University of Alberta

Collaboration Among Teachers in Senior High Schools

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in

Educational Administration

Department of Educational Policy Studies

Edmonton, Alberta
Fall 1996

ISBN 0-612-18099-9

University of Alberta

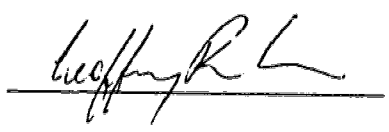
Library Release Form

Name of Author: Geoffrey Paul Riordan

Title of Thesis: Collaboration Among Teachers in Senior High Schools

Degree: Doctor of Philosophy

Year this Degree Granted: 1996



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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *Collaboration Among Teachers in Senior High Schools* submitted by Geoffrey Paul Riordan in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Administration.

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Abstract

Collaborative work relationships among teachers are widely accepted in the literature as being more ethically, professionally, and instructionally desirable than are traditional modes of individual practice. This study was designed to present the understandings of collaboration held by teachers in senior high schools who had experience in collaborating.

A purposive sampling technique led to the identification of 10 teachers—five collaborative pairs—whose work experiences and practices conformed to a definition of collaboration as a form of collegiality that is characterised by its openness, mutuality, and intensity. The participants worked in five different high schools representing two school districts in an urban centre in western Canada. Data were gathered from scheduled interviews, conferences between the five pairs of teachers, and a focus–group discussion. These data were analyzed and reported according to the influence of factors on the forms, contents, and outcomes of the collaborations.

The major finding of this study was that the development of effective collaborative relations was most strongly related to the complementarity of two sets of characteristics. The first set related to characteristics of the individual teachers, namely their (a) personal philosophy of education, (b) construction of professionalism, (c) commitment to norms of continuous improvement, and (d) openness and flexibility with regard to new ideas. The second set of factors related to the teachers' work assignments. Self–initiated collaborations were formed among teachers who taught the same subjects to the same grade levels and who were either close in age or who had been in the school for a similar length of time.

The influence of a secondary set of factors relating to the teachers, their work assignments, their subject area, and their schools were also identified. These factors were seen to be related to both the professional and organizational contexts and

purposes of the collaborations. The collaborations were seen to serve four purposes: (a) pedagogical, (b) professional development, (c) micropolitical, and (d) individual support and relationship maintenance. All the teachers reported that their collaborative relations were personally and professionally rewarding.

Recommendations for research and practice addressing issues such as collaborations across subjects and between schools, teacher recruitment, and subject subcultures are presented.

Acknowledgements

A number of people have made a significant contribution to this research. Drs. Ted Holdaway and Joe da Costa provided advice, assistance, and encouragement throughout the study. In addition to their excellent supervision of this study, both acted as mentors and role models for my academic work. Not only did they offer advice regarding university teaching, scholarly writing, and the general conduct of research from funding applications through to conference presentations and publications, they also invited me to work with them on these activities throughout the course of my studies. The talent, patience, and generosity of these two gentlemen is gratefully acknowledged. Other members of the supervisory and examining committees, Drs. Ken Ward, Wally Samiroden, Sue Scott, Henry Hodysh, and the external examiner, Dr. R. C. Bryce each made valuable contributions in the form of suggestions and encouragement.

Several other members of the Educational Policy Studies Department contributed to this study. On numerous occasions, Drs. Frank Peters, Margaret Haughey, Beth Young, Gene Ratsoy, and Paula Brook, as well as Mrs. Christiane Prokop, shared their time and ideas during the course of this research. Their interest in this research was greatly appreciated. Drs. Gene Ratsoy, Allen Pearson, and Don Richards each occupied the chair of the Department during the course of my study. Their support in the form of various assistantships and teaching assignments, was critical for completion of this study.

The friendship, interest, and advice of several doctoral students is also appreciated. Colleen Judge and David Thomas read earlier drafts of this dissertation and provided valuable feedback. David Paterson, Kathy Grieve, Rosemary Foster, and Chris Elford were always available to discuss the study and offer advice and encouragement. Discussions with these students and others in the cohort group prior to the study, namely, Don Grant, Art Gagne, Rolf Boon, and Diana Millard, were interesting, enjoyable, and educative.

This study would not have been possible without the cooperation of school and district administrators in the two districts in which this study was conducted. The 10 teachers who accepted the invitation to participate in this study were remarkable. Their thoughtfulness and willingness to share their understandings made this study an enjoyable and stimulating experience.

The encouragement and support of friends and family were greatly appreciated. Former Australian graduates of this program, the late Dr. Neil Johnson as well as Drs. Janiece Moylan and Michael Gaffney provided valuable advice and encouragement. My parents' unwavering faith in my ability to complete this work was a source of strength. Finally, the patience and good humour of my wife Judy and children Alex and Joseph is gratefully acknowledged. They left home, family, and friends in order that I might undertake this work. They were invariably understanding of the many demands made upon my time and thoughts during this research.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

> What this book tells is what every teacher knows, that the world of school is a social world. Those human beings who live together in the school, though deeply severed in one sense, nevertheless spin a tangled web of interrelationships. . . . For let no one be deceived, the important things that happen in schools result from the interaction of personalities.
> (Waller, 1932, p. 1)

This study examined collaboration among high school teachers, which is one part of the web to which Waller referred. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to address the question: "What are the understandings of collaboration held by senior high school teachers who are engaged in self–initiated collaboration with a peer?" A qualitative research design was selected as being the most appropriate means of addressing this question. Borg and Gall (1989) defined qualitative studies as those which "focus on social processes and the meanings that participants attribute to social situations" (p. 387). The qualitative method chosen involved the inductive analysis of data in the form of transcripts of interviews with 10 teachers identified using a purposive sampling technique, conferences between these teachers, and a focus group discussion between the researcher and the participants, field notes generated by the researcher, and information from pertinent school documents.

One of the key criticisms of the literature on teacher collaboration has been that it has suffered from a lack of conceptual clarity (Little, 1987, 1990). Terms such as collegiality and collaboration have frequently been used synonymously to describe a variety of different activities among colleagues. Little (1987) has authoritatively argued that these activities vary dramatically in terms of their intensity, frequency, and effects. Therefore, in describing the theoretical context of the study, attention is also focussed on clarification of the key terms that have been employed.

Following this introduction to the literature, specific arguments for empirical attention being directed at the phenomenon of collaboration among senior high school teachers are presented. The chapter closes with a description of the organization of the dissertation chapters.

Context of the Study

The furtherance of collegial and collaborative practices among teachers in schools has been a consistent recommendation of the school effectiveness literature (Hargreaves, 1994). This literature has consistently identified the existence of collaborative work patterns among teachers as key features of "effective schools" (see Rosenholz, 1989). Collaborative modes of professional development, such as peer coaching (Joyce & Showers, 1987) and clinical supervision (Acheson & Gall, 1987; da Costa, 1995), as well as the collaborative processes inherent in the Total Quality Management (Deming, 1982), all point to the pervasiveness of the view that collaborative modes of professional development are effective in the development of expertise and quality (Lieberman & Miller, 1984) and may result in further professionalization of the practice of teaching (Little, 1993).

Collegial work practices, then, are believed to result in a variety of positive outcomes, ranging from improvements to individual teachers' classroom teaching performance, through general improvements to the quality of instruction, to effects felt at the level of the school and the profession as a whole. Two issues emerged in the literature on collaboration. First, very few empirical studies had focussed on high schools, and those that had were often designed as studies of other issues that were related to collaboration, such as teachers' use of preparation time. This observation led to the intent to study collaboration from the perspective of teachers who were currently involved in collaborative relations. Further, the intent was to study the processes and content of these self–initiated work relations, regardless of their purpose.

The second issue that emerged from the study of the literature on collaboration was the inconsistency with which the term was operationalised. The electronic version of the second edition of the Oxford English Dictionary (1992) provided two definitions of "collaboration." The first defined collaboration as "united labour, co–operation; esp. in literary, artistic, or scientific work." The second definition was "traitorous cooperation with the enemy." Collaboration as cooperation was the general sense in which the term is used in the literature, where the term is used to denote a wide variety of activities between different people or groups for a variety of different purposes.

Arriving at a more precise definition of "collaboration" is made problematic by the appearance in the literature of various synonyms, such as "collegiality,"

"colleagueship," "cooperation," "helping," "peer coaching," "peer sharing and caring," and "consultation." Noting the wide range of teacher activities subsumed under these terms, Little (1990) argued that these activities were "phenomenologically discrete forms that vary from one another in the degree to which they induce mutual obligation, expose the work of each person to the scrutiny of others, and call for, tolerate, or reward initiative in matters of curriculum and instruction" (pp. 511–512).

Clearly, identification of the context for this study requires the explication of a set of discrete definitions of the various activities that make up the set of behaviours that are grouped in this study under the heading of peer relations. These activities need to be differentiated according to their purpose, duration, membership, and the beliefs that members hold.

The Teacher Peer Relations Continuum

"Peer relations among teachers" is a general term, which encompasses teacher collegiality. Within teacher collegiality are several ideal types of teacher interaction. The Teacher Peer Relations Continuum (Figure 1.1) has been developed for this study following an analysis of Lortie's (1975) conclusions about how teachers perceive and understand their role, Little's (1990) Provisional Continuum of Collegial Relations, and Conley, Bas–Isaac, and Scull's (1995) Continuum of Peer Relations. The Teacher Peer Relations Continuum shows graphically the location of the various types of activities in relation to the extent to which they involve mutual obligation and scrutiny, shown in Figure 1.1 as a variable along the independence–interdependence continuum. Little (1990) elaborated on this feature in this way:

> The move from a condition of complete independence to thoroughgoing interdependence entails changes in the frequency and intensity of teachers' interactions, the prospects for conflict, and the probability of mutual influence. That is with each successive shift, the warrant for autonomy shifts from individual to collective judgment and preference. With each shift, the inherited traditions of noninterference and equal status are brought more into tension with the prospect of teacher–to–teacher initiative on matters of curriculum and instruction. (p. 512)

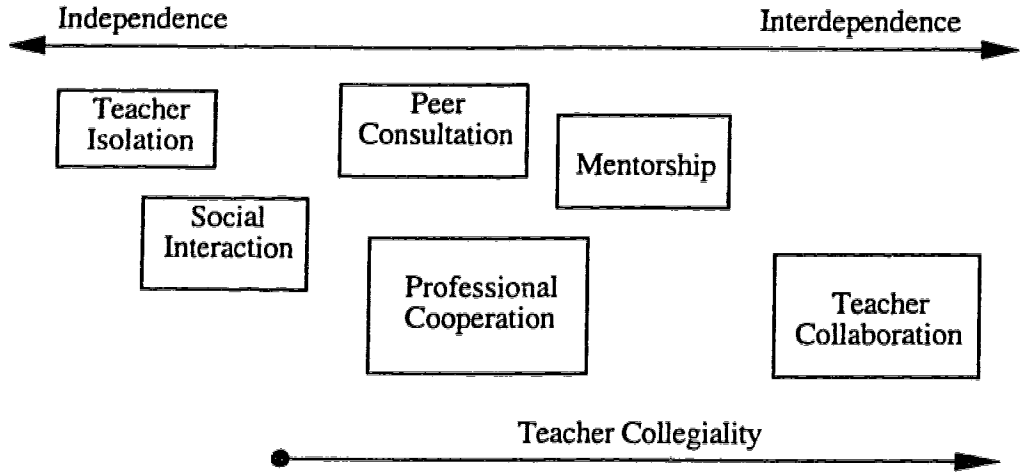

FIGURE 1.1

Teacher peer relations continuum.

Adapted from Lortie (1975), Little (1987, 1990), and Conley, Bas-Isaac, and Scull (1995).

Teacher individualism combined with some form of social interaction is located toward the "independence" extreme, whereas "teacher collaboration" is located toward the "interdependence" extreme. Teacher individualism occurs when teachers think and behave on the basis of an understanding of teaching as an individual responsibility and student learning as the result of the aggregated efforts of individuals. Work is done outside the scrutiny of others and is essentially a private matter. (See Little, 1990 and Lortie, 1975.) Interactions with other teachers are more social than professional, although they may occasionally seek help or advice, but they tend to do so on their own terms and under specific conditions.

Definitions of Key Terms

Teacher peer relations. Teacher peer relations denote, at the most general level, the social and professional interactions and among teachers. Within teacher peer relations are a number of "ideal types" of interaction.

Teacher collegiality. Teacher collegiality refers to those activities within teacher peer relations that provide the professional support that advances the practice and knowledge of teaching (see Little, 1987, p. 498). As the Teacher Peer Relations Continuum suggests (Figure 1.1), social interaction among teachers qualifies as a comparatively weak form of collegiality on the grounds that teachers derive support from their social contacts with peers and this support may provide the incentive for individual teachers either to improve their practice or to learn how to teach more effectively.

Teacher collaboration. This term denotes joint work, shared responsibility, and the existence of high levels of trust, respect, and mutuality. Collaborative activities are more frequent and intense than other collegial behaviours. Teachers who work collaboratively think and behave on the basis of an understanding of teaching as a shared responsibility and an understanding of student learning as the result of cooperative activity. The scrutiny of the peers is therefore welcomed (see Little, 1990 and Lortie, 1975).

Social interaction. This type of interaction is based on social and interpersonal interests. It is characterized by camaraderie, sympathy, and moral support. Unlike collaboration, social interaction is not work–focussed. Teachers remain autonomous, they are free from scrutiny, and their right to exercise their personal preference in the

classroom is not challenged by their peers. Schools with high levels of social interaction are often described as having a positive climate and high staff morale. (See Little 1990, pp. 513–515.)

