one of our schools going in with a whole regime of changes that they are going to implement. . . . they're going to implement them no matter what. . . . I have to give teachers credit for having some intelligence and knowing what they're doing, even if their ideas are different from yours. I really believe that compromise is very important in anyone's life.

The interview transcripts revealed that all of the participants respected the notion that the values and beliefs of others may be different, but not necessarily wrong. They also stated that it was their responsibility to communicate their goals and beliefs to the teachers they worked with, in order to bring about change for educational improvement.

Initiating change to improve the education of students. All of the interviewees held the perspective that they had a moral responsibility to initiate changes that would improve the education of the students within their schools. One principal expressed this viewpoint by stating:

I guess you have to keep everybody's personality in mind whenever you want some change, but still, if you see something and you think it's educationally good for the school and the kids, you have to try to get it going.

All of the principals expanded on the idea that in order to initiate changes in their educational programs, they had a responsibility to keep themselves well informed of the current literature and research related to particular innovations. One interviewee commented on this idea:

Because as a principal, as a leader, I knew from the research that that's where it was going, that's where Alberta Education was going, and that's where we were going to need to go, and I hook that one on with no hesitancy, and the staff was fine. They were excited about it and so was I. But diagnostic evaluation, which was much more technical and analytical and so on, was a hard process that even though I knew there was value to it, I didn't really know enough about it, and I got into that the wrong way.

This principal's reflections in the above passage suggested that her success in initiating change was sometimes dependent on how much she knew about a particular innovation.

Facilitating change through professional development. Another responsibility the principals saw themselves as having was that of providing professional development activities in order to facilitate change within the school.

One of the participants viewed herself as being a "staff development leader," and suggested that part of her responsibility as principal was to provide a staff development program to address the needs of teachers in her school. This principal highlighted the fact that most of the staff meetings in her school included professional development activities. The following passage clearly illustrates her view that principals should teach and assist staff members, and not simply impose expectations:

Today the more tools you provide, if you provide the tools with the idea they're tools and that teachers can use them to help them be better teachers, and not say to your staff, "You must be knowledgeable in learning styles and so on." If you just kind of lay on expectations, people are going to say, "Forget it!"

In the interview this principal acknowledged the fact that she spent a lot of her administration time planning and preparing professional development activities to meet the needs of her staff.

The other participants expressed a similar viewpoint in relation to professional development, but alluded to the fact that they often brought in outside resource people to assist with professional development activities. One principal who wanted to see more emphasis on writing in the language arts program stated:

I had come out sometime in June after I had been appointed here and I got to go and talk to each staff member, and I said that the one thing I really wanted to start here was a writing program with the kids. I said I would like to start right away in September, bringing out Mrs. _____ in particular, introducing inservicing with us and getting the writing program going and off the ground. . . . and they all agreed with that in June, so we were able to start with that right away in September.

The above description indicated that, once this principal had communicated his intentions to the teachers, he acted quickly to establish a support system for teachers by bringing in a district consultant to work with them. During the interview he also mentioned that many teachers contacted the consultant after the initial presentations to invite her to work with them in their classrooms. This particular principal also expressed the opinion that, by bringing in an "expert" or a resource person in the language arts field, he was able to gain more credibility for his own goals, and was able to provide teachers with an outside support system.

The same principal stressed that he had a professional responsibility to model the professional development interests he encouraged teachers to pursue. He emphasized that by modelling his involvement to learn more about a particular innovation, he would increase his knowledge in the area and demonstrate his level of commitment to the staff. He illustrated this point at length in the following passage:

I cared about whole language, and I wanted to show them I cared, and I wanted them to care about it too. . . . The other thing was, as a personal goal to that in terms of my own professional development, my P.D. goal--and it was the one that I sent in to the Superintendent--was to learn more about whole language so that I could get a better feel of the fit of the whole thing and how it would develop through the entire school. So, as my own P.D. goal, and to enhance it, I was going to attend a couple of language arts conferences, which I did, and then I would be able to bring back even more.

All of the principal participants strongly agreed that the amount of time and interest they devoted toward a particular innovation, and the amount of support they offered to teachers through professional development activities, made a powerful statement about their commitment to the change they were working toward.

Empowering others to facilitate change. Not only did principals view themselves as being responsible for organizing professional development activities in order to facilitate change, but they also viewed themselves as having an important role in empowering others to take an active part in the change process. One principal expressed the view that an effective school leader is one who encourages staff members to look at their own strengths and what they can bring to their role as educators. In one of our interviews, she expanded on this belief:

So I think what you have to do is you have to get people to believe in themselves and have faith in what they can do. If you have confidence in your people, usually they'll discover their own strengths. . . . and so I think part of it is helping that teacher to realize how good they are, to know what a job they are doing.

Later on in the interview the principal described the co-operative planning model that she built into the school day. She described it as a time when a small number of teachers had an opportunity to share ideas, offer suggestions, and assist one another in a small group situation. She described how this process gave the staff a greater leadership role

in the area of whole language and co-operative planning, and how it encouraged them to work as a team: "It's almost like the staff is inservicing themselves. . . . They're planning together, so they're building on their strengths as a team. So I'm interested in team building in the school, too, and that gets some things happening." She also suggested that the key to empowering teachers is to believe in them and make them believe in themselves:

I really believe it's having faith in your people and to know that they really ~~truly~~ do have gifts to bring; it's not just saying it to be nice. Teachers really have a lot to bring, and I think when you have people build on their own strengths, then you know you'll have fantastic things happening, because they'll just go the mile. They'll want to do it because they know they can do it.

All of the principals alluded to the idea that, by providing leadership opportunities for those teachers who showed an interest in a particular innovation or project, they were able to generate more interest amongst staff members toward the innovation. The same principal who offered the comments in the above example described the benefits of simply involving a small number of teachers in a leadership role:

I think what happens is, people inspire one another, that if two or three people try it and it's working, they would share it with their colleagues. "I'm trying this and it's really good." . . . The whole thing just kind of spins off.

Another principal described an incident where he was unsuccessful in his attempts to improve the library in his school and increase its use. He reflected on his attempts and attributed his failure to the fact that he did not have a plan for actively involving others:

We met and we talked but we didn't, I guess we didn't develop a good enough implementation plan that would leave responsibility with quite a few people. We seemed to be doing an awful lot at the time and I just didn't feel like pressing it and I couldn't give any more of my time: there wasn't any more.

I sensed that the principal felt the project would have had a greater chance of succeeding if he had given the teachers more ownership and responsibility.

From all of the interview passages centering on the idea of empowerment and shared leadership, I felt that the participants viewed this notion as an effective means of initiating and facilitating change within their schools.

From the interview data it was evident that the four principals in the study perceived their role as being an extremely powerful one in working with others to bring about change for school improvement. They viewed themselves as having to establish a positive school climate and they emphasized that their efforts to communicate their own values and beliefs had a significant impact on how successful they were in bringing about educational changes. They also viewed themselves as being both initiators and facilitators of change within their school environments.

The final and subsequent section highlights the strategies and skills that the four principals identified as being helpful for implementing change within their schools.

What Did Principals Do to Implement Change in Their Schools?

The interview data provided many in-depth descriptions of how principals attempted to bring about change within their schools. The principal participants discussed in great detail various strategies they used in their efforts to initiate and facilitate change. Their descriptions of various change efforts also revealed a lot of insights as to how they related to others involved in the changes. The following categories describe the strategies and skills the four principals

perceived as being helpful to them in their efforts to work toward changes within their schools.

Investigating the success of an innovation in other school settings.

Two principals who participated in the study discussed their initiatives to improve the parent-teacher interview process in their schools. Both of these principals stated that they had decided to postpone their initiatives until they had researched other school settings to find out how successful the specific interview project was. One principal who seemed very enthusiastic about the conference-reporting project expressed the following comments:

Interviews is a good one that is coming up, but I have elected--I think I believe in a longer interview, a more thorough interview process--but I have elected to wait and see. When I take a look at the staff here, I don't think they see it at this point the benefits. At this point I'm going to wait and see how well other schools do at it and what kind of district support there is and how their teachers feel after doing two years of it. . . . I'm not going to jump right on the bandwagon and get going yet.

The above comments suggested that, although the principal was supportive of the more extensive interview format, he felt it was important to see how it was implemented in other schools. During our discussion, he also indicated that he felt that teachers would have greater success using the format if they knew more about the kinds of obstacles other schools were encountering, and the extent of financial support they were receiving from the district.

Another principal commented on her efforts to research the success of the conference-reporting project in another school setting, before implementing the project in her school. She described how she provided her teachers with an opportunity to visit another school so that they could interact with teachers using the conference-reporting system:

We took a day as a staff to go over to another school that had implemented it, and so the teachers had a chance to talk to those teachers. . . . They had a chance to hear other teachers' perceptions from other schools.

The principal who shared these comments strongly emphasized the importance of preparing teachers for the change envisioned.

Both of the principals cited in the above examples stressed that it was important for them and their teachers to become more knowledgeable about the implementation strategies used in other school settings. They emphasized that the time spent investigating the implementation of the project in other school settings provided teachers with more time to think about the innovation and "mentally prepare" themselves for the change.

Monitoring the climate for change and initiating change at an opportune time. When the principals described how they attempted to initiate change in their schools, they often made statements like the following: "When I felt they were ready for the change I . . . , " or "I could see that it was something the staff would like to get involved with, and several asked me to do it." Statements similar to the above suggested that the principals were very sensitive to the behaviors and comments made by staff members before they attempted to initiate change. One principal elaborated on the importance of monitoring the existing climate before presenting the staff with a proposal for change. She mentioned one way of gaining a better understanding of the existing climate: "You might get their feel about it just by hearing what they say to one another and to you on--in a sense this gives you an idea of whether they're ready or no Another principal explained that he was able to proceed with his plans to introduce the concept of

learning centers to a few upper elementary teachers, after he overheard a conversation between two teachers one day in the staff room. He described the situation in the following way:

Even this week in the staff room I've heard a teacher talking about how they didn't have things to do when the kids were finished their work, and that they were going to establish a couple of things in the room.

The principal said that once he heard the teacher's comments that she was going to make a few centers, he knew that it was an opportune time to promote the concept of learning centers to the staff.

The same principal suggested that he sometimes talked about an innovation very informally, perhaps over lunch, just to let teachers hear the concept being mentioned. He commented on his tactics in the following way:

So I have brought that up several times so that people have thought about it, or at least they've heard about it and have had time to digest it. Then the next time it comes up it'll be that much easier to approach.

I sensed that this principal probably used this tactic to 'test the waters' and get a better idea of how teachers would react to the concepts he mentioned.