Peer consultation. Peer consultation is a form of opportunistic aid. This aid may take the form of advice giving or receiving or may be expressed through the requests for more tangible forms of support. This form of interaction differs from collaboration in that it (a) is less mutual and (b) does not include the openness of work to uninvited scrutiny. As Little (1990) explained, "teachers carefully preserve the boundary between offering advice when asked and interfering in unwarranted ways in another teacher's work" (Little 1990, p. 515).

Mentorship. Mentorship is a type of peer relation wherein the neophyte is given guidance and advice by a more experienced colleague. In a mentorship relationship the neophyte works under comparatively close supervision. Mentorship programs can be formalised, often as part of an induction program, or they can emerge as experienced teachers seek to offer advice or support to beginning teachers, or conversely, as beginning teachers ask an experienced colleague for advice and direction. Mentorships are restricted to a specific time frame. There is minimal mutuality in that the mentor does not necessarily learn from the protégé, although a more collaborative partnership can develop. Lortie (1975) claimed that collegial induction programs can help establish more collaborative norms and beliefs. The notion that mentorships may develop into collaboration has been advanced recently by Conley, Bas–Isaac, and Scull (1995).

Professional cooperation. This term is used to cover a variety of tasks that teachers in high schools frequently undertake. These activities may be undertaken within year–group teams, subject departments, or across the whole school and may include program development, program evaluation, policy development, co–curricula and extra–curricula activities, or professional development activities.

Professional cooperation differs from teacher collaboration in two ways. First, while cooperation is evident, participation does not necessarily require that the norms of autonomy and isolation be challenged. Second, these activities are bounded within a specific time frame, either the end of the school term or year, as is the case with year–group teams, or they are disbanded upon completion of their specific brief, such

as the development of the new discipline policy or the publication of the new instructional program or unit of work. Many activities described in the literature as collaboration fit this definition of professional cooperation.

Consequences of a Priori Conceptualizations

The preceding definitions are needed to identify participants and set the context for this study. However such conceptualizations raise two issues that are often of concern for researchers. Kaplan (1964) referred to the first of these as the paradox of conceptualization. He explained that "the proper concepts are needed to formulate good theory, but we need a good theory to arrive at the proper concepts" (p. 63). While the conceptualization of the Peer Relations Continuum and its subsidiary definitions are derived from reputable empirical studies, the definitions, especially those pertaining to collaboration, will be modified during the process of the study. The conceptualization of the phenomenon under study is therefore understood to be an iterative process.

The second issue is methodological determinism. Inherent in the definition of collaboration is the expectation that there are teachers in high schools who work in a manner that satisfies the definition of the phenomenon under study. It may be that participants who precisely match this definition of collaboration cannot be found. Such presuppositions were justified by Kaplan (1964) when he argued that "phenomena were worth searching for without necessarily accepting that they do exist nor that they always apply under all conditions" (p. 124).

Justification for the Study

Expanding our theoretical understanding of collaboration, as a specific form of collegiality, is important for both theory and practice. Little (1990) advised that "a harder look is in order—at what might be meant by collaboration, at the circumstances that foster or inhibit it, and at the individual and institutional consequences that follow from it" (p. 510). Specific justifications for the study are now provided. The following arguments were developed at the outset of this study.

Implications for Practice

Implications for Teachers

Teachers wishing to overcome the barriers of isolation and to work effectively with peers could benefit from this study of teacher collaboration. To the extent that a lack of knowledge of how to collaborate effectively with peers may contribute to teachers feeling isolated and unappreciated (Rothberg, 1985: Little, 1987), this study could help teachers find greater support and satisfaction in their work.

Implications for School and School System Administration

Policy and decisions taken by administrators to either implement or facilitate collaborative behaviours between teachers are likely to be more effective if informed by a more sophisticated theoretical understanding.

Principals, exercising leadership at the school site, may be able to better understand the processes and potential of collaboration to assist teachers in their work. Mentorship programs, team teaching assignments, and the effective functioning of various work groups, such as subject departments or cross–curriculum committees, could be more effective if based on recommendations derived from a study of how "expert" collaborators understand collaboration.

This research could also inform the emerging management, supervision, and leadership practices being advocated in the educational administration literature. These practices include Total Quality Management (Balosky & Lawton, 1994), School or Site Based Management (Barth & Pansegrau, 1994; Barth, 1990), Shared Decision Making (Hoy & Tarter, 1993), Peer Coaching (Joyce & Showers, 1987; Gordon, Nolan, & Forlenza, 1995), and Shared Leadership (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1991; Ames & Ames, 1993).

Implications for Teacher Preservice and Inservice Programs

Lortie (1975) argued that teacher education programs, and the procedures used to select candidates for such programs, need to be changed. His thesis was that teacher individualism is a barrier to improved teaching practice. This individualism is

> evident in the very inception of entry to the occupation; self selection is a major feature of the recruitment system. Since entrants hold an image of the teacher

> based on earlier times, and since students see little of the informal collegial interactions which occur, entrants are likely to perceive teaching as a highly individualistic affair. To my knowledge, no special effort is made to offset that conception upon entry to teacher training, nor is effort made to identify which applicants have demonstrated capacity for efficacious peer relationships. (p. 236)

Continuing in this vein, Lortie also suggested that teacher preparation programs be modified to give students more experience in group effort. A better understanding of collaboration could suggest the appropriate form and content of these modifications.

Importance of This Study for the Development of Knowledge

The Relationship Between Collaboration and Power

The location and exercise of power in collaborative relationships is of interest and should be explored. The definition of collaboration employed in this study incorporates the notion of mutuality. Hargreaves (1991) argued that the micropolitical complexion of teacher collegiality has been largely ignored in the literature. Describing collaborative approaches to clinical supervision, Glickman (1990) observed that "one difficulty in working collaboratively occurs when the teacher (or group) believes a supervisor is manipulating the decision when in fact he or she is not" (p. 145). Suggesting that Hargreaves' recommendations have largely gone unheeded, Conley, Bas–Isaac, and Scull (1995) argued that studies "have, therefore, failed to view collegiality initiatives within the context of shifting power relationships between teachers and administrators" (p. 7). By asking teachers to describe and explain how decisions are made and how conflict is resolved within their collaborative relationships, and by inquiring as to how administrators influence collaborative interactions between teachers (see Chapter 3), this shortcoming was expected to be addressed.

The General Applicability of Collaboration

Another issue that needs to be addressed is the general applicability of collaboration. As we have seen above, and as is further outlined in Chapter 2, collaboration has emerged as the preferred process for a variety of activities previously undertaken by individuals with unique responsibilities in school organizations. The

findings of this study may suggest the extent to which collaboration is applicable to various tasks undertaken in schools.

Perceptions of Collaboration

Perceptions of collaboration may be a critical issue in determining the effectiveness of teacher partnerships. Starratt (1992), in commenting on the often futile efforts of supervisors to work collaboratively with teachers during clinical supervision cycles, suggested that research designed to explore the perceptions of collaboration held by teachers was needed. The basis of these perceptions and their effects are of interest and should be explored.

Senior High School Teacher Collaboration

The data that enabled Little (1987, 1990) and Hargreaves (1991, 1994) to develop their influential analyses of teacher collegiality were generated from a limited number of empirical studies that had almost exclusively been conducted in elementary schools. Further, Hargreaves' (1991) description of contrived collegiality was developed from data obtained in studies in Ontario that were designed to help us to understand how teachers used their preparation time. This is typical of several studies that have examined collegiality as an adjunct to, or process involved in, some other activity. The other activity was the primary focus of the study.

Little (1990) has noted that "studies focussed directly on the phenomenon of collegiality and collaboration have given precedence to form over content" (p. 523). By focussing on the content, processes, and outcomes of collaboration, as understood by senior high school teachers who work in collaborative partnerships, this study attempted to address the current limitations in the literature.

Organization of the Dissertation

The dissertation is divided into eight chapters. Chapter 2 presents a review of relevant literature organised around a treatment of the theme of teachers' work. The first section details recent research and theory in relation to high schools as contexts of teachers' work. The next section presents literature pertaining to collaboration as a particular form of teachers' work. Literature that adopts a variety of theoretical perspectives is presented.

Chapter 3 provides a description of, and rationale for, the method that was employed in this study. The research questions are presented along with a description of the pilot study that preceded and informed this study. The individual strategies that were employed in the process of data–gathering, management, and analysis are presented along with details of measures that were employed to improve trustworthiness of the findings and meet accepted ethical standards. The chapter closes with the various limitations, delimitations, and assumptions that apply to the study.

Chapter 4 is the first of four chapters in which findings are presented. Demographic information about the teachers and a description of each of the schools is presented. Extensive use is made of tables to present the information. These tables were devised for use as a "quick reference" tool. As the reader encounters information about the participants and their collaborations that is presented later in the dissertation, details about the participants can be checked by reference to the tables.

Chapters 5 through 7 report the findings for each of the three Specific Research Questions. Responses to the interview questions that were developed in relation to each of the research questions were then used to develop sections for the reporting of findings in each of the chapters. The findings are summarised and discussed in relation to the literature at the end of each of these chapters. Again, use is made of tables and figures to present the information in an effective and efficient manner.

Chapter 8 presents an overview of the study. Conclusions directed at the General Research Question are offered. Several recommendations for research and practice are provided. The chapter closes with a personal reflection on the phenomenon of teacher collaboration in senior high schools.

The dissertation concludes with a bibliography and appendices. The appendices include copies of pertinent correspondence, interview schedules, and summaries of findings that were presented to teachers during the focus–group discussion.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this review is to present a survey of the literature pertaining to high schools, high school teaching, and teacher collegiality. Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 49) have explained that the purpose of the literature review in quantitative studies is to identify variables and describe their interrelation. Numerous experts in the field of qualitative research (e.g., Patton, 1990; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) have warned that the process of reviewing the literature "may bias the researcher's thinking and reduce openness to whatever emerges in the field" (Patton, 1990, p. 163).

These concerns were noted and it was decided that the purpose of this review would be to examine the relevant literature in order to focus the study (Patton, 1990) and to identify the factors that may bear exploration with the participants. However, the relation between these factors and their relative effects on collaboration are not addressed in this chapter. As the findings are presented in later chapters, literature identified in this chapter is revisited and discussed in the light of the findings. Further, a more critical approach is taken to the literature in the concluding chapter. Patton (1990) explained that in a qualitative study the literature review may take place during the analysis of the data, or even at the conclusion of the study. This was, to an extent, the method that was employed in this study. What follows is an introduction to the main sections of this literature review.

The debate continues regarding the essential character of teaching. Teaching is described variously as a profession, semi–profession, craft, or career (Lortie, 1975, pp. 22–23; Hargreaves, 1994, p. 13; Levin & Young, 1994, pp. 227–254). These interpretations are based on judgements about the meaning and value of what teachers do, and as such they operate at a level of abstraction that can obscure the fundamental nature of teaching. Connell (1985) argued, on the basis of an empirical study, that teaching is essentially a job which involves sets of tasks and human relationships that are structured in various ways. This job takes place in a workplace where these various structures can either help or hinder teachers' work: "Teachers are workers, teaching is work, and the school is a workplace" (p. 69).

According to Hargreaves (1994, p. 13), the popular view of teaching is of work performed with children in classrooms. Lortie's (1975) study of teaching revealed that

teachers receive their psychic rewards, i.e., significant and fundamental satisfaction, from these classroom interactions. Yet teachers' job requirements extend beyond the classroom. The extent to which these other tasks are related directly to classroom activities, and therefore the psychic rewards they hold for teachers, varies from activities such as marking students' work and preparing lessons to serving on school–based management committees, attending staff meetings, and supervising students during recess periods.

Teachers are also required to engage in various professional development activities. Owen (1990, p. 174) explained that in North America the overwhelming concern in the field of professional development has been with improving classroom instruction. There has been a growing awareness that collaborative, peer–based approaches to instructional supervision are more effective and ethically desirable than the traditional top–down bureaucratic arrangements. Recent developments in instructional supervision are illustrative of changes that are occurring in other areas of teachers' work.

Studies by Lortie (1975), and to a lesser extent by Connell (1985), paved the way for a spate of studies and publications on the topic of "teachers' work." Acker (1995) observed that "'teachers' work' has become a well–mined area of interest but one that has avoided capture by any single discipline" (p. 140). Acker noted that two of the most recent and significant contributions to this body of literature—Hargreaves' (1994) *Changing Teachers, Changing Times* and Biklen's (1995) *School Work: Gender and the Cultural Construction of Teaching*—both cited several hundred references to scholarly literature, but only 13 references were cited by both authors. She suggested that this was a common occurrence in the "teachers' work" literature that she reviewed.

The following review of the literature reflects the variety of theoretical perspectives that have been employed in the study of the contexts and nature of "teachers' work." It begins with a description of high schools, the organizational context for this study. Next, the issue of collaboration as a form of work is addressed. Within this discussion, literature which adopts a variety of perspectives—functionalist, cultural, and micropolitical—is reviewed. The chapter concludes with a summary of what is currently known about teachers' collaborative work in high schools.

High Schools

High schools are generally accepted as being those which offer programs of studies to students in Grades 7 through 12. Students enter high school upon the completion of the primary or elementary education, usually at around age 12, and leave between the ages of 16 and 18. In Canada, the U. S. A., England, and Australia there are several variations on this theme, with the stages of schooling being further divided, for example, between infants (K–2), primary (3–6), junior secondary (7–10) and senior secondary (11–12). In Canada and the U.S.A., K–6 education occurs in elementary schools. In the school jurisdictions in Alberta, Canada, where in this study was conducted, elementary schools (K–6), junior high/elementary schools (K–9), junior high schools (7–9), and high schools (10–12) represented the four main school types. This study focussed exclusively on what are regarded in Alberta as high schools, that is, those schools that offer programs of study to students in Grades 10 through 12. In other provinces and countries, such schools would be referred to as senior high or senior secondary schools.