Although the principals agreed that they learned a lot about the attitudes of individual staff members by how they interacted on a daily basis, they also suggested that it was important to simply ask teachers how they felt about working toward a particular change.

Requesting the input of staff members. Each interviewee emphasized on more than one occasion that it was important to seek out the opinions of staff members before deciding on what innovations would be implemented in their school, and what changes would be brought about. The principals acknowledged the fact that the changes they had the greatest success with

in their schools were those that involved the teachers from the outset. During one of the interviews a principal related an instance where she failed to ask teachers how they felt about participating in diagnostic evaluation:

But, no, I took that one by myself for the staff, and we went to a workshop by Alberta Education which was a real bomb, and I knew at the end of the day that the whole staff would lynch me if they had the opportunity.

She then described to me what she should have done before making the decision that the staff would attend the workshop: "On hindsight, I would have gone back to the staff and said, 'Well, what do you think? Think we should get involved with this along with everything else that's there in articulation and whole language?'" Later on in the same interview, the principal commented on the outcome of the whole episode: "In the end it turned out okay, but that was more by good luck! That was a change that I initiated that had no ownership, and so that one didn't go as well. But you learn from those!"

Another principal also supported the idea of building ownership and stated that when teachers became part of the decision-making process, they had a greater commitment to the change. Her remarks reflected this notion: "I feel that if they had some input, they have maybe more of a commitment to the decision, and therefore more willingness to carry it out and to support it." The other principals expanded on this idea and suggested that at times it was also helpful to ask the teachers if the timing was appropriate:

I think that conference-reporting is an excellent way to report, but we're not quite ready for it yet. I think maybe next year. But that's one I will throw out to the staff and say, "Do you think we're ready to take it on next year or should we wait a year?"

This particular principal explained to me during the interview that she thought several teachers on her staff were ready to take on the conference-reporting format, and she said that, in fact, they were almost asking for it. However, she reinforced the idea that, because this particular project had to be implemented on a whole-school basis, she felt that it was only fair to present the idea to the entire staff, and follow up by asking for their opinions on an individual basis.

All of the principals who participated in the study seemed to perceive their staff members as professionals, and therefore viewed their involvement in the decision-making process as being very important.

Making use of available resources. The interviewees stated that once they had made the decision with their teachers to develop new initiatives in their schools, they felt that it was important to assist teachers in as many ways as possible. Many of the principals mentioned that they had called upon outside resource people such as district consultants and facilitators to assist them with bringing about changes in their schools. One principal described the outcome of involving a resource person to assist his staff with their move toward a whole language program:

About six weeks or two months before we did the whole-school theme, we brought _____ back in and devoted an entire, in fact, a couple of staff meetings--one with _____ as a leader, one with me as a leader, and we brainstormed ideas and kept a line chart in the staffroom. As I was saying, we had _____ come in and she brought a bunch of material that we could choose and see how they fit into the various aspects of the theme. Then, we brainstormed more and more ideas and we left them up here right through the entire theme so that people had things to choose from, and we decided how we would organize our material, where it would be left, and what things people would use. We took one staff meeting, we went on kind of a purchasing day where some people went to the bookstores, some people went to the museum.

It was evident to me when I heard the description highlighted in the above example that the principal had done some preplanning with the resource person so that the teachers' time would be well spent and their needs would be well met.

Another principal commented on how she utilized the expertise of a district ~~facilitator~~ to provide the teachers with detailed information about conference reporting both before and after they had made their decision to pursue the program. She commented with the following:

I tried my best to explain to the teachers what I understood of the concept from the meetings I had attended, but I had the consultant or the person who was the facilitator for the project, Mrs. _____, come out to the staff meetings two or three times and explain the theory and rationale behind conference-reporting.

I sensed that this principal appreciated the fact that a resource person with a lot of expertise in the area was available to offer the necessary information, share her experiences with the innovation, and offer support to teachers.

The same principal mentioned that she made a special effort to allocate funds her written resources specifically related to conference-reporting: "I also had ordered _____'s book on communicating with parents and reporting to parents, and I got a copy for each of the staff." Another principal who was helping teachers adopt a whole language approach to teaching expressed that it was her responsibility to provide resources for teachers to use in their classrooms. She expressed the following views:

I wanted to have classrooms that had an enriched environment, so in order to do that I think, number one, I had to provide resources for teachers. I had to make sure that all of the resources were here, because there were a lot of books in the school; listening centers were here if people were interested.

The materials were here and teachers didn't have to go out and find them.

It was extremely evident that all of the principals saw themselves as having a responsibility to provide teachers with the necessary resources that would assist them in working toward the change.

Modelling and participating in the implementation process. In addition to providing resources for teachers, all of the principals stressed that modelling was an essential component in bringing about change. In discussing this notion, they identified how modelling benefited themselves as well as the teachers. One principal shared her view that modelling, or demonstrating the use of a innovation, can act as a means of motivating teachers. She expressed the following to describe this point:

I'm quite enthusiastic about things, and I know that I have to watch that, because I don't want to lay anything on, so I have to find other ways to get people--and I think a lot of it comes in modelling.

Another principal expressed the same viewpoint in the following statement:

I think talking about it [the innovation] is a big motivator, and letting them see something work is a big motivator. . . . and talking about it, getting them into it a little bit, letting them see some results from it; if they see that a thing works they'll use it.

This principal reinforced the belief that teachers will more likely try new methods and strategies if they see them as being practical in the classroom setting.

Some of the participants highlighted another very important point during their discussions about modelling to bring about change. They mentioned that by modelling the use of a particular innovation, they were able to identify its shortcomings. One principal articulated this idea

in the following way: "That's where maybe modelling comes in, you know, then you try and model it yourself and sometimes by going through it yourself you see the pitfalls a bit more." In speaking with this principal, I sensed that she was working toward the change in a more proactive manner rather than a reactive one.

The four participants in the study really stressed the idea that, by modelling and participating in the implementation of an innovation, they strengthened their credibility with teachers. A principal who was recognized for her ability to model what she believed in expressed the following perceptions:

I guess I had some extra insight to bring to them, and I didn't bring it as an administrator; I brought it as a teacher, because of the kinds of things I did in my own classroom that worked. So I guess there was a certain amount of credibility attached to what you're presenting: you've used it and you believe in it, and so you share that.

Another principal who stressed the importance of establishing credibility by modelling described how he attempted to motivate teachers to take on more extra-curricular activities for students. He suggested that he was able to involve teachers by taking on extra responsibilities himself:

They saw it happening, and I think that this year teachers are taking on a lot more. . . . I think in some ways they do give me a little bit of leadership because they know that I will pitch in, that I'll do my part. I won't give them extra supervision and do none, I won't try to get out of teaching something that requires a lot of marking or preparation.

A third principal summed up the whole idea of credibility quite nicely: "Yes, it goes all the way through and, I mean, I just think you can't expect standards from other people that you yourself can't live up to."

A few of the participants mentioned that at times they had to go

beyond modelling to assist teachers in the change process. They described how they offered hands-on assistance at the classroom level with individual teachers. One interviewee expressed her belief that principals should be willing to assist teachers who are implementing new techniques in their classrooms:

And if people want to give it a try, you're willing to go in. I went into the classrooms and helped people set up. For example, I had a teacher come and say, "I'd really like to try this, but I just haven't a clue how to go about it." And so I asked the teacher to pick a time and I went in with the teacher and we spent a couple of hours and we set up the room. In fact, with that one teacher, I even assisted her in getting the kids into using those different resources, and then she was left on her own. After two weeks she came in and she said, "You know, I'm really excited about what's happening. I see the value."

Another principal who wanted the teachers in his school to use the computers with students offered to take the students for a block of time and teach them simple keyboarding skills with the teacher present. He described the situation in the following manner:

I would go to a teacher, and I wanted them to be comfortable with computers, and most of them had never touched them; they had no idea what to do with them. So I said, "I'm free for this forty-five minutes, let me take your class. Come on with us, we'll go down to the Computer Room and I'll teach them something." . . . So the teacher would participate in the lesson.

Another principal who wanted teachers to learn more about planning religious celebrations described how she handled a situation when she was faced with a teacher who was quite reluctant to get involved:

I told the teacher that, "The best way to learn is to do it and I will help you; I'm no expert, but what I know I'll share with you." . . . Now at the beginning of the year teachers are almost asking to plan particular celebrations.

All of the principals who shared the above examples agreed that a "hands-on" approach to assisting teachers individually took a great deal

of their time; however, they agreed that it was a very effective way of bringing about change because it demonstrated the practical value of the change being pursued.

Monitoring the change efforts. A few principal participants in the study stressed the importance of monitoring the change efforts of those involved. Although the interviewees suggested that it was important to give people time to work with an innovation, they stated that it was important to be aware of the number of efforts staff members made to work toward the change. One principal stated that when there were many things happening in the school it was important for her to monitor how teachers paced themselves: "I think you have to look at your teachers, so if they're tired, see if they're doing too many things and just be perceptive. You have to watch what's going on out there so you don't overload them."

A few principals expressed the opinion that it was often possible to monitor change efforts by examining the work and behavior of students.

One interviewee shared her perceptions regarding this idea: "As the leader it is important to see what is going on in classrooms, what the children are doing by their work, how they behave, and their attitudes towards it and whatever." Another participant expanded on this notion with the following comments:

I guess the advantage for me is that I go into those classrooms to teach French, so I'm in the classroom, but I'm in the classroom with the children, so I can see a lot of what's happening just by seeing what's around. And so, if I'm seeing lots of charts and lots of stories by the students and that kind of thing, then I see that there's something happening in terms of whole language. . . . I think basically you're monitoring by being visible and by being around--spending little bits of time here and there.

The descriptions provided by these principals implied that monitoring the

classroom setting and the efforts of teachers informally on a regular basis was a most effective means of becoming aware of what was happening and how teachers were progressing toward change.

Reinforcing teachers for their efforts. Only one of the participants in the study suggested that it was important to reinforce teachers for their efforts in working toward a change. She expressed the view that part of her role in supporting teachers was to show them that she appreciated their efforts within the school. She articulated this viewpoint in the following manner:

I just think it's important to support them financially, emotionally, whatever. If a few people have done some really nice jobs on celebrations and things like that, things we'd like to see more of in the school, I try and let them know I appreciate it, perhaps by telling them or by just sending them a note.

This principal's perception was that she felt it was important for her to acknowledge the efforts of others, so that they knew that their efforts were appreciated by others. During the interview she indicated that teachers needed to know that they would be supported either financially or emotionally. She also stressed the opinion that a simple "thank you" to teachers is often forgotten, and that it goes a long way in motivating others to continue with their efforts in working toward change.