In this section, literature is reviewed that pertains to high schools. Typically, this literature does not differentiate between junior and senior high schools. Siskin (1991) observed that "researchers persistently treat elementary and secondary schools as a single topic" (p. 135). What follows has the twofold purpose of describing high schools and differentiating them from elementary schools.

Organization of High Schools

The most obvious organizational characteristic of high schools is the subject department. "In high school, students are organized by grade across subjects, but teachers are organized by subject across grades" (Siskin, 1991, p. 135). Siskin and Little (1995) observed that "subject departments form the primary organizational unit of the high school, defining in crucial ways, who teachers are, what they do, where and with whom they work, and how that work is perceived by others" (p. 1). In a recent study of subject departments and school culture, de Brabander (1993) noted that "departmentalization in secondary schools is an almost universal feature in western societies" (p. 82).

Subject departments are typically administered by a subject coordinator or department head. In his recent review of the literature pertaining to the role of the

department head, Brien (1996) noted that there was considerable variation in the role of department head across school jurisdictions. Siskin (1991) has observed that the role of the department head has been understudied. Based on a similar conclusion, Grossman and Stodolsky (1995) have recommended further study of the role of department heads in terms of their contribution to the development of department subcultures, hiring of staff members, and ability to implement reform.

Important insights into the potential of the department head to contribute to the development of collegial practices within the subject department were offered by Hill (1995) in his case study of a Social Studies department. Hill, who was the chair of the department that was the subject of the case study, carried out these functions: (a) encouraged collegiality and provided resources in the form of meeting time for joint planning, (b) ensured that issues that could cause potential conflict were fully and openly debated within the department, and (c) played a strong instructional leadership role. It seems that teachers in high schools often look to department heads, rather than principals for instructional leadership (Siskin, 1991; Brien, 1996).

For their part, principals and assistant principals, particularly in large high schools, are responsible for whole–school management and leadership. Department heads often have responsibility for administering department budgets, the acquisition of resources, and the scheduling of teachers to teach particular classes. Principals and assistant principals play a key role in the macro–management of the school's programs: in liaising with parents, external administrators, and members of the community; and in managing pupil behaviour.

Teaching in High Schools

Levin and Young (1994) argued that, compared to elementary schools, in secondary schools "more stress is placed on specialized subject matter" (p. 261). Accordingly, elementary and secondary teachers have different views of "what their job is and how to approach it. Elementary teachers more often describe themselves as teachers of students; secondary teachers see themselves more often as teachers of subjects" (p. 261). These differences in self–perception, Levin and Young concluded, lead to significant differences in practices.

In their national study for the Canadian Teachers' Federation, King and Peart (1992) offered the following description of teaching in senior high schools in Canada:

> Most senior secondary teachers are subject specialists and have to be prepared to deal with near university–level content. Generally, senior secondary teachers across the country teach six of eight teaching periods although in some instances the workload is heavier. In a semestered school each teacher is responsible for three or four classes a day; during the out–of–class period teachers prepare lessons, mark tests and assignments and work on administrative tasks. (p. 51)

Levin and Young (1994) identified five characteristics of teaching as an occupation. First, teaching is a largely isolated job. "Many researchers have pointed out that teachers not only work separately from one another, they tend not to talk with one another about that work" (p. 179). The second characteristic of teaching is the lack of a shared technical culture. There is wide agreement that there is no one best way to teach and teachers tend to learn how to teach individually through their own experience. Third, teaching often calls upon teachers to perform different and conflicting roles. "Teachers desire to have all children succeed, and to develop a love of learning in students, yet much of their time and energy goes into controlling students' behaviour and evaluating students according to external standards" (p. 180). The fourth characteristic of teaching is uncertainty. By this, Levin and Young (1994) mean that it is difficult for teachers to know when they are successful due to the vagaries of pupil assessment.

The final characteristic is that "many teachers feel that they have a limited ability to have an impact. Influences such as the students' family and friends, or social phenomena such as television, are thought to have more impact on students than do the schools" (p. 180). This final assertion is contentious in that it can be interpreted to suggest that teachers, generally, are feeling less efficacious than they may have in the past. Teacher efficacy research is reviewed below. In the process of reviewing this literature no references were discovered to support the contention that efficacy levels among teachers are falling. Levin and Young's assertion, therefore should be read with some caution. The opinion that they offer seems to be based on anecdotal, rather than empirical evidence, a possibility made more plausible by their failure to reference their assertion.

Time

In their study of high school teachers in Britain, Campbell and Neill (1994) found that teachers in high schools worked on average slightly over 54 hours per week. This represented an increase of seven hours over the findings reported from a similar study 16 years earlier by Hilsum and Strong (1978). Campbell and Neill reported wide variation in the number of hours that the teachers in their sample reported that they spent on their work, the range was between 35 and 90 hours per week. The following reports the average time that the teachers reported that they spent on different tasks: teaching, 31%; preparation, including marking, 24%; administrative tasks, 30%; and professional development, i.e., attending meetings and reading journals, 10%. A variety of other activities comprised the remaining 5% of their working time.

The perception that there is an ever–increasing burden being placed on teachers by the current climate of educational change has been described by many writers. In Alberta, the Alberta Teachers' Associations' (1994) recent publication *Trying to Teach* detailed the concerns that many teachers had regarding the increasing expectations being placed on them. As the title of the report indicates, teachers are demanding that the impediments to their being able to devote the maximum amount of time to teaching be removed.

Hargreaves (1994) has described such perceptions and sentiments in relation to the intensification of teachers' work. "Overall, teachers' work is described as becoming intensified, as pressures accumulate and innovations multiply under conditions of work that fail to keep pace with these changes" (p. 15). Hargreaves claimed that the intensification of teachers' work has affected teachers' lives in five ways (pp. 118–119). First, it has reduced the amount of relaxation time. Second, it has led to a decrease in time for professional development and reflective thinking. Third, it has created feelings of chronic and persistent work overload. Fourth, it has lessened the quality of service. Finally, it has forced the diversification of expertise and responsibility to cover personnel shortages.

King and Peart (1992) reported the amount of time that senior high school teachers spent on various tasks that were in addition to their classroom teaching responsibilities. With respect to the in–school supervision of students during recess breaks, 20% reported that they were not required to undertake supervision, 46%

reported 1 hour, 16% reported 2 hours, 8% reported 3 hours, and 11% reported 4 or more hours of supervision. With respect to "hours per week spent outside of school on marking, lesson preparation, and planning" (p. 67): 5% reported doing 21 or more hours, 9% reported 16–20 hours, 18% reported 11–15 hours, 37% reported 6–10 hours, 30% reported 1–5 hours, and the remaining 3% reported that they did not attend to such activities outside of school hours.

There was considerable variation in hours spent on marking, lesson preparation, and planning by teachers in high schools and this variation was related to the subjects taught. Approximately 20% of English teachers reported spending 16 or more hours on these activities, while slightly less than 25% reported spending 5 hours or less on marking, preparation and planning. English teachers reported spending the most time on these activities, with science teachers spending the second most time. By comparison, approximately 15% of teachers of Mathematics reported spending 16 or more hours on these activities and approximately 35% reported spending 5 hours or less.

In his discussion of the issue of time as it relates to high school teaching, Hargreaves (1994) described "four interrelated dimensions of time" (p. 96):

1. *Technical–rational time.* This is the dominant understanding of time in the management literature. Time is a finite resource which is managed to accommodate educational goals. Decisions are made as to how time will be divided among competing tasks and purposes.

2. *Micropolitical time.* Time can be seen as an indicator of the micropolitical power or importance of an individual, group, or subject. Certain subjects are afforded more time in the school timetable, and certain individuals spend more or less time teaching and attending to administrative tasks.

3. *Phenomenological time.* This conception of time emphasizes differences in its subjective estimations by people. As Hargreaves observed, for some people, time is thought to "fly," while for others it can seem to "drag." "Subjective variations in our senses of time are grounded in other aspects of our lives: in our projects, interests and activities, and the kinds of demands they make upon us" (p. 100).

4. *Sociopolitical time.* This refers to the way in which people's estimations and understandings of time come to be imposed on others. Hargreaves drew an analogy between time in the physical world, specifically, Hawking's (1988) explanation of time and the theory of relativity, and the differences between the perceptions of time held by teachers in the classroom and educational administrators. Hargreaves argued that administrators often fail to perceive the constraints on teachers' time that the teachers themselves perceive and accordingly, administrators become frustrated with what they judge to be slowness with which innovation and reform take place. In this manner, administrators at a distance from the complexities and density of classroom teaching activities, are like Hawking's imaginary space traveller who perceives from a distance the activity on a large astronomical body and judges it to be moving slowly.

These different conceptions of time are important in this study. As will be shown in the following discussion of collaboration, the presentation of the findings, and the discussion at the conclusion of this study, teachers perceive time to be an important factor in teacher collaboration. Hargreaves' (1994) theoretical perspectives are useful in the identification of key issues relating to teachers' perceptions of time and collaboration.

Instructional Methods

The King and Peart study (1992) cited above also reported interesting information about the relative amounts of time that teachers in elementary and high schools spend on various instructional methods. This information is summarised here because it indicates commonly used high school teaching instructional activities and further highlights the differences between teachers' work in elementary and high schools.

King and Peart (1992) observed that teachers in senior high schools tended to employ more structured teaching methods than their elementary counterparts. Further, these direct methods had the effect of keeping the teachers "at centre stage, managing and manipulating the learning" (p. 58). In their survey, King and Peart asked teachers to rate the frequency with which selected teaching methods were employed. They reported the percentage of teachers by grade level who answered "often" with respect to each method. They then presented these percentages for each grade level in graphical

Table 2.1

Approximate Percentage of Canadian Teachers, by Grade Level Taught, Who Reported That They Used Selected Teaching Methods "Often"

Instructional method	Grade 3	Grade 6	Grades 7–9	Grades 10–12
Simulation/ games	33%	24%	18%	8%
Small group work	57%	53%	47%	47%
Lecture/ demonstration	50%	55%	58%	70%
Class discussion	68%	58%	45%	45%
Seatwork	68%	56%	54%	52%
Testing	17%	19%	24%	33%

Note: Adapted from King and Peart's (1992, p. 52) data.

form. As a result the summary of their findings presented in Table 2.1 has been determined visually and may contain slight errors.

Efficacy

Research on teacher efficacy has identified differences between estimations of efficacy held by teachers in high schools compared to teachers in elementary schools. Further, several studies (e.g., Rosenholz, 1989; Welter, 1990) have reported often conflicting findings with respect to collaborative behaviours, collaborative cultures, and teacher efficacy. Discussion of these studies will be presented later in this chapter. What follows here is a description of the construct of teacher efficacy and a report on the relation between efficacy and grade level taught.

Teacher efficacy refers to the extent that teachers believe that their efforts will have a positive effect on student achievement. In his recent review of empirical studies of teacher efficacy, Ross (1994) found that most researchers have utilised the work of Bandura (1977, 1986, 1993) in forming their conceptions of efficacy. These conceptions include the following aspects: (a) subjective estimations of efficacy are based on past actions; (b) estimations of efficacy stabilize over time; and (c) estimations of efficacy can be modified on the basis of new information, including vicarious observation of peers, and comments regarding competence offered by others.

Influences on behaviour. According to Bandura (1993), estimations of self–efficacy influence behaviour in a number of ways. People possessing high levels of self–efficacy are more likely to: (a) be more committed to the achievement of goals, (b) overcome setbacks in the achievement of goals, (c) accept responsibility for their actions, (d) be resilient in stressful situations, and (e) be proactive in their selection of tasks. Relating these observations to teachers, Ross (1994) argued that teachers with high levels of self–efficacy would be more likely to set higher learning goals for themselves and their students, accept responsibility for student learning outcomes, and be more involved in decisions regarding subjects and grades that they taught.

Differences between elementary and high schools. Several studies have shown that there are statistically significant differences between estimations of efficacy by high school and elementary teachers (Ross, 1994, p. 11). Elementary teachers express higher levels of teaching efficacy than their high school counterparts. Ross concluded

that many of the differences could be attributed to the size and complexity of high schools and to differences in elementary and high school students.

Differences within high schools associated with grade level taught. One study (Raudenbush, Rowan, & Cheong, 1992) found that teachers of the senior grades in high schools report higher levels of efficacy than teachers of junior grades. Ross (1994, pp. 12–13) offered a possible explanation for this finding when he speculated that the teachers who are judged to be the most effective are more likely to be assigned to the senior grades.

Gender

In the pilot study (Riordan, 1995) that preceded and informed this study, the possible influence of gender on teacher collaboration was identified. One of the participants in that study, who happened to be the only male teacher, commented that he thought that women were better suited to collaborative forms of work. With this in mind, it was decided to include in this study a consideration of the possible effect of gender on collaboration.

According to Acker (1995), in her review of the literature on gender and teachers' work, "gender, at least in sociological writing, is understood as a cultural rather than biological category, indeed one that shapes our notions of biology. It refers to culturally specific and changeable definitions of masculine and feminine" (p. 115).

Categories of approaches to gender issues in the literature. Acker (1995, pp. 113–114) devised five categories to classify the place of gender in the writing about teaching. In the first category gender is ignored. The second category mentions gender but does so in a stereotypical fashion, one which often demeans the role of women teachers. Literature classified in the third category attempts to integrate an analysis of gender issues but these issues are peripheral to the main analysis. In the fourth category, the issue of gender is thoroughly integrated with other perspectives. Finally, in the fifth category, gender has been moved "to centre stage and become[s] the basis of analysis" (p. 114).