Providing instructional time for teachers to prepare and plan for change. The idea of providing instructional time to teachers to plan for change was highlighted by most of the principals during the interviews. Principals expressed the idea that teachers were more likely to get involved in the change process when they were given time to plan for the use of the innovation being implemented. One principal described the idea of providing instructional time, and stated that it was a powerful

way of involving more individuals:

And, I think, also providing people with the opportunity to get together, like the co-operative planning model that we've built into the school day, where teachers get together every two weeks for forty-five minutes to plan co-operatively, by grade. It's built into the school day, and I think that's very powerful, too.

She also stated that the teachers on her staff who were involved in the co-operative planning time appreciated that they did not have to spend additional time meeting with their colleagues after school. She shared the following to illustrate this point: "And so you're building in, and that's going to get things happening in your school too, because you're not doing it after school and you don't have people in their own little room; they're planning together." Although all of the interviewees supported the idea of providing instructional time, they admitted that it was difficult to schedule within a small school where there were very few staff members. The participants also emphasized the idea that when principals provided this time for teachers, they made a strong statement about their commitment to the change.

Working with a small group to initiate change. In addition to providing instructional time for teachers, the principals felt that it was often more effective to initiate change with a small number of teachers. One participant in the study suggested that during her initial attempts to bring about change, it was most worthwhile to work with those teachers who were eager to participate in the change. She labelled those eager to participate as the "swing group." The following passage reveals her feelings toward working with this group:

You've got twenty percent of your population that'll say, "I'll do it immediately," you have twenty percent who'll say, "I'm not changing come hell or high water." And then you have your swing group. And like she said, it's the negatives that always

get you down. And you spend all your time worrying about how you're going to get that person to change. Don't waste your time, because they might change and they might not, and you've wasted all your energy there. I think you'd have a lot more effect with that swing group.

As I listened to her comments, it was very evident that she felt principals should direct their energies toward working with teachers who had an open mind to the change, were willing to co-operate with one another and would make things happen. Another principal shared a similar viewpoint in expressing the following statements:

But to make changes occur, I think if you could get six out of ten to go with the change, I'd go with it. If two of them were left out, or two of them were on another course, so be it until you can either bring about the change in them or they leave.

The principal who expressed the above comments implied that it is possible to start with a smaller team of teachers, work with them, and hope that their efforts would have a "rippling effect" with others in the school.

One of the interviewees who described his efforts to establish a whole-school theme, where all of the teachers were involved, suggested that he might initiate the program differently if he were to try it again in a different school:

I think that going into another school, I might not right off the bat again say, "I want to do a whole-school theme." What I might do is try and organize two or three teachers to do it in a smaller group, and then see if it can catch on.

All of the principals seemed to recognize the value of working with those teachers who were eager to pursue change by experiencing different behaviors and adopting new techniques.

In conclusion, the principal participants discussed a wide range of strategies and skills to describe how they implemented change in their organizational settings. Their perceptions highlighted the importance of

involving teachers from the outset, monitoring and assisting teachers throughout the implementation process, and reinforcing teachers for their efforts. The principals also emphasized the importance of providing instructional time for teachers to plan for change, and they suggested that it was often more effective to work with a small number of teachers when initiating change.

Summary

The four principals who were interviewed provided a rich description of change, how they viewed their role in relation to change, and what they actually did to implement change in their schools.

They expressed the view that change is a process and is valued if it aims to improve the learning environment for students. They commented on the idea that a trusting relationship between the principal and teacher is an essential basis for working toward any type of change. The principals also stressed the view that change involves the attitudes of individuals, and, most importantly, the personal beliefs and values of those involved in the change.

All of the participants perceived their role as being a very important one in implementing change in their schools. They saw themselves as having to establish a positive atmosphere in the school, and having to communicate their personal goals and beliefs to staff members.

Most importantly, they viewed themselves as having a moral responsibility to initiate changes to improve the learning environment for their students. Some of the interviewees also saw themselves as being professional development leaders when they attempted to initiate

and facilitate change within their schools. All of the principals held the view that it was their responsibility to empower teachers and help them recognize their personal strengths so that they could experience more of a leadership role within the change process.

In describing how they implemented change within their schools, the four principal participants mentioned that they tried to involve teachers in making decisions when planning for and initiating changes. They also stated that it was necessary to support teachers and offer assistance at the classroom level when needed. The principals also commented on the importance of providing resources for teachers, and they suggested that it was very crucial to provide instructional time for teachers to plan and prepare for the implementation process. It was interesting to note that all of the principals suggested that it might be more effective to initiate change with those teachers who are interested, rather than with everyone on a school-wide basis.

Chapter 5

Themes Within the Interview Data

Introduction

Throughout the analysis process, the researcher identified several underlying issues or themes related to the notion of leadership and change.

The intent of this chapter is to highlight the themes which emerged from the interview data gathered. The following sections discuss each theme in relation to statements made by the four principals who participated in the study.

The Responsibility to Change Things

There seemed to be variations in the extent to which principals regarded their own personal responsibility to make changes within their schools. The principals with less experience as school-based administrators expressed the view that they felt compelled, as one principal said, "to maintain the status quo."

Those principals with more experience definitely viewed themselves as having a personal responsibility to change things to improve the teaching and learning taking place in their school. These principals also seemed to view their role in implementing change in a very confident, self-assured manner.

Timing

Another theme that kept emerging from the interview data was the notion of timing. When the participants discussed the idea of initiating change at an opportune time, there seemed to be slight variations in their opinions as to when changes should be initiated. A first-year principal felt that it was a good idea to hold off from making any major changes within her first year at the school. During the interview, she expressed the feelings she had when she initially started her position:

I think when I first came in I thought, okay, maintaining the status quo, unless it was something that was completely adverse to what I had read in terms of changes and starting new jobs, and that kind of thing; it was my feeling that if I came in like a bulldozer that I would lose them immediately.

The principal who shared these comments felt that it was wise to be somewhat "cautious" in initiating changes within a new setting.

Another principal, on the other hand, felt that it was appropriate to express his ideas for particular changes from the very outset when he met with staff members for the first time. He shared the perspective that the teachers he was working with should have a clear idea of his philosophy of teaching and learning. He described how he initiated change in the following way:

I did tell people even the June prior to starting here about a couple of things I wanted to do. I had come out sometime in June after I had been appointed here and I got to go and talk to each staff member.

The comments cited in the above examples exemplify the contrasting opinions of two principals regarding the notion of timing and initiating change. In discussing the aspect of timing with both principals, it was interesting to discover that their decision of when to make changes was

very much related to how confident they were with their role as principal and their willingness to take risks.

Dealing with Resistance

As mentioned in the previous chapter, all of the participants stated that change involves the personal attitudes of individuals. Within their discussions regarding the influence of attitudes, they often mentioned the element of resistance. All of the principals alluded to the idea that resistance to change was often a result of "a fear of the unknown." They also suggested that teachers may resist change when they do not know enough about the change.

One principal suggested that resistance to change is often more covert in nature. She stated that teachers might have the attitude that if they participate in something new ~~one~~ year, they will not have to go through the same experience the following year. She also implied that when this type of attitude exists with a group of individuals, it is often impossible to build in any form of commitment or ownership because personal attitudes remain negative. All of the principals suggested that it was senseless to try to force someone to change. They felt that it was important to give those resisting change more time to reflect on an innovation, more information about how the change will take place, and assistance in incorporating new behaviors into already established behavioral patterns.

Working with Others

There seemed to be contrasting views to a certain extent in the ways in which the four participants perceived the idea of working with staff.

members' to bring about change. Three of the principals discussed change as a process of encouraging teachers to "buy into" an idea or innovation. In conversations with these principals, they expressed the idea that it was often their role to try to "sell" an idea to staff members. One of the principal's statements implied that her role in implementing change might involve some form of manipulation or coercion. She suggested that the process of encouraging individuals to change involved the planning and coordinating of a different set of behaviors. Her comments reflect this opinion:

I wish there was a better word, but it is manipulation. It's knowing where the people are at and taking them from that. . . . I mean, there are some things you close your eyes to, and it's the same thing, you have to close your eyes and yet you know that in another situation it may come up again and you are able to say, "You know, I don't agree with that," or "You know, have you thought of doing it this way?" or whatever.

The above passage suggests that this particular principal saw a need to persuade others to adopt her way of doing things.

A similar perspective came through in an interview with another principal. Comments such as, "I wanted to get people using the library," and "It seemed really important to me, but it didn't go with other people," indicated that he wanted staff members to adopt a certain set of behaviors he regarded as being important.

While the majority of principals discussed the idea of impressing their values on others when implementing change, they also recognized the importance of developing group values within the change process. One principal did suggest that true change occurred when individuals worked collectively toward a common goal, so that a set of multiple values would result. The following comments illustrate her perspective in working with other staff members:

But I know that you can't lay it on, I know that's true. . . . And so the key is to provide opportunities for teachers and let them--provide the leadership, I think. That's why I'm doing what I'm doing, is because hopefully I have some leadership skills and I find a way to get people excited about doing things without imposing it on them.

This interviewee seemed to have a different perception of how change occurred within an organization. She spoke of "providing leadership opportunities for teachers" in order to bring about change. Compared to the other principals, this principal seemed to really understand the importance of providing time for collective group values to develop and refine during the implementation process.

Ownership

Related to the idea of working with others to bring about change is the aspect of ownership. Although all of the principals felt it was important to provide staff members with the opportunity to be part of the decision making process in implementing a particular change, they did not all view the idea of building ownership in the same light. Three of the principals viewed the idea of building ownership as mainly a way of encouraging teachers to "buy into" an idea or innovation. They described examples where teachers adopted an idea or philosophy and incorporated it into their way of teaching. One principal discussed her attempts to create a more cooperative atmosphere in the school. Her comments reveal how she tried to teach staff members her philosophy:

One of the things I recall was that I wanted the atmosphere of looking at children's behavior to be on a more positive scale, and that required trying to teach the staff members my philosophy. . . . Things like respect for one another, and not setting up so many rules that you must not do this or that. . . . I shared my thoughts with teachers on how I expected children to act in the building, what my expectations were, and then I developed a handbook, and not only one for the parents

and students, but I developed a handbook for the teachers. Once the teachers got an idea of how I intended to operate, then we as a staff could carry out the plan and help if incidents arose--they could carry out my plan.

The statements highlighted above illustrate that this participant felt it was possible to build in ownership by simply asking teachers to use techniques and ideas based on her own personal beliefs. This perspective of ownership seems to reflect to a great extent a 'sell it, buy it, use it' approach in working toward change.