One of the challenges facing theorists in this area is determining how much weight to place on gender as a characteristic in relation to other factors such as age, race, religion, and marital status. Related to this question is the issue of the extent to which differences in men are recognised and acknowledged. Feldberg and Glenn

(1979) have argued that men's experiences have often been neglected in gender research and have concluded that when they are, such attempts have tended to reinforce stereotypes. Several years later, Abbott (1993) noted that while certain studies had compared differences between men and women, and while other studies had compared differences among women, varieties that can be seen to exist among women have not been compared to various differences among men. He argued: "The antinomy between the simple male–female opposition and the diversity of women when considered alone is the basic conundrum of this literature, indeed, of the gender and work literature as a whole" (p. 197).

Acker (1995) concluded her review of the literature with the view these challenges are being addressed and that more sophisticated studies, ones which include and integrate gender perspectives along with other theoretical stances, are emerging in the literature.

Career Aspirations and Ambition

An example of the way in which biological gender stereotypes have been applied and then later challenged and integrated—in other words, have moved from Acker's (1995) category five to category four—can be found in Cohen's (1991) case study of five veteran high school teachers. Cohen referenced Biklen's (1983) notion of feminine and masculine forms of ambition. From the feminine perspective, ambition is not about achieving increased pay and status, but rather "an ideal of self perfection. They compete not with their colleagues or supervisors but with themselves, as they work to do the same job better and better" (Cohen, 1991, p. 100). Cohen concluded that both the men and women teachers that she had identified as being effective and who had achieved longevity in teaching, all demonstrated this "feminised form of ambition."

Little (1982) referred to similar values and aspirations as norms of collegiality and continuous improvement. This phrase has become quite common in the literature on teachers' work and collegial interactions, and is often identified as a characteristic of teachers who work in successful or "effective" schools (Huberman, 1993).

It seems then that we have at least two forms of ambition or aspiration for teachers. The one described above as either Biklen's (1983) feminised form of ambition, of self improvement and cooperation, or Little's (1982) norm of continuous

improvement. At the other extreme we would have the more traditionally presumed "career ladder" form of ambition which would see the beginning teacher aspire to ever increasing levels of responsibility, higher salary and status, and eventually less classroom teaching.

Traditional career path. The unsuitability of this traditional career path for a significant proportion of the teaching population has been well documented (e.g., Cohen, 1991; Campbell & Neill, 1994; National Board of Employment, Education, and Training, 1990). In their national survey of teachers in Canada, King and Peart (1992) reported that when asked as to their career expectations in ten years, 49% of teachers in senior high schools said that they expected to be still teaching in the classroom. The break down of the other expectations was as follows: principal, 3%; assistant principal, 3%; department head, 14%; consultant, 2%; homemaker, 6%; in a career outside education, 6%; and the remaining 15% had no plans. King and Peart also reported that when asked if they were "interested in seeking a different position (e.g., department head, principal)" (p. 37), 25% of female senior high school teachers and 24% of their male counterparts agreed.

On the basis of these data it could be argued that gendered interpretations of ambition, particular as they may apply to high school teachers in Canada, do not seem to apply in a strictly biological sense. To the extent that they may apply to Canadian senior high school teachers, they would be likely to do so from a cultural perspective.

Teacher Collaboration

A growing consensus about the effectiveness of collaboration is evident in recent education newsletters and journals. A recent issue of the *Journal of Personnel and Evaluation* (Schwab, 1995) was devoted to a consideration of several collaborative approaches to evaluation and professional development. Another recent scholarly publication, the *Instructional Supervision, AERA Special Interest Group Newsletter* (1995) carried a discussion of the trend toward greater teacher collaboration in supervision.

In this newsletter, nine professors of instructional supervision responded to the question, "Has the field traditionally known as instructional supervision evolved to a point where it should be known as something else" (p. 4)? One responded that the role performed by supervisors "could become the norms of professional practice for all

educators" (p. 4). Another offered the opinion that the "critical piece in today's schools is, I think, collaboration, and such interactions should inevitably lead to the empowerment of principals and teachers as peer coaches and mentors in their own settings" (p. 5). In a similar vein, a third professor noted that "today's more successful schools are fast becoming centres of shared inquiry and decision-making. Teachers are moving toward a collective—not an individual—practice of teaching. These teachers collaborate with each other" (p. 5). This professor concluded that in this

> age of democratization, of dismantling of old sources of authority, it seems we could at least give this new process a new, and more fitting name. May I suggest that it's about collaboration, being one among equals, and having power with—not over—others? (p. 5)

These comments are offered as further evidence that supports the trend noted by Hargreaves (1994, p. 186), and described by Little (1990) as the "present enthusiasm for teacher collaboration" (p. 509). The pervasiveness of calls for greater collaboration appears to be driven by three beliefs about collaboration, namely, that it is more effective than traditional, individual practice, more ethically desirable, and is part of a larger social trend towards greater democratization and egalitarianism.

The literature on teacher collegiality and collaboration has been divided into three categories. These categories represent different theoretical and analytic perspectives. The first category contains literature that adopts a functionalist or managerial perspective. Writers adopting this perspective analyze the efficiency and effectiveness of collegial practices. The second category comprises literature that examines collegial behaviours in terms of cultural issues. Literature located toward this end of the continuum analyzes teaching according to teacher behaviours and socialization as well as attitudes and beliefs held by groups of teachers about their work. The third category deals with literature that adopts a micropolitical perspective. In this literature, writers identify collegial activities in the context shifting power relations and the actions of individuals and groups to deal with differences.

Functionalist Perspectives on Teacher Collaboration

The collaborative process is complex. Numerous issues have been identified in the literature as affecting the effectiveness and functioning of collaboration. Functionalist perspectives have often been associated with managerial perspectives in

so far as they have traditional concerned themselves with theories pertaining to the potential improvement of performance and efficiency.

The Benefits of Collegial Practices

The terms collegiality and collaboration are used throughout this section in keeping with the way the authors who are cited used the terms.

Overcoming teacher isolation. Many of the problems identified in schools, and more specifically with ineffective teaching practices, are attributed to teacher isolation. Lortie's (1975) conclusion that teaching, compared to other professions, was an isolated and cellular activity, and that this isolation resulted in reflexive conservatism, has been supported and reiterated for the last 20 years. Ellis (1993) noted that not only was collegiality rare but also that the quality of such interaction varied greatly (p. 43). Goodlad (1984) observed that the isolated classroom cells where teachers worked were symbolic of teachers' isolation from each other and from the sources of ideas beyond their own background of experience. Little (1987) reported that teachers "work out of sight and hearing of one another, plan and prepare their lessons and materials alone, and struggle on their own to solve most of their instructional, curricula, and management problems" (p. 419). Holt (1993) reached similar conclusions and attributed the failure of teaching to establish a professional culture to this endemic isolation.

These and other writers have proceeded to argue that collegial practices need to be instituted and facilitated in order to overcome the detrimental impact of isolation. For instance, in her report on a peer–assistance program, Chrisco (1989) concluded that the program helped the teachers "overcome the artificial limits of isolation" (p. 32). Sergiovanni (1992) discussed the potential of collegial practices to overcome teacher isolation and to create a culture of professional collegiality. Raney and Robbins (1989), in their description of collaborative practices, concluded that where "peer sharing and caring have occurred . . . reflection has followed, passivity has been challenged, appreciation of others has increased, and feelings of isolation have been replaced . . . by an environment of collaboration" (p. 38).

Professional development activities. One of the main benefits of collegial practices appears to be that they allow teachers to learn from the experience and expertise of their peers. In Australia, the Schools Council of the National Board of

Employment, Education, and Training (1990), in its review of teacher professional development research, noted that "teachers rate other teachers highest as sources of useful help and information" (p. 94). Similarly, Sandell and Sullivan (1992) noted that teachers in their study judged "informal influences such as discussions about the practice of teaching, opportunities to observe another's teaching, and to teach and learn from one another" (p. 138) to be more valuable and significant than formal professional development activities.

In her study of professional development activities, Little (1993) concluded that professional development activities based on "subject matter collaboratives" are the most appropriate and effective means of professional development for teachers in the current climate of educational reform. As well as meeting the learning needs of teachers, such collaboratives, Little argues, are likely to result in a greater professionalization of teaching.

Improving student learning. The act of collaborating with a colleague is widely believed to lead to improved teaching and student learning. By facilitating reflection, collaboration leads to improvements and changes in instruction (Oberg, 1989). Direct links between collaboration and improved student learning are still tentative, however Acheson and Gall (1992, p. 19) argued that it is reasonable to assume that there is a strong link between the two. A recent study by da Costa (1995b) reported links between students' attitudes and behaviours and teacher collaborative activities.

Collaboration and the induction of teachers. "The way newcomers are inducted into teaching leaves them doubly alone . . . [collaborative practices] seem particularly appropriate for inducting newcomers to classroom work" (Lortie 1975, p. 237). When neophytes learn to teach in the presence of other adults, Lortie went on to postulate, they will be more likely to adopt a collegial approach to their teaching. This approach, Lortie argued, is necessary to overcome the dangers of reflexive conservatism endemic in teaching.

Collaboration with experienced teachers is at the core of teacher internship programs that have been trialled, or at least recommended, in several countries. Holdaway, Johnson, Ratsoy, and Friesen (1994), having reviewed the literature on internships and reported on a major internship program, the *Initiation to Teaching Project in Alberta*, concluded that "internship programs may ultimately prove to be an important vehicle for enhancing the quality of teaching" (p. 219).

Expert opinion therefore suggests that collaborative practices may be critical in the induction of neophytes to the profession. In the short term the anticipated benefits include assisting teachers overcome the problems they encounter early in their careers, the transmission of the expert knowledge of senior peers, and social support. In the longer term, Lortie (1975) expected that teachers who have experienced close contact with peers when they enter the profession are more likely to construe teaching as a collegial activity as their careers unfold, and therefore be more open to change, growth, and ongoing professional development.

Factors That Promote or Constrain Collegial Activity

Prerequisites for participation. Many writers have specified criteria that should be used to determine who should participate in collegial activities. Again, using the example of shared decision making, the models presented by Vroom and Jago (1988) and Hoy and Tartar (1993) detailed the requisite knowledge, skills, and values that the participants should hold. These criteria included the extent to which the teachers' values were compatible with the aims of the organization. These models also provide a method for determining if the task is amenable to collegial action.

In the area of clinical supervision, several authoritative writers (e.g., Glatthorn, 1984; Glickman, 1990; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1993) have proposed differentiated models of supervision. Central to these recommendations is the belief that collaboration is not a valid means of professional development for teachers in the early stages of their career, or for teachers they judge to be minimally competent.

Taking a different line of argument, Fullan (1990) has also concluded that collegial practices are not universally applicable. In his assessment of the literature pertaining to collaborative approaches to teacher professional development, he observed that "we cannot assume that collaboration is for everyone. . . . one person's collaboration is another person's conspiracy" (p. 14). Therefore, within this literature there is agreement that; (a) characteristics of the task, (b) the needs of the organization, and (c) the perceptions, beliefs, and skills of the individuals involved, are important factors related to the success collegial work practices.

Factors that promote collegial practices. A number of research reports have identified factors that can promote collegial practices. Some of these have already been alluded to. Little (1987, 1990), Acheson and Gall (1992), Kruse and Louis (1993),

and da Costa (1995a) each identified one or more of the following factors that appear to be associated with the promotion of collegial practices: (a) the need for strong administrative support, (b) the provision of adequate time and other physical resources, (c) the existence of high levels of trust and respect, (d) favourable socialization into the profession, and (e) the deprivatization of practice, as important factors that support collegial practices. Hargreaves (1991) added that teachers also need to feel a sense of control over the collegial processes in which they are involved if such activities are to be effective.

Undue administrative interference. Taking a different line of argument are those who suggest that some participative practices have been "incompletely" implemented. Observations of "contrived collegiality" (Hargreaves, 1991) are criticisms of implementation and practice; of contrivance, not collegiality. While more is said about contrived collegiality below, one aspect of Hargreaves' argument is that where collegiality is promoted as a means of achieving administrators' goals, as opposed to the goals of the participants, such practices are likely to have undesirable outcomes for both the teachers and the school. These outcomes will be described in the following section.

Problems Identified With the Practice of Collaboration

Practitioners and theorists operating out of a management perspective express concerns that collegial processes are often time–consuming. Constantly, researchers (e.g., Hargreaves, 1991; Kruse & Lewis, 1993) have recommended that administrators wishing to implement collegial practices need to address the issue of the adequate provision of time. There are also those who would dismiss collegial activities, such as those related to shared decision making (Vroom & Jago, 1988; Hoy & Tartar, 1993), because they are time consuming and therefore judged to be inefficient.

As was noted earlier, collaboration is often encouraged on the basis of its capacity to promote teacher professional development. The thought is that teachers can learn from the experience and values of their peers. Fullan (1992) warned, in his reflections on leadership and vision, that visions and values can blind as easily as they can illuminate. Simply because teachers work cooperatively does not mean that the outcomes of the cooperation will be positive for the school, the students, or the teachers involved. As Holt (1993) cautioned, "although collegiality may be necessary for establishing a professional culture, it is not in itself sufficient. . . . The capacity to

reinterpret the fundamental questions of education in practical terms is needed, too" (p. 165).

The sharing of experience may not be beneficial if that experience leads to cynicism and despair, or if the bonds that are formed result in the formation of different power blocs within a school. This analysis is extended in the following section, where the cultural and political complexion of collegiality and collaboration are considered.

Cultural Perspectives on Collaboration

The cultural perspective allows collaboration to be examined in the context of human relationships and interactions. Those taking a fundamentally cultural view tend to describe teachers' work in relation to the norms and beliefs that teachers hold as a consequence of their socialization and their interpretations of their experiences as teachers in complex social organizations.