Another principal had a very different attitude toward the whole notion of building ownership in working toward change. She expressed the opinion that individuals are more receptive to change when they are empowered to use their own strengths and personal values in a leadership role. She also indicated that teachers need to really share in a problem-solving process of identifying what kinds of changes should occur.

By involving teachers as a group from the outset in a problem-solving process, she felt that there was a greater chance of developing a sense of ownership, because those involved had identified the need for change and taken the responsibility to arrive at some possible solutions. She also expressed the opinion that teachers would have a greater long-range commitment to the change because they had identified their own needs and offered suggestions as to how the change would be implemented.

Through their explanations and descriptions of how they attempted to bring about change in their schools, it was evident that the two principals cited in the above examples perceived the concept of ownership in a very different way. While one principal seemed to view building

ownership as a means of asking teachers to adopt a desired set of attitudes and behaviors, the other seemed to view it as an opportunity to involve teachers in a process of identifying needs and establishing group values in order to work toward a specific change.

Recognizing Tradition

Another theme that emerged from the interview data was the concept of tradition. For some of the principal participants in the study, tradition had an effect on their efforts to implement change in their schools. One principal who had entered an elementary school setting where there had been relatively little happening in terms of professional development found that the teachers were quite receptive to him and his enthusiasm for implementing new projects and programs. He stated that the school had originally been an elementary-junior high school with a steadily declining enrolment, and there were very few new initiatives being implemented. He also mentioned that the teachers appreciated the fact that he had a great deal of experience teaching and administrating at the elementary level, because the principal at the school previous to him had a keen interest in the junior high. Given the fact that he felt the staff would be ready for change, this interviewee stated that his decision to share his personal goals with the teachers in the month of June prior to starting his new position seemed quite appropriate. In this situation it appeared that the existing traditions within the school sparked an interest for change, excitement, new direction and leadership.

In another school setting, a first-year principal stated that she was content to maintain the status quo for the first few months, and to facilitate changes that were already underway within the school.

However, she discovered that many of the changes that were initiated the previous year included one form of preparation or inservice education for teachers. She described a situation where she found herself trying to assist teachers in using a whole language teaching approach with a new reading series which had been in the school for a year and a half:

It's very hard because patterns are there, and this is-- actually I remember now, because _____, who teaches grade one, said, "Okay, now this is my second year and so I'm working on themes and I'm pulling from different books, whereas last year I went sequentially." So she's struggling with it and realizes it's a struggle, but you know, I go into other classrooms and I see spelling being taught from the old Canadian Book of Spelling. . . . You know, I don't know how it [whole language] was brought in, other than the fact that, "Here's the new books, folks, and isn't this nice?" But there was no inservice or preservice or any of that kind of thing.

In this situation the principal was faced with the task of educating teachers about whole language teaching strategies and techniques, and this was something she felt should have been done before the reading series was even selected or introduced to the staff. With the knowledge that many of the changes attempted perviously in the school had failed, this particular principal was hesitant to initiate further changes. However, she did say that she was prepared to commit her efforts in assisting teachers to work toward changes that were already initiated within the school. A history of unsuccessful attempts by the former principal to initiate change within the school seemed to influence this principal's decision not to initiate any major changes.

Group De[liberation vs. Dictatorship

Another theme that emerged from the descriptive findings was the concept of group deliberation and dictatorship. All of the participants felt that it was important to recognize and respect the skills that

teachers had to offer. Some felt that it was senseless to try to dictate or demand that all staff members work with an innovation to the same extent. Two of the principals seemed less concerned with attaining full use of the innovation within their schools, while the other two principals seemed more concerned with providing individuals with opportunities to develop their professional skills at whatever level they were at.

The same two principals frequently discussed the skill of decision making and mentioned how important it was to seek the opinions of their staff members. Therefore, they seemed to emphasize that the "process of decision making" was most important in bringing about change, rather than the final decision itself or the end product. In general, it appeared that the participants viewed deliberation as a means of building group values and a sense of cohesiveness amongst staff members.

Power vs. Authority

The whole issue of power and authority was another underlying theme within the interview data gathered from the four participants. The principals often made statements that reflected how much power or authority they saw themselves as having in their administrative role. Two principals expressed the opinion that they felt their staff members saw them as power figures just by the very nature of their title and position. One principal stated, "I came in with the idea of trying to run the school in my way, in my fashion. I wasn't coming in with the idea of just following in somebody else's footsteps." Another principal made comments of a similar nature: "It's thinking of oneself as, yes, this is within my power. Yes, I can say, 'Jump,' and they can say, 'How

high?' because I have that authority." Although these two interviewees seemed to view themselves as being in a position of power, they also saw themselves as having the authority to lead others, make decisions and attempt to initiate changes.

Another principal within the study held a slightly different view of her role as principal. She described herself as having only as much authority as she earned through the respect of the teachers she worked with. She also suggested that exerting power to bring about change would only result in making people more resistant to change within the school. This interviewee expressed the opinion that her authority as principal and her effectiveness in bringing about change were a result of the positive relationship she strived for with staff members. She emphasized the idea that in order to attain authority and be effective in bringing about change, she felt that it was necessary to earn the respect of others.

Views of Effective Leadership

A dominant theme that emerged from the descriptive findings was the notion of effective leadership behavior. Although the interview questions were not specifically intended to encourage the interviewees to assess their own leadership skills, the questions did encourage the participants to reflect on their own behaviors and to examine their own value system in a very subtle, personal way.

The descriptive findings also illustrated some variations in the way that the participants viewed their leadership roles. All of the principals saw themselves as educational leaders. They discussed their attempts to bring about changes in order to improve the education of

their students. Within their own school environments, they regarded themselves as having high expectations for teachers and students, and this was reflected in their desire to initiate or facilitate change. The interview data also revealed that the four principals were most interested in bringing about change in areas exemplifying a strong philosophical base.

One principal made numerous comments about the importance of coordinating the efforts of her staff and assisting them to recognize their own strengths as individuals. She seemed to view an effective principal as one who regards the education of students as having top priority within the school, and in doing so is willing to create an atmosphere that supports and stimulates learning for all. This particular principal also seemed to view an effective leader as one who can empower others to bring about change. Compared to the other interviewees, this participant spoke much more about the importance of recognizing each teacher's professional strengths so that these qualities could be identified and coordinated to benefit others.

An exciting notion associated with leadership behavior is the concept of vision. Although all of the principal participants discussed their long-range goals in relation to change, some were still in the process of developing their own leadership style and vision. One principal stated:

And even in terms of school philosophy, I still don't feel that something like that, I don't feel that there's a strong philosophy as to what we really believe. And all of those things are biggies that really have to evolve.

Only one principal seemed to be able to articulate the vision she held for her school. She made statements such as, "I wanted to build a

strong school philosophy for learning involving all the staff and the students," and "I think you need to get people to believe in themselves and have faith in what they can do." By the types of professional development activities this principal described as having organized with her staff members, it was evident that she had a creative way of transforming her personal vision into a reality within her school.

Change as a Way of Learning vs. Change as a Way of Administrrating

One of the most important themes emerging from the interview data was the manner in which principals viewed change. Some of the participants seemed to view change as a facet of administrrating. They spoke of change as being external to the individuals they were working with. One interviewee demonstrated this type of attitude by making the following statements:

I have been trying to have teachers utilize the library more. Sometimes I think I haven't gotten very far with it. It is still not where I would like it to be mostly in terms of teacher and student utilization.

In this situation the intent to initiate change and improve the use of the library had originated with the principal. Later on in the interview this principal stated that although the use of the library had improved, it really was not where she would have liked it to be. This view of change really seemed to reflect the idea that the end result was most important.

A very different perspective of change that came through the interview data was that of looking at change as a form of learning. Some of the participants held a broad perspective of change and viewed it as a facet of living and learning, while others had a much narrower view of

change and saw it only as being part of administrating. One principal demonstrated this attitude as she described change as an integral part of the daily teaching and learning process:

I've never been able to say, "Yes, we've got learning centers in place," because we don't. You continually refine and polish, refine and polish, and it just gets better and better and better. So I think for me it never ends. . . . But in my mind, there's lots more we can do in here to make it a better school for kids and for the staff. So, it's kind of never ending.

These comments exemplify the interviewee's belief that change is truly an exciting, personal experience that is part of living and learning. She also seemed to regard each opportunity for change as a new challenge for all educators to learn and grow professionally.

Summary

In the descriptive findings gathered from the four principal participants, there were several themes that were identified relating to the concept of change implementation. Attitudes about their personal responsibility to initiate and facilitate change seemed to vary slightly amongst the four principals. Although all the interviewees shared the belief that it was important to seek input from staff members, they held different perspectives as to how they should work with other individuals and build ownership to bring about change. Some of the principals suggested that the traditions and existing patterns in their schools were obstacles to initiating change, while others viewed tradition as working in their favor to bring about change.

Varied opinions regarding power and authority existed within the interview data and yet fewer differences existed regarding the notion of deliberation. The findings also seemed to highlight the whole issue of

leadership and how the principals perceived effective leadership in relation to change. Most importantly, some principals viewed change and change implementation as an integral part of living, while others viewed it as a responsibility within their administrative role.

Chapter 6

Summary, Reflections, and Implications

Introduction

This chapter consists of five major sections. The first section summarizes the purpose of the study and reviews the research methodology. The second section summarizes the major findings and the themes existing within the interview data. Personal reflections in light of the research are presented in the fourth section, while the fifth and final section of the chapter discusses several implications for practice and research in relation to the principal's role in implementing change.

Summary

Purpose of the study. The purpose of the study was to examine the perceptions of four principals toward change and toward their role in initiating and facilitating change within their schools. The reasons for this study are emphasized in the literature, which points out the importance of the role of the principal in implementing change at the school level.

The study specifically addressed the following research questions:

1. How did principals view change?
2. How did principals view their role in relation to change?
3. What did principals do to implement change in their schools?

Research methodology. The research methodology used in this study was designed to acquire principals' perceptions of their role in implementing change at the school level.

Extensive, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the four principals from elementary and elementary/junior high schools. The semi-structured interviews made it possible to probe for detailed information when necessary. Open-ended questions allowed the researcher to seek more thorough explanations from the principal participants and to develop a better understanding of how principals viewed their role in implementing change.

Initial and follow-up interviews were conducted over a two-month period. Each interview was tape recorded and transcripts were returned to each participant highlighting possible quotations and preliminary interpretations. Follow-up interviews enabled the researcher and interviewee to discuss statements noted within the interview transcripts. These interviews also provided principal participants with the opportunity to answer additional questions and elaborate on specific issues related to their role in implementing change within their schools.

Data analysis was ongoing from the time of the initial contacts with the principals. Journal notations, abbreviated notations, and interview transcripts provided information for the data files compiled for each principal. The information was categorized according to the major research questions, and as member checks occurred, the data collection expanded and statements made by the participants were analyzed.

Various themes emerged from the content analysis, and the data was analyzed again to identify these themes. The themes were identified with the intent of providing further insight and reflection into the data being described.

Major Findings from the Interview Data

The four principal participants in the study provided detailed descriptions of change, how they viewed their role in relation to change, and what strategies they identified as being useful to bring about change in their schools.

They expressed the view that change is a complex process, and one principal specifically emphasized the notion that educators have a moral responsibility to improve the learning environment for students. The principals emphasized the idea that if they did not view an innovation as working toward a better education for students, they did not attempt to implement it within their schools.

All of the principals commented on the idea that a trusting relationship between the principal and teacher is extremely important in attempting to bring about change for school improvement. The interviewees alluded to the idea that when change occurred within their schools, it required those individuals involved to refocus their attitudes and to take risks. The principals also shared the view that change involves the belief systems of staff members. They stated that staff members had to see the value of an innovation if they were going to internalize it or personalize it to any extent.

The four principals in the study viewed themselves as having a wide range of responsibilities in bringing about change. They saw themselves as being key individuals in bringing about change within their schools and as having to establish a positive working relationship with others in the school community; some of the principals saw themselves as having to take risks in order to work toward the vision they held for their schools. Most of the participants expressed the view that an extremely

important part of their role in initiating and facilitating change was to communicate their personal goals and beliefs to staff members. Although the principals viewed their own values and beliefs as being important, they shared the opinion that it was possible for teachers to keep their personal values and goals in working toward the vision held for the school. They also expressed the view that the process of change often involves a give-and-take relationship where those individuals involved may sometimes have to modify their expectations.

Some of the principals saw themselves as being professional development leaders in their efforts to facilitate in their schools. One principal specifically saw her role as being a "staff development leader," and stated that part of her responsibility as principal was to ensure that a quality staff development program was provided to staff members to address their specific needs. The principal shared similar views in that they felt an innovation would have a greater chance of succeeding if teachers were given more ownership and leadership responsibilities.

In discussing how they implemented change, two of the interviewees suggested that it was important to investigate the success of an innovation in other school settings before initiating change.

All of the principals felt that it was important to monitor the existing climate within the school before presenting a proposal for change, or before involving staff members in decision-making processes that work toward change. All of the participants commented that it was important to provide written resources and the appropriate human resources for teachers, and one principal even pointed out that it was crucial to provide instructional time for teachers to plan for the use of

a particular innovation.

Modelling was regarded by all principals as a very effective means of assisting teachers in the implementation process, and one interviewee expressed the view that modelling or demonstrating the use of an innovation assisted her in motivating teachers to incorporate new behaviors into their teaching style. Another participant felt that by modelling the use of an innovation, he was able to establish credibility. A few of the principals felt that it was sometimes necessary to go beyond modelling to assist teachers in the change process. During the interviews the participants also expressed the idea that it is beneficial to offer teachers ongoing support and assistance with a particular innovation at the classroom level when needed. It was interesting to note that all four principals shared the view that it might be more effective to initiate change with those teachers who have a keen interest in an innovation, rather than with everyone on a school-wide basis.

Summary of themes emerging from the interview data. From the ongoing analysis process, several underlying issues or themes were identified related to the notion of leadership and change implementation.

There were varying attitudes amongst the four principals regarding how they saw themselves as having a personal responsibility to bring about change within their schools. Principals with less experience expressed the view that they sometimes felt compelled to maintain the status quo, whereas principals with more experience seemed to view themselves as having a personal responsibility to change things to improve the teaching and learning taking place in their schools.

The notion of timing was another theme which emerged from the interview data. A first-year principal felt it was a good idea to

initiate changes gradually during her first year in the school, while another principal felt that it was appropriate to share his goals and initiate changes from the outset when he met with staff members for the first time.

When dealing with resistance toward change, all principals suggested that it was senseless to try to impose change on others. They expressed the opinion that it was important to give those individuals resisting change more time to reflect on an innovation, more information about how the change will take place, and assistance in incorporating new behaviors into already established behavioral patterns.

Contrasting views existed to a certain extent in the ways in which the four principals perceived the idea of working with staff members to bring about change. Most of the principals saw change as a process of encouraging teachers to "buy into" an idea or innovation. Some principals regarded the notion of ownership as a means of involving teachers in a 'sell-it-buy-it-~~it~~' approach to working toward change. However, one principal who held a very different perspective suggested that true change occurred when individuals worked collectively toward decision making and goal setting, so that a set of multiple values would result. This principal also expressed the opinion that teachers are more receptive to change when they are empowered to use their strengths and personal values in a leadership role.

Another theme which emerged from the interview data was the concept of tradition. Some of the interviewees suggested that traditions in their schools were obstacles to initiating change, while others viewed traditions as working in their favor when attempting to initiate change.

The interview data also indicated that there were varied opinions

regarding the notions of power and authority. Some of the participants indicated that their staff members saw them as power figures just by the very nature of their title and position. Only one principal described herself as having as much authority as she earned in working with others. This particular principal emphasized the idea that in order to attain authority and be effective in bringing about change, she believed that it was important to earn the respect of others.

The findings also seemed to focus on the broader notion of leadership, and how the principals viewed effective leadership relating to change implementation. Although all of the interviewees spoke about their long-range goals in relation to change and the importance of values, some seemed to be still in the process of developing their own vision. Only one principal was able to articulate the vision she held for her school.

One of the more subtle themes which emerged from the interview data was the extent to which principals viewed change as a part of living. Some of the principals simply saw change implementation as a task within their administrative role, whereas others seemed to view change as a part of living and learning. Those principals who viewed change as a part of living seemed to regard change as a new challenge for all educators to learn and grow as professionals.

Personal Reflections

As I look back at my interactions with the four principal participants from the initial telephone contacts to the final follow-up interviews, it becomes apparent that there were some discrepancies in what principals expressed at different times during the interviews.

Although all of the principals said that building ownership was a necessary part of working with others to bring about change, some described instances where they made decisions on their own without involving staff members in a group process. Even though some of the principals stated on several occasions that getting the input of staff members was very important in order to identify their needs and personal values, they spoke of instances where they attempted to impose their own values and beliefs on others. In regard to staff participation in the decision-making process, Leithwood and Montgomery (1986) suggested that effective principals "work toward high levels of participation by staff and others" (p. 113). They also suggest that once school goals have been set by the staff, the principal's responsibility is to translate them into tasks and attitudes so that each person is aware of his/her contribution to the goals. Those principals who spoke mostly about their own intentions rather than the intentions of the staff seemed to be more concerned about achieving an end product or result with an innovation, rather than with the process of working with staff members to achieve school goals.

In speaking with each principal individually, it became obvious to me that the principals with little administrative experience were still in the process of developing their own sense of leadership within their role. Although these two principals displayed a strong self-concept and value base, they seemed to still be emerging as leaders in creating a vision and being able to transform it into reality. Peters and Waterman (1982) suggested that an important characteristic of an effective leader is vision. They stated that leaders who develop their own vision and can communicate it effectively to others are able to put their own "personal

stamp" (p. 53) on the organization. In speaking with the four principals, I found all of them to be very open in the interviews and it became clear to me that the two participants who were fairly new to the role of principal were very honest and sincere about the fact that they were still developing their own vision of what their school should exemplify. They expressed the view that they were still learning from their daily experiences. The principals mentioned that the interviews had encouraged them to really reflect on their beliefs and analyze how they had attempted to implement change in the past.

In reflecting back on the numerous conversations I had with each principal, I found it interesting that all of the four participants displayed a real commitment to their own professional development. They spoke about the importance of keeping well informed with the current literature relating to teaching and learning, and they mentioned their experiences of participating in graduate programs and attending conferences. They all seemed to be enthusiastic and conscientious about their work life, and their enthusiasm seemed to demonstrate true commitment to their role as leaders.

As I analyzed the interview data and reflected on the statements made by the four principals, I found that the literature on change and the principal's role in relation to change in no way reflects the complexity of change and how it evolves within an organization. The principals spoke about the impact of existing attitudes and personal values amongst staff members, and they recognized to varying extents that those personal values are an integral part of living. Holt (1987) stated, "Moral questions, then--questions of ethics or personal values--have a great deal to do with living, and with professional activities

like teaching, which may form a part of living" (p. 16). Most of the literature on change seems to conceptualize it in a very simplistic manner, and it fails to address the critical issue of values which are inherent in the change process. Models attempting to explain change tend to examine change in a neatly formulated step-by-step process leading to achieve a specific end result.

Although more current research at least recognizes that individuals personalize the use of an innovation to varying extents, it still discusses change in relation to individuals working at the same level with the same innovation, to achieve similar results. The existing literature fails to relate the broader notion of leadership and group processing skills to that of change implementation within the school setting.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

Based upon the research literature written on change and the principal's role in implementing change, and in light of the analysis of the data gathered in this study, certain recommendations might be considered. The following sections highlight some of the implications for practice as well as for future research in the area of change and the principal's role in implementing change.

For practice. Given the findings about change and how principals view themselves as implementers of change within their schools, prospective school principals also may want to give special consideration to the following recommendations.

Firstly, prospective principals need to realize that their own personality and daily behavior demonstrate to others how they view

education and change. Principals who are flexible, willing to compromise, and who demonstrate a sincere commitment by participating in the implementation process are most likely to have credibility with their staff members and be successful in working with teachers toward change.

Secondly, principals and prospective principals need to go beyond the quick-fix, step-by-step approach to bringing about change. When necessary, they need to be willing to spend more time with teachers individually and as a group in order to identify individual needs, make decisions, and develop group values that work toward the vision held for the school.

Thirdly, individuals undertaking the role of principal need to consider the importance of empowering others to help change evolve. Principals need to recognize and make use of the strengths of staff members so that they build in a sense of ownership and commitment toward the change. By providing teachers with leadership opportunities to initiate change or to assist others with a particular innovation, the principal is able to overtly demonstrate a sense of trust and respect for those teachers he/she is working with.

Most importantly, prospective principals also may want to spend more time reflecting on their own values and personal beliefs before attempting to initiate change, so that when they attempt to make decisions in bringing about change, they have a solid understanding of their personal value base and the judgments they have made. Prospective school principals also need to be more aware of the moral notion involved in bringing about change. They need to view change in a broader sense, and in doing so, recognize that change involves the personal beliefs and values of all those participating in the implementation process.