Teacher Isolation

As reported above, Lortie (1975) argued that teaching was an isolated and cellular occupation when compared to other professions. This isolation, along with the selection and socialization of teachers leads to reflexive conservatism in response to increased needs for adaptation and change. Teacher isolation is widely accepted as the norm in schools.

Hargreaves (1994) argued that collegiality has been seen as the alternative to this isolation. Little (1990), while acknowledging the potential of collegial activities to challenge the dominant practices associated with isolation, was sceptical about the extent to which collegiality had been embraced within the culture of teaching. She suggested that collaboration is largely volunteeristic and generally peripheral to the main work of the organization. Based on her review of the literature, Little concluded that felt interdependencies in teaching were few (p. 520). She cited, as evidence for her conclusion, research by Pellegrin (1976, p. 368) who asked teachers to specify essential relationships, that is, other teachers whom they relied on to do their work. Teachers in this study identified an average of one person. Asked to specify close consultative relationships, an average of four teachers were specified.

If the culture of teaching is still largely one of isolated individual practice, then there is evidence to suggest that this is likely to be more pronounced in high schools than elementary schools. Rothberg (1985) surveyed 196 elementary and secondary

teachers who were attending graduate programs at Florida's College of Education. Rothberg identified the teachers as being either elementary (n=73), middle (n=36), or senior high (n=87) school teachers. Over 80% of the teachers from all groups felt that their classrooms were private and that only they and their students should enter. Of the groups, senior high school teachers preferences were higher. Similarly, while very few teachers reported that they visited each others' rooms, senior high school teachers did so even less frequently. Of the elementary and middle school teachers, 80% said they would like to visit colleagues classrooms, whereas 68% of the senior high school teachers were unsure. Finally, over 85% of the elementary and middle school teachers felt that their good work went unnoticed sometimes or frequently. Over 85% of the senior high school teachers felt that their good work went unnoticed frequently or always.

Subject Departments as Cultural Contexts

Levin and Young (1994) expressed the commonly held view that teachers in elementary schools see themselves as teachers of children whereas high school teachers see themselves as teachers of subjects. The centrality of the subject department in the work of high school teachers has been discussed earlier in this chapter. Here the focus is on the department as a source and context of teacher culture. Johnson (1990) mentioned some of the possible sources of this cultural aspect of the subject department when she made the following observation:

> Whereas elementary school teachers' primary reference group is the school—or in some buildings the grade of cluster—high school teachers usually regard themselves as members of departments, their interests and identities resting primarily with colleagues who share similar academic interests and training. (p. 167)

Grossman and Stodolsky (1995) argued that the nature of the subject discipline, individual teachers' perceptions of the school subject, and the subject department, all combine to form the conceptual context in which teachers work. The contextual context, to the extent that it is shared by members of the a department, can be understood as a feature of a department culture, or to use Ball (1981) and Ball and Lacey's (1984) term, a subject subculture.

Department cultures and contexts have recently been shown to be statistically significant covariants of collegial behaviour. Talbert and McLaughlin (1994) found that departments within schools varied significantly from one another according to the strength of collegial interactions. Talbert (1995, p. 72) concluded that it seems the department, and not the school, is the significant context of high school teacher collegiality.

In her study of Mathematics and English departments, Siskin (1994) found that these departments were characterised by different cultures and norms and that Mathematics departments at different schools shared more common features than Mathematics and English departments at the same school.

Grossman and Stodolsky (1995) identified some of the origins and features of subject subcultures. They observed that subjects and departments differ in the following ways: (a) "academic disciplines differ in their histories, epistemologies, and the degree of theoretical consensus existing within the field" (p. 6); (b) school subjects differ according to their status within the school; (c) subjects differ with regard to the extent to which they assessed and controlled by the state through examinations and the content of syllabus documents; (d) subjects differ with regard to the extent to which they are taught sequentially; and (e) school subjects differ with regard to their scope and coherence.

Collegiality and the Effective Schools Literature

In her study of elementary schools in eight Tennessee districts, Rosenholz (1989) described

> schools where teachers share common goals, and schools more like organized anarchies; schools where colleagues help one another, and schools of professional isolation; schools where teachers learn and grow, and schools where most of them stagnate; schools where teachers believe in themselves, and schools of contagious uncertainty; schools where teachers spark uncertainty and hope and schools where they only despair. (p. 1)

Designed as a study of effective schools, data were gathered from teacher questionnaires, school demographic information, and teacher interviews. Differentiating between what she referred to as moving and stuck schools, collegiality and collaboration among teachers emerged as a characteristic of moving, that is,

effective schools. This research is reported in the "cultural perspective" section as it often associates school effectiveness with cultural factors.

Gladder (1990), in her doctoral research at the University of Oregon, examined high school teacher collaboration in relation to school reform initiatives. Based on her review of the literature she concluded that successful schools and businesses are characterized by people working together for a common purpose. An assumption of her study was that developing norms of collaborative behaviour would result in better teaching and learning.

The study proposed that "a better understanding of teachers' responses to efforts to engage them in school decisions and how current school structures and culture affect collaborative practices could contribute to school reform efforts" (p. 245). She found that teachers in the two high schools that she studied "engaged in spontaneous and informal cooperative activities like joint planning and comparing notes about student evaluation and discipline. Those requiring more structure and formal agreement rarely occurred" (p. 254). She found little evidence of a shared culture of collaboration in either of the two schools that she studied.

Her study identified several organizational conditions that influenced collaboration (pp. 256–261), some of which are identified below:

1. *School schedule.* There was little time for meetings and the lunch hour was split in one school.

2. *Physical facilities.* The grouping of teachers in department staff rooms mitigated against inter–department collaboration in the form of whole school decision making and curriculum initiatives. One school was designed in such a manner as to facilitate curriculum sharing. Classrooms adjoined each other and she concluded that this led to the development of high levels of trust.

3. *Time.* This was the major constraint at both sites, however it was not cited as an obstacle by the group of teachers at one school who were enthusiastically engaged in whole school curriculum initiatives. Their enthusiasm had been encouraged by the fact that their collaborative efforts had resulted in the attainment of federal funds for a major school renewal project.

4. *Norms of privacy and isolation.* Gladder (1990) stated that her study confirmed several of Rosenholz's (1989) findings, namely that teachers were reluctant

to enter into collaborative relations out of fear of unfair judgements from colleagues and concern about being judged to be imposing their views on others. The teachers in Gladder's study were hesitant to observe each other, reluctant to provide help, and unsure of themselves when it came to seeking advice because they were concerned about their advice seeking being construed as an admission of incompetence.

5. *Teacher autonomy.* Gladder described this as a major obstacle to collaborative decision making. Some of the teachers in her study interpreted that autonomy as trust. It also afforded them privacy.

Recognising the cultural pluralism of many large high schools and the resultant difficulties faced by those who wish to infuse schools with certain shared cultural attributes, Gregory and Smith (1987), recommended that, "First and foremost, high schools must be small" (p. 132). Small schools, these authors implied, are more amenable to cultural change efforts, or to use their term, community building.

Criticisms of "shared–culture" prescriptions. Recommendations such as these do not seem grounded in the teachers' work literature (e.g., Hargreaves, 1994; Huberman, 1993) that questions the desirability of a single, shared culture in high schools. Both these writers present persuasive arguments to suggest that cultural diversity can be a positive and creative organizational attribute. Different subject subcultures may still share certain attributes, while maintaining other important and distinct features.

To conclude, there is a growing body of literature which "documents the salience and power of subject departments in high school teachers' work lives" (Talbert, 1995, p. 70). There appears to be significant variation between departments in high schools with respect to the subject subculture in general, and norms of collegiality in particular. Further, there is an increasing body of literature that has raised important questions about the desirability of monocultures in high schools (Hargreaves, 1994; Huberman, 1993).

Criticisms of the "effective schools" literature. Several writers (Hargreaves, 1992, 1994; Huberman, 1993; Little & McLaughlin, 1993) have been critical of studies of high school teachers' work that endeavoured to equate shared norms of collaboration with school effectiveness. They have presented similar evidence to that which was presented earlier in this chapter to argue that high schools are

phenomenologically different to elementary schools and that the notion of a shared culture in a large high school is misleading. Hargreaves (1993, 1994) and Huberman (1993) have argued that the very premises of the effective schools research, namely those that define success in terms of strong leadership and improved student scores on standardised tests, are highly questionable. Moreover, both of these writers have questioned the legitimacy of administratively imposed agendas for teachers' collaborative work.

Additionally, Huberman (1993) has argued that it is nonsensensical to study the whole school, as the effective schools literature does, if we are looking at investigating reform:

> I submit that the logic of using the school building as the unit of analysis and intervention is goofy when we are talking about at least 25 to 30 teachers and support staff and 500 pupils. Why the school? . . . How much collaboration can we expect between 8th grade physics teachers, 11th grade English teachers, and physical education instructors? Why are we putting these people together to draft objectives, plan curricula, and monitor one another's test results when their instructional contexts are so different? How did we ever think we could bank on a workable collaboration between teachers who have despised one another for years? Why must we become, at virtually all costs, a socially cohesive community when so few of the requisite conditions for becoming so are met? (p. 45)

The significant impact that differences in individual's purposes, values, and contexts can have on collaboration has been acknowledged by Sebring (1977). In describing a workshop that he developed to facilitate teamwork among teachers and administrators, Sebring identified the five principles that were used to develop the program. One of these principles was based on the premise—which he attributed to Benne, Bennis, and Chin (1969)—that "collaboration is always an achievement and not a gift. Collaboration is usually attained through open and gruelling confrontation of differences" (p. 1).

The confrontation of differences is one of the key elements in analyses of teachers' work that also emerges from the micropolitcal perspective. It is to this perspective that attention is now directed.

Micropolitical Perspectives

Iannaccone (1975) defined micropolitics as the political activities that take place in and around schools. As a theoretical tool, micropolitics alerts us to the actions of individuals and groups as they seek to "pursue their own ends, in collaboration or conflict with others" (Foster, 1995, p. 2). In a similar vein, Hoyle (1982) defined micropolitical strategies as "those by which individuals and groups seek to use their resources of power and influence to further their interests" (p. 88). Micropolitical behaviour has its origins, according to Foster (1995), in the "contestation of ideas" (p. 2) or as Townsend (1990) put it, "in the conflictive interests that swirl around the school" (p .208).

In the following section, attention is focussed on the literature that adopts a political perspective to teachers' work and collaboration. Some of this literature is related closely to the writing reviewed here, particularly that of Ball (1981, 1987) and Hargreaves (1994) who agree that "in secondary schools, a major part of micropolitical activity is focussed on the department" (Ball & Lacey, 1995, p. 96).

In attempting to overcome the endemic isolation of teachers, administrators often attempt to impose collegial practices. For example, mentorship programs, school based management structures, and induction programs, as we have seen, may each contribute to creating more collegial cultures in schools. However, if they are essentially an administrative contrivance designed to further the goals of the administrator rather than serve the needs perceived by the teacher, Hargreaves (1991, 1994) argued, they may have deleterious effects.

Contrived Collegiality

Unlike collaboration, where teachers' collaborative activities are spontaneous, voluntary, development oriented, and unpredictable, Hargreaves (1994, pp. 195–196) described contrived collegiality as being administratively regulated, compulsory, implementation–oriented, fixed in time and space, and predictable. Contrived collegiality is designed primarily to meet goals determined by administrators, not the teachers themselves.

Hargreaves argued that these contrivances result in inflexibility and inefficiency. Political issues are at the basis of the problems with contrived collegiality. He further proposed that administrators both at the school and district level need to hand over

greater responsibility for the development and not just the implementation of policy. This analysis is similar to that offered by Watkins (1992) who coined the phrase "hegemony of consent" to describe practices that have the appearance of participation, but on closer inspection are devices for the greater centralization of power.

Of interest in this study were the teachers' understandings of the extent to which they have autonomy and control over their actions. The teachers will also be asked to describe the extent to which administrators and other teachers influence or seek to influence their work. The development of the research questions, listed in Chapter 3, have also been informed by a desire to understand the impact of the teachers' collaboration on other teachers in the school. This idea was prompted by what is described below as balkanization.

Balkanization

Hargreaves (1994) claimed that balkanization is a dominant feature of high schools. Teachers collaborate within small groups and these groups are isolated from each other. As Hargreaves explained,

> Balkanization is characterized by strong and enduring boundaries between different parts of the organization, by personal identification with the domains these boundaries define, and by differences of power between one domain and another. It is an organizational pattern that sustains and is sustained by the prevailing hegemony of subject specialism . . . [it] restricts professional learning and educational change among communities of teachers; and [is] a pattern that perpetuates and expresses the conflicts and divisions that have come to characterize secondary school life. (p. 235)

Other Micropolitical Studies

Other important studies and scholarly writings (e.g., Ball, 1981, 1987; Nias, Southworth, & Yeomans, 1989; Zahorick, 1987) have begun to illuminate new insights into teachers' work that emerge as a consequence of the adoption of a micropolitical perspective. Ball's (1981) classic study of a British high school highlighted the conflict between subject departments over a proposed change to student streaming procedures while Zahorick (1987) and Nias et al. (1989) have focussed on micropolitical behaviours in their studies and analyses of teacher relations in elementary schools.

Micropolitical behaviour is to be expected in high schools, especially when such schools are faced with having to apportion scarce resources (Marshall & Scribner, 1991). Scarcity can lead to crises, change, or reflective moments that can lay bare deep divisions in teaching ideology (Ball, 1987, p. 14). Micropolitical behaviours, like other political behaviours stem from teachers' own interests. Ball (1987) has identified three types of interests, vested, ideological, and self, that often form the basis of contestation in schools.

Summary

Collaboration has generally been embraced with enthusiasm in the education literature. As a collegial process it is widely believed to have potential to provide more appropriate induction for new teachers, and to transform the practice of teaching leading to improved student learning and higher levels of teacher satisfaction. Numerous factors have been identified as being critical to the success of collegial processes, including administrative support, the development of trust and respect, the provision of adequate time, and the granting of responsibility for the contents of their shared–work to the teachers involved.