The implications noted above suggest that district personnel who are responsible for district-wide projects should be aware of the complexity of change and of the time required for change to evolve within the school setting. If change is to be more than simply a "quick-fix" to an existing educational practice, then individuals working at the district level must be willing to allocate the appropriate resources and provide sufficient time for change to evolve.

For future research. While this study attempted to identify how a small number of principals perceived their role in implementing change, it did not attempt to examine what principals actually do to bring about change. This question might be considered in an observational study where the efforts and behaviors of principals are observed within the school setting.

As this study focused mainly on principals working in elementary and elementary/junior high schools, other studies might involve principals at the junior high and high school level, to see if principals' perceptions regarding their role in change implementation differ to any extent.

While this study sought the principal's perceptions of his/her role in implementing change, future studies might also attempt to examine how teachers view the principal's role in bringing about change for school improvement.

Concluding Statement

By examining change from the principals' point of view, I found it possible to compare their perceptions to the existing literature regarding change implementation and leadership. My discussions with these principals shed light on the importance of personal judgment and

decision making in relation to bringing about change. Most importantly, though, the study identified for me the sheer complexity of change. It also emphasized the considerable importance of the principals' vision and beliefs, and how these become the basis from which he/she works toward initiating and facilitating change within the school.

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Appendix A

Correspondence

January 26, 1988

Dear

Thank you for participating in my research project "Principals' Perceptions of Their Role in Initiating Change." The purpose of my study is to find out how principals view their role in initiating and facilitating changes in their school environment.

Although there is a great deal of literature available related to the topic of change, there is very little information on the principal's role in initiating change. Being that managing change is a current issue, your perspectives as a principal are very important to providing insights for others.

Your involvement in the study has been approved by _____, our district testing officer, _____, Superintendent of Program Services, and my thesis adviser, Dr. Margaret Haughey. Your involvement in the study will entail an interview of approximately one hour in length. All information for the interview will be kept confidential and a transcript of the interview will be returned to you for clarification, and permission to use specific information.

I wish to assure you that no comments or statements will be attributed to any school or school principal. At no time will you or your school be identified in the final document. As a participant you also have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

I appreciate your time and involvement and look forward to speaking with you.

Yours sincerely,

Deborah Rowley

DR/sl

June 20, 1988

Dear

Thank you very much for participating in the interviews designed to gather information for the study "Principals' Perceptions of Their Role in Implementing Change."

Your interest, time, and contributions were very much appreciated. A copy of the final document will be available to you in your school system's professional library.

Sincerely,

Deborah A. Rowley

DR/lp

Appendix B

Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule

(Sample Questions)

- How many years have you been an administrator?
- How long were you an assistant principal?
- Tell me a bit about how you view yourself as a principal. What kinds of things do you think are characteristic of your role?
- So when you came into the school and you had some ideas in mind, did you set a limit or perhaps some expectations for yourself as to how much you would try to do for that year?
- You commented on how you provided resources for teachers. Did you go into their classrooms to find out what was happening?
- How did you monitor the new programs and techniques they were using?
- You've said several times now, "With the strong staff I have" How do you set the climate or atmosphere that demonstrates the attitude, "We want to get involved"? How did you get that attitude going?
- With staff changes each year, how did you continue or maintain this attitude toward change?
- What would you do if somebody said, "Well, I don't want to try that"?
- How do you 'test the waters' or get a feel for what is happening in your school, to know whether it's the appropriate time to introduce or initiate something?
- Tell me how you go about involving your teachers in the decision-making process you keep referring to.
- How do you know you've reached your intended result?
- When you came to this school, how did you see yourself coming in, since you were new to the school and new to the role of principal?
- Could you describe a change that you have attempted to initiate or implement in the past?
- How do you keep a close check on how your teachers are progressing with a new idea or innovation?

What kinds of programs in your school are teacher-initiated? What is your role in assisting teachers with their efforts to bring about change?

What impact do you think timing has in relation to change?

Were you aware of the notion of timing when you introduced the change?

Tell me more about how you see change as being a process.

You said yourself that change does not happen overnight. How do you see yourself, as an administrator, being able to support teachers over an extended period of time?

What would you do in a situation where someone was resisting the idea of change?

- How are you influential in getting people to work as a team?
- Do you think you have to build a team before you can attempt change? Or do you think the team-building process occurs as individuals go through changes?

How do you demonstrate to staff members your commitment to a particular innovation?

- How do you support teachers in their efforts to implement an innovation?
- Does your role differ in any way when you are attempting to implement changes that are initiated at the district level, as compared to those you've initiated?
- When you initiate change of some sort, do you do so with a small group, or do you expect the entire staff to participate?
- You mentioned the notion of modelling. How do you think modelling has an influence on others in working toward change?
- You've mentioned that the attitudes of individuals often vary within a school. How do you attempt to facilitate change when individuals have varying levels of interest and commitment toward an innovation or idea you would like to initiate?
- How important are the opinions of your staff members to you when you are attempting to implement change?
- What advice would you give to prospective principals who are going to be involved in implementing changes within their schools?

Appendix C

Transcript Samples

Sample #1

D: It's kind of in a sense like the people who resist a change and putting themselves through a new behavior pattern, like you say, need time, need to be not coerced or pushed, maybe just even have it brought to their attention, you know, asking them why they're doing it, and here's why we do this one way, maybe, and, like you say, maybe those are the ones that over time, over two, three years after they are totally absorbed in a school that's of a different philosophy, might have to sit back and look at themselves and then say . . .

P: Do I fit here?

D: Yes, or do I fit here, yes.

P: And I thought, you know, I'll be surprised. The only reason why I think I might be able to do the plaid phonics books relatively fast is that I know that they are interested in getting more books for their grade level. And so, it's sort of like dangling a piece of candy in front of them and saying, you know, and I thought, and I'll look at the budget and say, not only will I give you that money but I will double the money if you will. And I thought, those phonics books are about five bucks a pop, and I think that's at least 60 books per classroom. And I thought that's not a lot, but it's some. So, you know, I thought maybe they'll do it. Otherwise you just sort of have to let it, and then the seed is planted. And I have one coming to Phonics and the Whole Language Program on the in-service day. So I thought, you know, we're trying to meet them, at least, through the back door.

D: And that's what takes so long! But in terms of, if you didn't do it that way and you came in and you said, well, we're going to have a whole language school here, and we're going to do this this year, and this is what we're going to work--all going to work on themes, and whatever, and you might find that people will stay with you maybe for six months, and then all of a sudden they're going to throw their arms up and say, hey, I've had it. Like, I don't like this. What are you doing to us, you know?

P: And yet I also think that I want to move in that direction, so I do think--that's why I say I'm trying to think of what do I want for next year, so that I can sit down, say, at the end of February and at the beginning of March, say to them, look, this is where I'd like to see us moving, and so that they have a chance to let it gel, and so on, and then again be open to them, saying, no, I can't handle this or we can't handle this or whatever. But then they can make a decision, too; they might say, okay, I'm thinking of a change; I don't agree with that, so I'm moving schools. But I think, too, sometimes, I mean, you can't let everything evolve, or you'd never get anywhere. And so I think that you have to plant the seeds. And I thought, with the writing program this year, I thought, okay, where can we go from that? Let's take it and move at that, rather than sort of saying, okay, we did writing this year, now we're going to do math, now we're going to do this, but taking something and really doing it well, so it's ingrained and integrated with them.

D: And building on it in the end.

P: And that's not even fair for the kids.

D: What do you feel your role is in terms of modelling? You don't have to answer right away.

P: I think that's really important, but it's awfully hard to model everything you want. And I thought, you know, in terms of it's one thing that I think is really important and that I can see why they say that principals should teach, because I don't think that, if I don't go in well planned, I don't think that I can expect them to go in well planned. And, you know, if I don't do my correcting, I don't think I can expect them to. So I can see why teaching principals is very important, but choose your subjects wisely, not like I did.

D: You're teaching probably all the leftovers.

P: No, I'm not, but it's language arts, social studies, heavy-duty marking, but it's stuff that I really like. So, I mean, you're trading off, if I had to teach Phys. Ed. I wouldn't do any marking, but I'd do a lot of preparation. And so, you know, you've got to trade off here.

D: So in terms of modelling, then, if you model in your teaching, modelling what your vision sort of is for the school . . .

P: And behaviors and that kind of thing. The other thing I thought, like, it's something really simple, too, is, like, in terms of dress code. And I notice that, coming to this school, people dress very professionally. But I thought last year Jane dressed professionally, _____ always wears a suit and tie, or sometimes he'll wear a sweater, but I think that comes . . .

Sample #2

D: Being that it's your second year, then, last year, when you came into the school, you must have had maybe some idea of what this school was like. Were there a lot of changes that you started underway last year?

P: There were a few changes that I--I kept my goals fairly limited, and even still, if you talk to the staff they might say there were too many, but I don't think the changes were that great and they were fairly supportive, but I did tell the people, even the June prior to starting here, about a couple of things that I wanted to do. I had come out sometime in June after I had been appointed here and I got to go and talk to each staff member, and I said that the one thing I really wanted to start here was a writing program with the kids. How would they look at that? I said that's one thing that I'm very high on and I want going in the school, and I said I would like to start that right away in September, bringing out _____ in particular, introducing in-servicing with us and get the writing program going and off the ground, and that would be my one big thing. And they all agreed with that in June, so we were able to start with that right away in September.

D: Great.

P: In fact, I think we had _____ out the first two weeks in September. I had booked her the previous year, so our Thursday afternoons, that's how they were spent.

D: Oh, so you did this on a continual basis? It wasn't like a one-shot in-service, then?

P: Yes. I think _____ came out three times or so, and then she came back out to help the teachers individually in their classrooms and came out for parties and things like that that went with the writing program. So that was the one big change that I wanted, was to put an emphasis on writing. And I did have a fair idea of the type of kid that would be in this area, the type of school that would be, because I had taught at _____ School, which is neighboring to here and very similar socioeconomically, so I had a fair idea of the type of place I was coming to. But I think the teachers make the school more even than the community, so I wasn't sure how the personalities would be, and I didn't know any of them, except for _____ who I had taught with previously, but she was part-time last year.

D: Oh, okay. You, then, when you came in, you had set some goals, then, for yourself, I'm sure; it sounds like you had already said, well, we're going to work on the writing program. That was a whole-school kind of a goal. How did you view your role in starting this?