The enthusiasm for collaboration is not universal. Several writers have questioned its general applicability in schools, particularly in the areas of decision–making and professional development. Others are concerned that collegial processes may consume unwarranted amounts of time. Still others argue that collegial processes are sensitive to administrative imposition, so much so that if teachers perceive collaboration to be administratively imposed they are likely to be ineffective.

These concerns are, however, minor compared to the those that emerge from a political analysis of collegial practices. By shifting responsibility for implementation and not for the formation of policy to the school site, administratively imposed collaboration masks a greater centralization of real power. Another view of collaboration that is afforded from a political perspective is that of collaboration within pre–existing subject departments in schools leading to greater balkanization in schools. This has dire consequences for the organization and the individuals who work there. Balkanized sub–cultures operate politically, compete for scarce resources, and build strong boundaries to resist the intrusion of external forces.

This literature provides further justification for the selection of high schools as the context for this study. As was noted in Chapter 1, most of the current empirical research on teacher collaboration has focussed on teachers in elementary schools. The case has been made here that high schools differ significantly from elementary and, to a lesser extent, junior high schools, in terms of their organization, and that teachers in high schools differ from their counterparts in these other schools in their understandings of their role and in the instructional techniques they employ. Accordingly, it is reasonable to assume that the distinctive characteristics of high school teaching may lead to distinctive forms of collaboration among high school teachers.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

In this chapter the method that was employed to determine the research questions and to gather, manage, analyze, and report the data is presented. In addition, details as to how certain ethical concerns common to this type of research were addressed is presented. Finally, the limitations, delimitations, and assumptions that apply to this study are identified.

The purpose of presenting the following information is twofold. First, readers of this research need to know the strategies that were employed in this study in order to determine the weight they can attribute to the findings. Therefore, the intent is to describe the methods in sufficient detail to allow the reader to form informed judgements about the likelihood that the study has achieved its purpose.

The second reason for the explication of the research methods is to allow replication of the study in different contexts. Replication of the study may vary in the extent to which it corresponds to the work described here. Some future researchers, for example, may judge a particular data management strategy to be applicable and useful in their own work, while others may wish to replicate the entire study.

Purpose of the Research

The intent of this research was to study collaboration by tapping practitioner wisdom, that is, the teachers' experiences and understandings of collaboration. This approach is "based upon inductive thinking and is associated with phenomenological views of 'knowing' and 'understanding' social and organizational phenomena" (Owens, 1982, p. 3). Cook (1991) viewed the decline in the authority attributed to traditional empiricist theory to have occurred at the same time as a "corresponding increase in the authority attributed to other forms of knowledge, particularly practitioner wisdom" (p. 52).

The methods that were employed were determined following a consideration of what Lincoln and Guba (1985), and Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, and Allen (1993) referred to as an interpretivist approach to research. By seeking to describe practitioner wisdom, an interpretivist study can provide valid and useful information. The potential validity and utility of such a study are linked to the extent to which the researchers can disentangle themselves from preordained theory.

In a sense, the definitions being used to establish the context of this study and identify potential participants, along with the detailed questions proposed, represent the researcher's pre–ordained theory. A crucial factor in this research was the extent to which preordained theories determine the results of the analysis. The teachers' understandings, not the researcher's prior theories, should inform the findings of this study, although it is granted that these understandings are still filtered and interpreted by the researcher. Techniques for ensuring that findings reflected the participants' understandings are detailed later in this chapter in the section that treats the methods employed for ensuring trustworthiness.

Of equal concern during the study was the desire to avoid what Hargreaves' (1994) described as the melding of teachers' voices into one, morally strident voice. As such, it was decided that, where possible, data and findings would be presented in relation to the individual participants and further, that where generalizations were made, the participants that held the particular view, or to whom the finding applied, would be identified.

Development of the Research Method

Information is presented in this section that describes how the study was developed. Specifically, the decisions that led to the content of the research questions and method are described. Prior to developing the proposal for this study, the researcher worked with an experienced researcher in the conduct of a study devised to examine collaborative relations among teachers who were engaged in professional development activities based on a clinical supervision model (Acheson & Gall, 1992). This earlier study had a significant influence on the conception and design of this dissertation research. Accordingly, the influence of what effectively became the Pilot Study is also included in this section.

Rationale for Seeking Teachers' Perceptions of Collaboration

The purpose of this study was to report and analyze the understandings of high school teachers who were engaged in collaborative partnerships. As such, students, other teachers, and administrators were not asked to evaluate these collaborations. Teachers who collaborate are arguably the experts on their collaboration.

Further, the researcher assumed that the teachers' estimations of the effects of their collaborations on their students' learning would be the most influential perceptions in relation to the collaborations.

Development of the Research Questions

The specific research questions were developed in response to Little's (1990) recommendation that "a harder look is in order at what might be meant by collaboration, at the circumstances that foster or inhibit it, and at the individual and institutional consequences that follow from it" (p. 510). Close examination of this recommendation, along with the literature examined in the previous chapter, and the conclusion that little empirical work had been done on collaboration in senior high schools, provided the following parameters for the construction of the research questions. First, it was determined that the study should focus on senior high school teachers. Second, it seemed reasonable to ask teachers in high schools who have experienced collaborative relations to provide their understandings of the phenomenon. The General Research Question was derived from these two delimitations.

The third parameter was that the teachers should be asked their understandings of the forms and contents of the collaborations they have experienced. This parameter informed the development of Specific Research Question 1 and its various component questions. The fourth parameter was that the questions should address the issue of which factors influence the form and content of the collaborations, or as Little (1990) put it, "at the circumstances that foster or inhibit it." Related to this parameter was the intent to ask the teachers to gauge the extent of the influence of these factors. These parameters informed Specific Research Question 2 and its component questions. The final parameter was that teachers should be asked to describe their perceptions of collaboration with regards to "the individual and institutional consequences that follow from it." This parameter informed Specific Research Question 3.

These parameters thus provided the initial delimitations that were applied in the development of the study.

General Research Question

What are the understandings of collaboration held by senior high school teachers who are engaged in self–initiated collaboration with a peer?

Specific Research Questions

1. What are some of the forms and contents of self–initiated collaboration among senior high school teachers?

   (a) How have the partnerships developed?

   (b) What tasks do these teachers attend to when they collaborate?

   (c) How do these teachers collaborate?

2. To what extent do selected factors concerning the teachers and their schools appear to influence the collaborations?

   (a) To what extent do factors associated with the teacher appear to influence the collaborations?

   (b) To what extent do the teachers' assessments of their partners appear to influence the collaborations?

   (c) To what extent do factors associated with the teachers' instructional and other professional activities appear to influence the collaborations?

   (d) To what extent do other factors associated with the school appear to influence the collaborations?

3. What do the teachers understand to be the outcomes of their collaborations?

   (a) What do these teachers understand to be the outcomes of their collaborations with regard to themselves and their teaching?

   (b) What do these teachers understand to be the outcomes of their collaborations with regard to others and their school?

Pilot Study

A pilot study (Riordan, 1995) was conducted between October 1994 and March 1995. It addressed the question: How do teachers perceive their collaborative relationships with their colleagues? The 10 teachers who volunteered to participate in the study were involved in a professional development program which was based on

the clinical supervision cycle (Acheson & Gall, 1992, pp. 9 – 13) and comprised several cycles of planning conferences, classroom observations, and feedback conferences. Information about the participants is summarized in Table 3.1.

Data were gathered in the form of transcripts of audio–taped conferences between the two teachers and two interviews with each teacher. The first interview took place prior to the taped conference: the second occurred after the conference. During these latter interviews, themes and issues that had been identified from the conference transcripts were explored, using a stimulated recall technique. All transcripts were returned to participants for validation.

Findings

Strong collaborative pairings. The data revealed that where teachers had elected their partner, and where the two teachers had an established personal friendship, collaboration was highly valued and constantly exercised. For these teachers, obstacles such as time and a lack of administrative or peer support had little impact on the frequency or content of their shared work. These teachers found support and reassurance from their partner and could cite numerous instances where they had gained new insights and acquired new skills as a result of discussions with, and advice from, their colleague. These teachers also reported instances where they had incorporated this learning in their own teaching. They were student–focussed in their discussions and frequently took risks by disclosing their own professional concerns and perceived areas of weakness. These disclosures were handled by the teachers' partners in a positive and supporting manner. Finally, these teachers shared similar pedagogical beliefs.

One of the four teachers in this group, the only male in the study, suggested that there may be a link between gender and collaboration. He thought that women were more inclined to want to work collaboratively. This issue was explored in the dissertation study to the extent that it led to the inclusion of an interview question to elicit the teachers' understandings of the extent to which gender was an issue in their collaborations.

The finding that the teachers were student–focussed was also explored in the dissertation study. Teachers may be less inclined to be wary of their peers' surveillance of their work if they conceive student learning, as opposed to teacher instruction, to be

TABLE 3.1

Pilot Study Participants: Demographic Information

Teacher	*Partner & length of partnership*	*School*	*Designation*	*Notes*
Joan	Jill (< 1 yr) Appointed partner	Morrison K–9 Special Ed.	Team Teacher	First–year Teacher
Jill	Joan (< 1 yr) Appointed partner	Morrison K–9 Special Ed.	Team Teacher	Experienced Teacher
Kate	Karen (> 1 yr) Elected partner	Morrison K–9 Special Ed.	Team Teacher	Experienced Teacher
Karen	Kate (> 1 yr) Elected partner	Morrison K–9 Special Ed.	Principal & Team Teacher	Experienced Teacher
Sharon	Sandra (< 1 yr) Appointed partner	Morrison K–9 Special Ed.	Team Teacher – Speech Expert	First year at the school
Sandra	Sharon (< 1 yr) Appointed partner	Morrison K–9 Special Ed.	Team Teacher	Experienced Teacher
Robert	Roberta (> 1 yr) Elected partner	Vivaldi Elementary	Grade 2 Music Expertise	Experienced Teacher
Roberta	Robert (> 1 yr) Elected partner	Vivaldi Elementary	Grade 5 Art Expertise	Experienced Teacher
Francine	Fiona (> 1 yr) Elected partner	Descartes Elementary	Assist. Principal Teacher –Librarian	Experienced Teacher
Fiona	Francine (>1 yr) Elected partner	Descartes Elementary	Teacher	Experienced Teacher

at the core of teaching. The researcher was therefore inclined to illicit information concerning the teachers' pedagogical preferences and styles, and to see if there may be a relation between pedagogical issues and collaboration.

Weak collaborative pairings. Where teachers had little or no prior friendship with their partner, and where the partnerships had been formed by administrators, the teachers were less inclined to engage in collaborative work. While these teachers all said that collaboration was a valuable model for teachers, they cited numerous reasons why they did not collaborate more fully with their colleague. Chief among these reasons was the absence of time. When the teachers did discuss their work they tended to concentrate on the logistical planning, occasionally arranging their work so that time could be saved, or a teacher could be "subbed–off" a particular activity. When these teachers observed each other in the classroom, they tended to focus on specific teacher behaviours, such as the frequency with which questions were addressed to particular students.

A pattern also emerged in the way that these teachers viewed their relationships with their partner. In all instances, one or both of the teachers described their partner according to the position they held either in the organization or in terms of their comparative seniority. Seniority and positional power were not issues for the four teachers that were more actively engaged in, and enthusiastic about, their collaboration. A final difference between the two groups was that this group of teachers held different and often divergent views about what constituted good teaching.

Influence of the Pilot Study

Both the research questions and method in this chapter have been influenced by the pilot study. The findings suggested that the teachers' experiences of collaboration were complex, and that the method of gathering data from repeated interviews and audio–taped conferences between the teachers generated rich data capable of revealing such complexities.

The potential of such data to reveal the complexity of the teachers' experiences was illustrated by the insights gained regarding the factor of time in relation to teacher collaboration. The finding that time was not an insurmountable obstacle to persistent and meaningful collaboration for some of the teachers in the pilot study challenged the existing literature that claimed that the provision of time was vital for the development

and exercise of collaborative practices. Where teachers judged the benefits of joint–work to be of significance, they "made the time" to meet and work together. Further, where teachers attributed their lack of collaboration to time constraints, the transcribed conference data supported an alternative explanation, namely that these teachers may have found their joint–work to be an impediment, as opposed to a source of assistance, in their work. Accordingly, where teachers do not derive personal benefits from their collaboration, the provision of time in the school day to allow such collaboration is unlikely to promote greater collaboration.

Therefore, given that the data obtained in the pilot study were capable of revealing what Hargreaves (1991) referred to as "one of the main benefits and pleasures of qualitative research [namely] the surprises it yields, surprises that are primarily driven by the data" (p. 78), the method proposed below is based on similar, though expanded, data–gathering techniques.

The Pilot Study was conceived and conducted in collaboration with an experienced researcher. The study took place in elementary schools and was focussed on a specific application of collaboration, namely, clinical supervision. Following this study, the researcher returned to the literature and it was at this stage that the decision to focus on the form and content of self–initiated collaboration among high school teachers was made.

Data Gathering

This section presents a description of the data–gathering techniques. The steps involved in identifying the participants are described. Next, details pertaining to the conduct of the interviews are presented. Additional data, in the form of transcripts of teachers' conferences, an audio–tape of a focus–group meeting, and notes made during the course of the research in a fieldbook were also gathered. The manner in which these data were collected is also described.

Selection of Participants

Ten senior high school teachers, comprising five collaborative partnerships, participated in the study. These teachers were employed in either one of two school districts in a large urban centre in Western Canada. The participants were identified using a purposive sampling technique. This technique was employed because it was

necessary to find teachers who had sufficient experience of collaboration to be able to assist the researcher in addressing the research questions. Demographic information pertaining to the participants and their schools is presented in Chapter 4.

Several criteria were developed in order to assist in the identification of potential participants. These criteria were based on the definition of collaboration presented in Chapter 1 and certain pragmatic factors pertaining to the efficient management and analysis of the data. Specifically, the criteria employed comprised the following: (a) teachers were identified by their peers or their principal as working collaboratively with at least one other teacher, (b) they must have been working with their partner for at least one school year, (c) they must have been prepared to provide an audio–tape of one of their meetings, (d) their collaboration must have been substantive enough—in terms of mutuality, openness, and content—to satisfy the researcher that their experiences could aid in addressing the research question, and (e) both teachers in the collaborative partnership had to be willing to participate.

Ten participants were considered to be adequate for three reasons. First, the criteria that were used to select participants were expected to ensure that the participants had sufficient experience with collaboration to be able to provide the necessary data. Second, when analyzing the data in the pilot study, it became apparent that there was considerable redundancy with a sample of 10 participants. Finally, given the amount of qualitative data that would be generated from interviews, conferences, and the focus–group discussion, more than 10 participants would make data analysis too cumbersome.

The criteria detailed above precluded the selection of a team of three or more teachers who would have otherwise satisfied the criteria. Two reasons justify this delimitation. First, previously cited research by Pellegrin (1976) showed that the majority of teachers specify one other teacher when forced to nominate essential collegial partners. Second, given the broad range and large number of questions posed in this study, analysis of the data would become unmanageable if themes and issues had to be traced and corroborated among three or more team members.

Description of Procedures Employed in the Selection of Participants

Permission to conduct the study was sought and obtained from two school districts. The researcher discussed the study with the district officers responsible for

approving research studies. In these discussions the researcher explained the criteria that would be employed in selecting participants. Based on this information, their estimations of schools most likely to cooperate, and the decision to draw participants from schools of different size and character, three schools in each district were identified.

The respective district officers then notified the principals in each of the selected schools and sent them a copy of the outline of the study that had accompanied the formal request for permission to conduct the research. Approximately one week later, the researcher contacted each of the principals and sought their assistance in identifying candidates for participation.

In order to ensure uniformity in how the study was explained, and in the description of the characteristics that were desired in the participants, a script for this initial contact was developed (see Appendix A). This script contained, among other information, a list of the participant selection criteria listed above. These criteria were also listed in the outline of the proposed study that the principals had received.

Over a period of approximately three weeks, 12 teachers were identified. The researcher phoned each nominee and talked briefly about the study. Dates for initial meetings were set. These meetings, and each of the interviews that followed, were all conducted at the school site. The initial meetings were held with both participants present.

Two of the 12 nominees did not participate. Despite their initial interest, they expressed concern at the amount of time that would be involved and were slow to return calls. By this stage the researcher was content that the other participants represented a variety of potentially interesting perspectives on the basis of their varying ages, gender, teaching subjects, and the respective lengths and purposes of their partnerships. The researcher contacted these two teachers and they said that they would prefer not to participate.

Teachers in two of the five partnerships had been working collaboratively for less then one year. While the selection criteria suggested that they be excluded from the study, it was decided to include these teachers for a number of reasons. First, teachers in both partnerships had known their partner for several years prior to their collaboration, and second, they impressed the researcher with their openness and the

nature of some of the issues concerning their partnerships. The researcher became aware of these issues during the initial meetings with the teachers in question.

At each of the initial meetings, the researcher explained the purpose of the study, answered questions, and presented copies of the letter of consent (see Appendix B). The intent was to leave the letters with the teachers to allow them the opportunity to consider their participation. Each of the teachers expressed a willingness to participate and signed the letters immediately. Discussion of the purpose and contents of this letter is presented later in this chapter, in the section detailing the ethical issues related to the study.

Data-gathering Techniques

Information About the Schools

While at the school for the initial meetings with the participants, and at other times during the study, the researcher took the opportunity to meet each of the principals. During discussions with these people, information was gathered regarding the school, its programs, mission, and distinguishing features. Copies of pertinent school documents, namely, staff handbooks, student handbooks, year books, school and newsletters, were also collected. These data are reported in Chapter 4. The information gained from these discussions was also helpful in allowing the researcher to develop a sense of the contexts within which to locate the experiences described by the teachers.

Interviews

Experience gained during the pilot study, along with consultation of several texts that treat the use of interviews in qualitative research (e.g., Werner & Schoepfle, 1986; Merriam, 1988; Patton, 1990; Bogdan & Biklen, 1992; Glesne & Peshkin, 1992) informed the content and conduct of the interviews. Valuable advice, such as that offered by Glesne and Peshkin (1992, p. 32), who advocated the use of a "cover story" which should address several points, including the purpose and process of the interview, was incorporated. Further, the researcher formed the view that the most appropriate type of interview for this study would not be like a conversation, wherein both parties contribute equally, assisting each other come to new understandings. The researcher was cautious not to impose his own views on the participant, or to signal

through gesture or comment that some insights were more valuable than others. In this study the teachers were thought of as the experts of their experiences, and accordingly, the researcher attempted to adopt an attitude of "naive curiosity," presuming little and asking for constant clarification and explanation.

Formal, informal, and casual interviews. The main data–gathering strategy employed in this study was scheduled interviews with participants. Werner and Schoepfle (1986) differentiated between three types of interview: formal, informal, and casual. The distinction between formal and informal interviews is that the former is recorded. Informal interviews occur prior to and after the tape recording of the formal interview. Casual interviews are not recorded and occur as the result of casual encounters in the field.

The distinction between interview types is important. Data from formal interviews have the value of being less likely to be distorted by the interviewer during analysis as there is a verbatim record of the interview. The formal interview suffers however from a lack of spontaneity on the part of the respondent. The potential for spontaneity is greatest in the casual interview, but the problem with this method of data–gathering is the potential for distortion due to the lack of a verbatim record.

Werner and Schoepfle (1986) stated that data from the three types of interviews are potentially valuable and should be used in ethnographic studies. They cautioned, however, that "the ethnographer's database should clearly differentiate information obtained through formal, informal, or casual interviews" (p. 301).

Each of these types of interview was employed in the study. Casual interviews took place during telephone conversations. These conversations occurred throughout the study and were often initiated by the teachers who phoned with questions or clarifications related to the transcripts, and at the end of the study in relation to their reactions to the findings chapters which were sent to them for comment and approval.

Informal interviews were conducted during the initial meeting with the pairs of participants and before and after each of the formal interviews. On several occasions, these interviews revealed important new information. One of these informal interviews led to the researcher and the teacher returning to the interview room to audio–tape the additional information that had been volunteered.

Finally, 7 of the 10 teachers were formally interviewed twice. The intent was to formally interview each teacher on two occasions, the second after the transcript of the teachers' conferences had been studied. One teacher was ill for an extended period of time and was unable to meet for a formal interview. Accordingly, she was interviewed informally by telephone. Notes were made in the researcher's fieldbook following this interview. The other two teachers were interviewed a second time, however, due to a technical problem, the audio–tape of the interviews was too poor to allow transcription. This problem was recognised several hours after the completion of the interview with the second teacher. The researcher immediately spoke onto an audio–tape, using the scheduled questions (Appendix E) as a prompt to recall each of the responses made by the two teachers.

This audio–tape was transcribed and from it the researcher developed two, point form summaries. These point form summaries were returned to the teachers as an Appendix to the letter sent to each of the participants following the second round of interviews (Appendix F). Both teachers verified the accuracy of the summary of what they had said.

Interview schedules. The two formal interviews conducted with the teachers were based on a schedule of questions developed by the researcher. These schedules (Appendices C and E) were developed using the Specific Research Questions listed earlier in this chapter as a guide. A common schedule was used for the first round of interviews. The schedule for the second round of interviews allowed for modification for individual teachers. Specific questions, relating to the first interview and the contents of the transcript of their conference, were asked of each participant. Merriam's (1988, pp. 124-125) advice was headed in the ordering of the questions, with care being taken to deal with issues of a factual or general nature early in the interviews, before moving to questions that required more analysis.

In each of the interviews, additional probing questions were asked. The existence of scheduled questions was not intended to arbitrarily limit the contents of the interview nor to restrict the participant from talking about what they thought were important issues and factors. As Bogdan and Biklen (1992) have noted,

> Even when an interview guide is employed, qualitative interviews offer the interviewer considerable latitude to pursue a range of topics and offer the

> subject the chance to shape the content of the interview. When the interviewer controls the content too rigidly, when the subject can not tell his or her story personally in his or her own words, the interview falls out of the qualitative range. (p. 97)

The researcher was particularly alert to instances when the teachers appeared to be theorising about collaboration. On these occasions, the researcher asked the teachers to describe a specific experience that had led them to their stated conclusion. This strategy, discovered during the Pilot Study, yielded a number of important stories that highlighted key factors in the teachers' collaborative experiences. Many of the stories that the teachers told in response to these questions are presented in the following chapters.

Teacher Conference Data

The participants were asked to audio–tape a collaborative planning conference or meeting that was typical of their interaction. At the first round of interview, one teacher from each partnership was supplied with a blank audio–tape for recording the conference. These audio–tapes were transcribed. The transcripts were checked for accuracy by the teachers, and then analyzed by the researcher to provide a fuller understanding of the collaborations.

In addition to providing corroborative data, the conference transcripts also illuminated some aspects of the collaborations that neither of the teachers had mentioned. The researcher noted these instances and developed questions for specific teachers on the basis of this new information. These questions were designed to probe for further information. Additionally, the teachers were asked to estimate the extent to which the interactions recorded on the audio–tape were typical of their other interactions.

Transcription

Transcription of the audio–tapes of the interviews, teacher conferences, and the tape made by the researcher following the two interviews that were not properly recorded, was carried out by a typist with considerable experience in transcription.

Focus–group Meeting

Following analysis of the interview and teacher conference data, the participants were invited to discuss the results of the analysis, and to offer their own understanding of the data (see Appendix F). Five of the 10 participants, representing three of the five partnerships, were present at this meeting.

While the main purpose of this strategy was to ascertain the trustworthiness of the analysis, the weight of support expressed by the teachers for individual findings did provide additional data. Also, some of the teachers provided additional information that further clarified some of the findings. A more detailed description of how this meeting was conducted and how the data were presented at the meeting is provided later in this chapter.

Fieldbook Notes

Additional data, in the form of observations made by the researcher during visits to the schools, information gleaned from pertinent school documents, and reflections of the researcher during the conduct of the study, were recorded in a fieldbook. These data also included descriptions of the classrooms where the teachers worked and notes from part of a lesson that the researcher observed. The fieldbook entries proved useful, particularly as they allowed the researcher to trace the development and refinement of themes throughout the study.

Data Management

A critical issue in research of this nature is the management of the large database that is collected (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). For the combined purposes of possible replication and to inform the reader of how the data were recorded and managed, the following description is offered:

1. A Personal Information Management (PIM) computer software program was used to keep a record of telephone conversations and meetings with all of the individuals in the school districts who were contacted in the process of the study. Notes were made and appended to the file for each person. Appointments and deadlines were recorded in the calender module of this software program. The appointments were also linked to the files for each person. The use of this software proved to be an excellent method of keeping track of appointments and information.

2. The researcher kept a fieldbook in which the position paper described below, observations, and other information were recorded. Periodically these notebook entries were typed into a wordprocessing document that was then stored in a specific directory on the researcher's computer.

3. All of the documents were stored in a single directory on the researcher's computer. The back–up strategy comprised two methods. The first involved keeping floppy–disk copies of the directory at two separate sites. The second method employed involved transmitting the entire directory as an e–mail attachment to the researcher's e–mail account on the university's General Purpose Unix (GPU) server.

4. The computer directory contained four subdirectories: (a) correspondence, such as letters to participants; (b) related documents, such as the research proposal, ethics approval forms, and applications to the school districts for conducting the study; (c) data, including transcripts of each of the interviews and conferences, typed fieldbook entries, and the data files created by the contact management software; and (d) the dissertation chapters.

5. Audio–tapes of interviews, teacher conferences, and the focus–group discussion were labelled with the date, and except for the focus–group, the names of the people speaking. The audio–tapes of the interviews and conferences were given to a typist who transcribed them and then returned the tapes and a computer disk containing the file of the transcription. The audio–tape of the focus–group discussion was not transcribed. The researcher replayed the tape and made notes directly onto the handouts (Appendices G through L). Following transcription, the audio–tapes were stored and the transcripts printed. Copies of the transcripts were then sent to the participants (Appendices D and F). Where changes were suggested, these were then made on the computer document. Corrected transcripts were then printed and placed in a binder for analysis.

6. Literature pertaining to collaboration was reviewed prior to the commencement of the study. The literature review included in the research proposal was based on this literature. During the course of the study, and particularly at the latter stages of data analysis, literature pertaining to the themes and issues identified in the analysis was gathered. Photocopies of articles and notes from the reading of journal articles and books were filed. This material was incorporated into the literature

review, method chapter, and the various discussion sections of the findings and conclusions chapters.

7. The transcripts of the interviews and conferences, as well as the researcher's notes were analyzed. The various observations, direct quotes, paraphrasings and summaries of participant's comments, and notes were recorded on a 4m by 1m chart. This chart was constructed in the form of a matrix comprising 38 columns and 11 rows. Each participant was assigned to a row and the last row was kept for summative notes and the recording of themes for each of the factors that comprised the column headings. The column headings were taken directly from the research questions. For each question, categories were determined on the basis of the interview schedule questions and responses. Where the teachers made comments regarding factors that were not addressed by specific interview questions, these comments were recorded in an "other comments" column. Each of the nine research questions contained several columns for specific factors and an additional "other comments" column. The completed matrix was then examined and the various summaries that were presented at the focus–group meeting (Appendices G through L) were developed. Following the focus–group meeting the matrix was modified to incorporate the ideas presented during the focus–group discussion. Finally, the matrix was used as a guide to organize and write the findings chapters. Specific information pertaining to the analysis and coding procedures used in the development and use of this matrix is presented in the next section.