P: Okay, I felt I had already initiated by kind of putting the bug in people's ear that this was something that I really cared about, and I wanted to kind of show them that I cared, and I wanted them to care about it. I wanted them to think this is going to be something good, or at least we'll go along with it because it sounds interesting or something. The other thing was, as a personal goal to that in terms of my own professional development, my P.D. goal--and it was one that went in to the Superintendent--was to learn more about whole language so that I could get a better feel of the fit of the whole thing and how it would develop through a whole school. I had some experience with that, but I needed to get it more straight in my mind because, even today, I couldn't

come up with a definition of whole language. I don't think there probably should be one, but I wanted the writing to fit into an overall language arts program that really worked for kids, that made them comfortable, not necessarily score a lot higher, but that kids became more comfortable using language, they were comfortable with writing, they were comfortable with reading, it's not something they hate, it's something they look forward to. So as my own P.D. goal, and to enhance it, I was going to attend a couple of language arts conferences, which I did, and then I would be able to bring back even more.

D: Was there, then--it was your own goals plus you must have at some time, from the very beginning when you asked Charlotte to come in, because it was a change you wanted to get going in the school, was it really a change for most of the teachers here, or had they been . . . ?

P: Yes.

D: Okay, yes. So then it was something--or a new focus at least, anyway.

P: Yes, it was a new focus.

D: A new emphasis.

P: A new emphasis on the fact that the writing would be as important as the reading, and that they go hand in glove, they're not two separate items altogether. And that writing isn't just reports, that writing isn't just the sentence copying and things like that, that the kids have to get their own ideas down, and that they will benefit from publishing their own books.

D: So, in essence, too, it's also a way of teaching?

P: Yes.

D: Okay. So that's more of a philosophical type thing, that if people

are teaching to a whole language program with that in mind as a part of every subject that they teach, it'll integrate it, then it's not a big deal. If it is, that we have language arts from 10:00 till 11:30, then it is a big deal. It could be a change in a way of teaching, too.

P: Getting _____ involved was key. That was important, because it's one thing for me to say that I like it and this is what we're going to do and explain it all, but it's another thing when I've done that plus there's another person coming in who's even more--can add a new flavor and more emphasis to it. And then people look at that and say, well, now, there's two of them that believe that, so maybe there is something to this.

D: So, when you came in, then, you already had, because you had spoken to them in June, you came in, that was a change that you wanted to get underway. Was there anything that you felt you'd like to introduce but maybe thought that you might wait for a while until you got into the school, in terms of, did you feel that timing was--were you aware of the timing kind of aspect of it?

P: Oh, yes. I would like people to use learning centres in the school again, and I think that that fits--it's not a dependent fit with the writing. You don't need learning centres in order to be able to write, nor do you need the writing program as such, or the emphasis on the writing program in order to have learning centres. But they do complement each other, and can complement each other, but I waited until this year to bring someone out to talk to them about learning centres. And I established some learning centres in more subtle ways, and I believe that probably the best ally when you're doing a change like that is to have one of the teachers going along and showing, like somebody who

is keen on it and you'd give them everything they need. And so I had started a little bit of that last year when one of the teachers was interested in teaching on themes. When I had come back from the conference in Winnipeg, I just went on and on about how this person talked about teaching in themes, and somebody said, Well, that sounds like the way I have always thought teaching should be, but I always thought I was confined to the textbooks. So she said, How would I go about teaching a theme? And I said, Easier than me explaining, I have a book that has a theme already developed, with everything you would need. And I gave her that and she just went with it for five weeks. By the time she was finished, she had several centres in her room and by the time she was finished I also said, It's really neat, we have all these kids calling, we have extra computers in the Computer Room, would you like to have a couple right in your room in the corner that the kids could go through and use with these couple of programs? They're old ones. And she said, Sure. So I took those down and set them up for her. Well, before the end of the year another teacher wanted to have a couple of them in her room for the kids who were finished, and so those are some centres that are going, and then, as the idea of centres got going, I brought _____ in this year in October.

Sample #3

P: It did to some extent, though I knew that I was going to be here for two years at least. And I came with the idea of trying to run the school in my way, in my fashion. I wasn't coming with the idea of just following in somebody else's footsteps. Some of the little things that I remember doing, the library had one whole section of it was teacher resources, and I moved all of those into a workroom because I felt if it was in the workroom the teachers might utilize more of that, because I could see that it wasn't being used. And in that I recall there was a little cubby area where students used to sometimes work, but sometimes they would just play in there. And I know one of the teachers had expressed some reservation about this, but we went ahead with it anyway and did it, and then there didn't seem to be any problem. So it was more cosmetic changes, perhaps. I made a number of changes in the library, because I felt that was one of the things I tried to work on in my years here, because I feel that a library should be a place where children can have room to work and have it more as a resource center. There were many fine things in the library, more to do with science, perhaps, items that you would collect for science. So I was in the process of moving these out to make room for . . . so that was a change that some of the staff members observed, didn't say a heck of a lot, but they certainly . . . But there were some comments.

D: That happened very soon, then?

P: Yes, it did. It certainly did.

D: First day! Did you see yourself, then, as--I guess everybody has their own strengths or their own interests in particular philosophies of teaching or in curricular areas--did you see some of those things coming through in the vision that you had for your school?

P: Yes, yes. The library is one where I suppose it encompasses the whole school. I have been trying to have teachers utilize the library more. Sometimes I think I haven't gotten very far with it. It's still not where I would like it to be in terms of teacher and student utilization, and ultimately student utilization, but we did things like trying to get parents to come in. Well, first I had staff reading stories to children at noon in the library in the winter months, and then we tried to get parents to come in and do that, and I set up a viewing center in the library and a listening center. And the listening center was very popular.

D: It was used a lot?

P: It still is, yes. And now, this last year, we've put the computers in there.

D: I noticed, yes.

P: Because one of our teachers thought, perhaps, if all the computers were in one area they would be utilized more, instead of one per classroom, type of thing. So we're trying that this year. But also the idea that the library and for students to make greater use of resources, there, so we were fortunate to have the services of the library facilitator last year. So there were two classes involved in that program, which was nice because she was able to have projects and got the students to use it more. So, then, by example and by the physical changes in the library and some of the things that I had discussed in the

staff meetings related to the kinds of things, like having an offer come in for the _____, so we've tried to focus on--one of my things is trying to get children to read more. So focussing on the library and the things that we're doing there, plus other things in the school, like encouraging them to read, and then having awards in September . . .

D: To promote reading.

P: Yes. So that kind of thing.

D: You had probably had a lot of experience trying to implement maybe some changes, especially when you're developing your early childhood program in our system. You had a lot of experience doing that, and then also with combined grades, because that was sort of a pioneer area, wasn't it? They had not had combined grade consultants before, so did you find that, when you came here, that some of the strategies you used--you talked about you came in, you had some things that physically, cosmetic change that you did right away--was there any philosophical-type changes that you were trying to put forth with the staff?

P: One of the things that I recall was that I wanted the atmosphere of looking at children's behavior to be on a more positive scale, and that required trying to teach the staff members my philosophy, and then how I wanted it--what kind of an atmosphere I wanted in the school, which required their cooperation, too. Things like the basic respect for one another, and not setting up so many rules that you must not, you must not, you must not, but gradually trying to share with the staff how I treated children, like, for instance, if there was a problem with a student, send it to the office, send it to the office. They've all learned, with the exception of one who still is trying to do this, and my philosophy is that if a child is acting up, it's not my problem; it's the

teacher's problem. I will work with the teacher and help her, but I don't think it's up to me to solve it. Inevitably, I am involved in it with But basically what I have done with that thing was to share with the teachers my thoughts on how I expected children to act in the building, what my expectations were, shared that with the staff and then I developed a handbook, and not only one for the parents and students, but I developed a handbook for the teachers, for the staff as well. And in that I set out some of the things that we'd-- standards of behavior, if you like, for want of a better term, for the students and so, once the teachers got an idea of how I intended to operate, then we as a staff--and I try to do things gradually, because hitting them with everything all at once is no good, at least, I don't think it is--so once they understood how I operate, how I dealt with students, and usually I would do it in the presence of the teachers so they could see, then they understood what I was trying to establish. Then they could carry and help if incidents arose, they could carry on my plan.

D: Were they involved when you did the handbook? Did you have a lot of these ideas stated yourself, or did they have input into the book?

P: I had a good idea as to what I wanted to put into the book, but I asked them for input. I said, "I am going to prepare a handbook for staff; what things would you like in there?" So they gave me just some ideas, but then I compiled it by myself. Also what we did in terms of trying to promote more of a community thing was, with the staff, we looked at ways to reward the children for the things that we wanted, so together the staff, we developed what we'd do for awards and that kind of thing. So two or three times a year we acknowledge this, and we have an award for different things, so the staff had a lot of input into that.

Sample #4

P: Yes. And there's no ownership.

D: That's right. . . ., what happens when you come into a situation where somebody resists, out-and-outright resists, what your vision is, or not maybe what your vision is, because probably they wouldn't be here to begin with if they weren't at least somewhat enthused about what was happening in this school, at least now with the principal being involved in the hiring a little bit more, or selection process.

P: We may lose that.

D: Yes. What happens if somebody said, "Well, gee, I don't want to do that"? What should you do?

P: Two things: one thing that happens, I think, is that if people are here and they don't get on the bandwagon because the philosophy is so strong, because it's bought by the majority, they usually themselves will not stay, because they don't fit into it. Another thing that happens is, parents sometimes--if a teacher doesn't fit into the philosophy of the school, which the parents also have ownership of . . .

D: Yes, that's right.

P: . . . because we sell our philosophy to our parents. I've had parents say, "That teacher does not fit the philosophy of the school, and that can create a problem for teachers. I had no problem with sitting down with the teacher who is resisting what's going on in the school and is detrimental to the students in either, number one, doing the job of evaluation, if it's a teacher who should be on Goals for

Improvement because they are just not doing the job, then I will get involved with that. I don't think in a threatening way, but let's say you've got somebody on staff who's not doing a competent job. Then I think, as an administrator, I have to look at it from the evaluation point of view. The other thing is, you might have a very good teacher who is just not fitting the school and, I think, to sit down with that teacher and say, "How do you feel about being here?" and maybe that teacher should be somewhere else. Or if they want to stay, that at least they know that we're willing to help them, but if they're going to stay they can't really buy out of this. If we've got a Jon Stott's Spiral Sequence Literature Program going in our school from kindergarten to six, and some teacher says, "I'm not doing that program," then we don't have it; we don't have a spiral going. And so we have to be able to say to that teacher, "If you're going to be at _____, that will be an expectation, because this is the project that we do, and our parents are aware of it, and it's a spiral, and it moves up, and therefore it is a commitment you must make in that instance." That's just one example.

D: Using that example, do you give people some time to--you were saying some people need more time.

P: Absolutely. And I wouldn't even expect it in the first year. Let's say somebody came on board and maybe they'd do a little bit of it, or we'd send them out to a workshop with Jon Stott, or we'd have another teacher do some planning with them; you have to give them the opportunity; you can't just lay it all out at once. We had a new teacher come on staff this year, for example, in grade one, never been involved in articulation process, never taught whole language, came from a highly structured environment, and she was a teacher who was placed here. I was

very worried about her, but, at the same time, I knew that I could not go down to that teacher and say, "I want to see listening centres and reading centres, and I want to see all this stuff happening," that I had to allow her time to fit. We dealt with those problems, that some of the grade ones didn't want to come to school. We were dealing with that whole thing; continuity wasn't being provided in one room.

D: Yes, and expected a lot of people.

P: Yes, and parents, too. And so I had to find a quick way to give her a few strategies, like, "Maybe if you got some self-portraits out in the halls and a welcome sign and things in your classroom that kind of speak of environments, that will be your starting point. And then as you get more comfortable with the children, I will help you set up some things that you would like when you feel you're ready. And looking at that teacher now, when you walk into her class she would never know she had an adjustment problem, now. But if I had gone in in September and said, "Now, you get this all in place because you don't fit it," she would have probably had a nervous breakdown and we wouldn't have accomplished a thing. So I think you have to give people time, and she wasn't doing anything truly detrimental, although her style was such that there were some kids who weren't happy being in her room initially, and that's not great. But at the same time you can't come down on the second day and say, "Look, you'd better change that." You have to find a way to give them . . . and I anticipated the problem, and I talked to the parents and said, "She's new; give her time. This is new to her; give her time to fit in to this. It'll come." And it did. So those are difficult questions, though.

D: That's great. And hard to make that decision at that time, too.

P: Yes. And sometimes you get people staying on who don't really--that you are disappointed, that they're not really going maybe as much--it's such a good staff, really, it's strong. I think they support each other and 90% of the time it's really going well.

D: _____, you had mentioned before that when diagnostic reading came up, you had said you had other things going on at the school; it might not have been the right time. How do you test the waters or get a feel for what's happening out there, to know whether it's the right time to introduce or initiate something new?

P: I'm a real believer in pacing. Some people will look at the school from the outside in and they'll say, "You're doing too many things," but I don't think they can make the judgement; the people on the inside will make the judgement. And I think that what you have to do, because sometimes you will make a mistake--that was one example, of taking on one thing too many too soon, and so I think just being able to back off from it and say, "Okay, we'll shift gears; we'll let this one go," and then have the staff say, "Well, no, I really think we're okay on this one." But I think you do have to pace and be careful. I think you have to look at your teachers, see if they're tired, see if they're--examine how many things you are doing, and just be perceptive. You have to watch what's going on out there so that you don't overload them. And at the same time, though, if you provide the staff development that they need and you provide the support that they need, you can alleviate some of that. Some people say, "Well, how can we do all of this in x number of years?" Well, I think you can do it because, number one, it's good education, it's good learning, and all you're doing is bring your people up to date with what's happening in learning styles or ~~co~~-operative learning.

Today, the more tools you provide, if you provide the tools with the idea that they're tools, and that teachers can use them to help them be better teachers, and not say to your staff, "You must be knowledgeable in learning styles; you must know how to do co-operative learning; you must be an effective teacher; you must do whole language; you must . . . ,"

and you just kind of lay all that on as a lay-on, people are going to say, "Forget it!" But if you provide them with tools, where they can use co-operative learning, or where they might like to look at a learning-style component of their classroom, and you just kind of keep providing them with tools, some of our teachers have said, "It's so good to be ahead of the eight ball than behind it. I feel so good when I go to a workshop and somebody says 'learning styles' and I know what that's all about, or somebody says 'co-operative learning' and we've already done it in a staff meeting, and we know what 'whole language' is about because we've been doing it for three or four years, or we've been involved in articulation." They're not in that position now that some schools are in where it's all being laid on because it's been left to the very end and it's just being dumped on . . .

D: And they want to catch up.

P: . . . whereas, we've processed it over a period of time. I'm a strong believer in process, too; we do a lot of processing. We process everything.

D: You go through it together?

P: Yes. If we're having a problem, then we look at it through process. Let's say the school isn't going the way you want it. Let's say you see the whole place is falling apart. Let's say that happens: you're midway through the year and all of a sudden everything seems to be crumbling.

Then I would take a look at some process and say, "Okay, what's the ideal situation? Where are we? Let's examine what's going wrong; let's process the problem."

D: Write it down.

P: Yes, look at it and figure out how we can get--right now, I'm thinking this time of the year that we should have a Self-Esteem Week. That's just kind of something that's come to mind, and so now I'm looking at ways that I will process that with staff so that we can have a Self-Esteem Week for staff and for kids right now in this time frame, maybe right after Teachers' Convention. Get staff to process: How can we have a week like that? What would we do? What is its purpose? Where is its value? Why do we need it at this time of the year? And then get something going that gets everybody up again, because this is a slump time of the year. So, I think, those kinds of things. Ownership, I guess, you'd have to build in that, because if I just came out and said, "Look, we need a Self-Esteem Week around here" . . .

D: They'd say, "Well, what's wrong?"

P: Yes, "What's wrong with your self-esteem?" right? Let's take a look at this time of the year. How do we usually feel this time of the year? What can we do to have a little lift in the school? Of course, the mini-Olympics will do that, too.

D: So that, sort of, then, from the initial onset, if you can tell, you went through the process and it broke down, or they said, "No, this is not the right time," or whatever, then you say, "Okay, fine, let's go through it."

P: That's right, and it's not a life-threatening situation. If I felt the instructional program was going down the tube, it might be a little

bit life threatening and we'd have to say, "We'd better get on top of this. We'd better take a good look, because this is a high priority." And at that point, I think, as a leader I would say, "I think we're in trouble here; we'd better take a look at it." Self-Esteem Week, I might throw it out and see how people feel about it; if they're all for it, away we go. And they probably would be, because that's like a motherhood statement: nobody's going to turn down a Self-Esteem Week.

D: Maybe one final question is, how do you know when you've reached your intended result with these people? How do you know that you've achieved with a project or if it was something that you just said before, after it happens it feels so good to see how everybody got in it. How do you know when a change is reached? I wouldn't say something like learning centres, because it's going on all the time; you never really end it, even though the idea of initiating is not initiating ____.

P: I don't know if you ever end any of it, because if I look at the kinds of things where we have initiated change in the school, we're certainly not finished with the articulation process; we certainly could do a lot more with whole language--we're still growing; learning centres can always be extended; school climate will always succeed and collapse throughout the year. And so, I really don't know if you ever come to the end. I suppose if you had a specific curriculum objective or something; I suppose you could look at the mini-Olympics, but that's not really a change thing.

D: No.

P: So you can see that kind of culminating. But I don't know if you're looking at improving, because all of the change that we've been involved with in the school is all in the learning process; I don't think it ever

stops, so you just keep spinning it on and keep getting better. I always say you're polishing it. I've never been able to say, "Yes, we've got learning centres in place," because we don't, because you continually refine and polish, refine and polish, and it just gets better and better and better. So I don't think for me it ever ends. That's why _____ is not anywhere near where it could be, because I always think, "It's pretty good, you know." I think it's a good school, but we're not where we could be. It could get much better. It's not because we're not doing a good job, though. You know what I mean? The people are doing a super job, and I would never go out to the staff and say, "We're not anywhere where we should be." But, in my mind, there's lots more we can do in here to make it a better school for kids and for staff.

So it's kind of never ending.

D: It's really neat to see that idea of the atmosphere that you can try new things without feeling hesitant, or that teachers can get involved in things without feeling hesitant as a nice atmosphere to work in.

P: I really almost think the biggest obstacle to change is when people really--I think where leaders run into trouble is people maybe don't have confidence in the leader, or they don't believe that the leader believes in them, and they just don't want to do it. So a lot of it is how we present things, and it's how you look at it, too. You go to leadership and we go to agenda meetings and so on, and let's say somebody presents a new idea. Let's say it's whole language. Some administrators will look at it and they'll say, "That's just another thing we have to get involved in. That's a lot of crap, and I'm not going to do it." And somebody else will say, "That's a better way of learning and maybe we should look at it."

D: It's not something that stops _____; it's not _____.

P: Yes, and I think anything new that comes along is worth looking at if it creates a better learning situation for kids, so if you can have that idea that most new things that are presented are usually better than what we've had, if you look at them closer, unless something is really wacko or something, but you should at least look at it. There's a lot of research out there on co-operative learning. I took a workshop in it last year; I think it's really exciting. I haven't really done anything with it with my staff yet, although I have had a few staff meetings where I've used it. And that's what I'll do, subtly, is use it for a while and then probably present something else down the road. But I didn't go down to Seattle and take a course in co-operative learning and then come back and _____ is a co-operative learning school. But yet, I think co-operative learning is a wonderful tool that we eventually will use in this school, but I have to wait. The same with conference reporting: I think conference reporting is an excellent way to report, but we're not quite ready for it yet. I think maybe, maybe next year. That is one I will throw out to the staff and say, "Do you think we're ready to take it on next year, or should we wait a year?" Some teachers are ready for it now; they're almost asking for it. They're saying our . . .

Appendix D

Journal Notations

Journal Notations

(Sample)

Jan. 15/88

- (Telephone)
- Is very interested in the study and the concept of change.

Feb. 18/88

- [Principal] has a keen interest in staff development. Sees the staff as a vital asset in assisting with change.
- School seems alive with sense of community (statements on staffroom walls).
- Office is very 'child-oriented.'
- [Principal] spoke a lot about the power and influence of teachers.
- Seems to have a strong viewpoint about getting them to see the value of an innovation.
- Very modest about accomplishments; credits the staff for their accomplishments.
- Seems really interested in change and seems to be analyzing her behaviors as she shares them.
- Talks about the lack of district support for administrators seeking to make improvements in programs in their schools.
- Build in instructional time for teachers to work together.
- Mentions that all teachers are working at different levels. Seems to be a humanist and appreciates everyone for their strengths; doesn't dwell on weaknesses.

April 18/88

- (School Visit)
- [Principal] speaks about "group processing" and her attempts to take the staff through a decision-making process to identify problems and

generate solutions. "These are our problems" (Was excited about the approach.)

- Was interested in reading her transcript. Shared it with members of her family.
- Spoke about judging the pacing of things happening in the school. "Only those involved can make a judgment."

Vita

NAME: Deborah Anne Rowley

PLACE OF BIRTH: Edmonton, Alberta

YEAR OF BIRTH: 1959

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION: Bachelor of Education, University of Alberta

HONORS AND AWARDS: Graduated with Distinction
Health and Physical Education Council
Award Recipient

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE: Teacher/Physical Education Consultant