Data Analysis

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) description of data analysis in naturalistic inquiry, the constant comparative method of data analysis (Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), Bogdan and Biklen's (1992) description of data analysis techniques, and Patton's (1990) instructive advice on the processes of data analysis were all consulted in the process of determining the method employed in this study. As Patton explained, "the challenge is to make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify significant patterns, and construct a framework for communicating what the data reveal" (pp. 371–372). This challenge is made all the more difficult by the absence of "agreed–on canons for qualitative data analysis" (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 16).

Merriam's (1988 p. 136) advice on the development of categories was noted. Of particular interest were the suggestions to ensure that the categories reflect the purpose of the study, to guard against developing categories early on in the study, and to develop exhaustive categories. The researcher was however disinclined to accept Merriam's idea that the categories should be mutually exclusive. While this may give a certain neatness to the analysis, some interview data were judged to apply to more than one of the Specific Research Questions, and was therefore placed in more than one category. Precision is less desirable if it is achieved at the expense of identifying nuances of meaning.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) provided a useful list of constraints and limitations that the naturalistic researcher may encounter. The 13 points in this list (pp. 354 – 355) were acknowledged as potential threats to the veracity of the analysis. The temptation to either cling to or abandon a tentative hypothesis, evaluation, or diagnosis on the basis of a misreading of new data was a cause for concern. Fieldnotes describing the researcher's development of themes and ideas during the course of the study revealed that all of the ideas and emerging themes were modified, while several were totally reconstructed.

Presented below is a description of the steps that were taken to "make sense of the data." Patton (1990) has argued that qualitative researchers have an obligation to describe the analytical processes that were employed, and that these processes be "recorded as fully and truthfully as possible" (p. 372).

Stages of Analysis

Analysis of the participants' understandings of their collaborative experiences began during the initial meetings with the participants. During these meetings the participants were asked to briefly describe the nature of their collaboration. Following these initial discussions the researcher recorded notes regarding the information that had been ascertained. These field notes were gathered throughout the course of the data–gathering. Nearing completion of the second round of interviews, the researcher made an audio–tape of impressions that had been formed on the basis of the recent interviews. It was at this stage that the researchers' analysis began to increasingly include cross–case comparisons (Patton, 1990). Prior to that point, the analyses recorded in the field notes had intentionally been limited to single case analyses (Patton,

1990). The audio–tape was transcribed and then consulted several weeks later when the themes were being identified.

Single Case Analyses

Patton's (1990) descriptions of single and cross–case analyses were informative for the development of the stages of analysis. Each participant was thought of as a case. Therefore a single case analysis involved examining the research questions in the light of data pertaining to each individual participant. There were four distinct stages of single case analyses:

1. Round one interview transcripts were analyzed in the development of Round two interview schedules. Teachers' answers to questions and unsolicited comments were studied, and notes were made in the margins of the transcript. These notes identified: (a) recurrent ideas, issues that required further probing; (b) and specific insights related to the research questions; and (c) information judged to be important but outside the conceptions of collaboration that informed the content of the research and interview questions.

2. The second instance of single case analysis occurred during construction of the matrix described in the Data Management section. The use of such a matrix, which incorporates headings suggested by the research and interview questions, was discussed by Patton (1990, p. 376). He suggested that such a matrix is an appropriate analytic tool which allows for both single case and cross–case analysis.

Following participant validation of the two interview transcripts and the conference transcripts, the researcher accounted for the data by incorporating it to the matrix, one "case" at a time. For each data set, decisions were made concerning the content of the data and the category or question to which it applied.

Direct quotes, paraphrases of quotes, descriptions of large pieces of text, and researcher observations, were all recorded on the matrix. Each entry was referenced to the specific page and document from which it was taken. The researcher then marked the section in the transcripts to which the reference had been made. In this manner it became possible to check that all of the data, in either direct or aggregated form, were reported in the matrix.

3. Having completed the matrix row, that is, having entered all the data for each "case," the researcher checked for internal structural corroboration. The benefit of using a large matrix was evident at this stage. Checking for corroboration simply involved reading "across the row" and checking the extent to which the data and findings were consistent.

4. The final stage of single case analysis involved a close scrutiny of the data and findings for each individual. The researcher asked the question: What do these data and findings tell me about this teacher's understandings of collaboration? Notes in response to this question were then made onto the matrix in the final, unheaded, column.

Cross-case Analysis

There were two discreet stages of cross–case analysis. This form of analysis, as its name implies, involves comparing data and findings related to specific factors across each case. The process can be visualised as reading down the columns of the matrix.

1. Both cases in each partnership were compared for similarities and differences. Notes were written on the matrix identifying links across the two cases. These links were also recorded using lines and arrows. This analysis also allowed for further corroboration of the data and findings.

2. The second stage of cross–case analysis involved comparing each case with each other case for each factor or heading. Similarly, annotations and lines were used to identify links and issues. Summative notes, tallies of the number of individuals who mentioned particular factors, general observations, and references back to the pertinent literature were recorded across the bottom row of the matrix.

Thematic Analysis

Following the above stages of analysis, the researcher began reporting the findings by writing the four findings chapters. As each chapter was nearing completion, the researcher began to summarize the findings for that chapter. At this stage, certain issues and themes became apparent. The connections and disjunctions became clear. It was therefore during the writing of the dissertation that the thematic analysis was conducted. The thematic analysis was like the cross–case analyses

described above, however, the focus at this stage was on identifying issues and themes at a higher level of generality. The themes and ideas discovered were those which addressed sets of factors. The two stages that were involved are now presented.

1. The first stage of thematic analysis occurred during the writing of the findings chapters. The summaries, discussions, and conclusions which appear at the end of these chapters are the result of this stage of analysis.

2. The second and final stage of analysis occurred after the chapters had been approved by the participants. At this stage the concluding chapter was written. The issues discussed in Chapter 8 are the products of this final stage of thematic analysis.

Trustworthiness

The following methods were employed to enhance the trustworthiness of the findings in this study.

Member Checking for Accuracy

The participants were asked to check the interview and conference transcripts for accuracy. The Letter of Consent (Appendix B) and the letters to the participants following the first and second interviews (Appendices D and E respectively), show how the member checking process was presented to the participants. Several corrections were made to the transcripts on the basis of the feedback received from the participants. These corrections all pertained to factual information such as details of previous teaching experience or current teaching assignments.

Veto Rights

Participants were given the authority to exercise veto rights over the data. It was explained to the participants during the interviews that the veto right had two purposes. First, from an ethical perspective, it was to give them the opportunity to have removed from the analysis, or later, from the dissertation any of their comments, or any of the researchers' observations regarding their comments, that they judged might cause them harm. The second reason was to allow them to have altered or removed any quotes and commentaries that misrepresented their understandings. None of the participants requested comments to be removed, although four did request that if

certain of their comments were quoted, that they be incorporated in a general manner to further protect their anonymity.

Member Checking of Data Analysis

Member checking also occurred at the analysis stage. Participants were invited to examine and discuss the findings and the initial analysis at the focus–group meeting and to comment on the analysis contained in the Chapters 4 to 7.

Focus–group Discussion

The intent of involving participants in a focus–group discussion was to work toward a consensual analysis and to "fill in the holes of description" (Merriam 1988, p. 125). This intent emerged following a reflection on Winter's (1989) suggestion that the conclusions of such studies be "broadly based, balanced, and comprehensively grounded in the perceptions of a variety of others" (p. 23).

Participant Reaction to the Findings Chapters

In addition to providing participants with the opportunity to contribute to the analysis in its earlier stages, each participant was provided with a copy of the four findings chapters in this dissertation and given the opportunity to check the final analysis. All the participants said that they thought the analyses pertaining to their collaborations were accurate and appropriate.

Structural Corroboration

According to Eisner (1979), structural corroboration is a process of "gathering data or information and using it to establish links that eventually create a whole that is supported by the bits of evidence that constitute it" (p. 213). The use of interview data, teacher conference data, focus group discussion data and analysis, a fieldbook for the recording of observational data, and insights gained from the perusal of pertinent school documents provided for the structural corroboration of the findings. According to Guba and Lincoln (1989), each piece of information in a study should be expanded by some other source. In this manner, the different data sources were compared for coherence and correspondence.

Position Paper

Prior to the commencement of the data–gathering the researcher wrote a position paper which documented the researchers' preconceptions (Agger 1991, p. 121) regarding the study. Parker (1992), believed that "we already harbour conceptions of what is to be studied; our theories determine what will count as fact in the first place" (p. 14).

Origins of Researcher's Preconceptions

The researcher's preconceptions had been formed on the basis of the reading of the literature on collaboration, the conduct and findings of the pilot study, and reflections on 11 years of high school teaching experience. By recording these preconceptions, the researcher was expected to be in a position to identify the extent to which each of the findings of this study were influenced by the researchers' expectations of the findings.

Comparison of the findings in this dissertation with the contents of the position paper was conducted by the researcher upon completion of the final five chapters of this dissertation, those being, the findings and concluding chapters. In describing the benefit of such a strategy, Lincoln and Guba (1985) explained that "if the later case reports reflects [sic] only those things that were expected in the first place, we may confidently assert that the investigators were *not* open to actual context or events" (p. 363). The researcher concluded, on the basis of this comparison, and the comments offered by the participants, that the findings presented in the following chapters more accurately reflect the understandings of the participants than those held by the researcher at the commencement of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Several steps were taken to ensure that the ethical standards of the University of Alberta were satisfied. First, ethical clearance for the study was obtained from the appropriate authorities at the University of Alberta. Second, prior to approaching schools and individual teachers, approval to conduct the study was received from the two school districts. This approval was sought using the official methods agreed upon between this university and the school districts involved.

Ethical Issues Pertaining to the Treatment of Participants

Dockrell (1988) provided a useful discussion of ethical considerations in relation to subjects. Within this discussion, Dockrell (1988) outlined several issues for consideration by researchers. The following applied to this study:

Letter of Consent

In this study, all participants were fully informed of the expectations for their involvement—the number of activities and the approximate time that each would take—their rights to withdraw from the study at any time, and their right to exercise powers of veto over any data they had supplied. This information, along with a description of the study and of how their anonymity was to be safeguarded was provided in the form of a letter of consent (Appendix B). All participants signed and returned this letter to the researcher. A copy of this letter was given to them for their own records.

Confidentiality

In relation to confidentiality, Dockrell (1988) provided this advice:

> Whether an attempt is made to disguise individual persons or institutions by the use of a fictional name, a number, or a letter, or whether their identity is fully disclosed, all concerned must have a chance to read the material before it is published. (p. 182)

This advice was heeded when the findings chapters of this dissertation were returned to paricipants for approval.

Veto Rights Over Transcripts

Transcripts of interviews and the audio–taped conference were provided to the participants and they were given the opportunity to exercise their veto rights. Letters were sent along with copies of the transcripts, to each of the participants following each interview. A copy of these letters is included as Appendices D and F. Some of the participants offered corrections to the transcripts, while others requested that their statements, if quoted, be corrected to improve readability. Both of these requests were accommodated. Accordingly, several of the direct quotations that appear in the following chapters have been edited to improve readability. Extreme care was taken to

minimise the effects on the contents, emphases, and nuances of the participants' utterances. Four participants asked, on at least one occasion during their interviews, that if certain of their comments were quoted in the dissertation that they be done so in a general manner. Again this request was honoured.

Presentation of the Findings at the Focus-group Meeting

The data and their preliminary analysis were presented to participants at the focus-group meeting in generalized form (see appendices G to L). This was done deliberately to avoid possible threats to ethical standards that may have occurred if findings and analysis were reported in a more specific manner. The potential ethical threat posed by presenting the findings to a group of participants was raised by a member of the supervisory committee during the oral examination of the proposal. The researcher judged, on the basis of the contents of the discussions and non-verbal gestures of the attendees, that all of the attendees were comfortable with the way in which the information was reported.

Veto Rights Over Analysis

Additional to the opportunities provided to participants to approve or veto the content of transcripts and the preliminary analysis—at the focus-group meeting—participants were also provided with a copy of Chapters 4 to 7 inclusive. In the letter that accompanied the copy of these chapters (Appendix M) participants were urged to read the chapters and report any concerns. The researcher spoke to each of the participants after they had read the chapters. None of the participants expressed any major concerns, however one did ask that one of the researchers' comments be rephrased in a more general manner. Another identified an error regarding the description of how he and his partner commenced their collaboration. The modifications with respect to both of these comments were made. Finally, all said that their understandings had been reported accurately in the chapters that they read.

Courtesy

Finally, the researcher was conscious of the importance of basic courtesies in dealing with the teachers. Their generosity in sharing their time and understandings was acknowledged frequently during the study and formally at the end of the study when "thank you" cards were sent to each participant. Care was taken with things such

as keeping a record of phone conversations, ascertaining the correct spelling of teachers' names, and reviewing notes prior to interviews and telephone conversations.

Transcription

One ethical issue that is rarely mentioned in the literature pertains to the employment of a typist to transcribe the audio–tapes of interviews and conferences. While no written instructions were given to the secretary, the researcher mentioned the importance of maintaining confidentiality regarding the contents of the audio–tapes. The secretary involved, who had considerable experience in transcribing tapes, was aware of these issues, and was used to working within the University's ethical policies.

Ethical Issues Pertaining to Customers

While this research was not commissioned by a particular customer, in a sense, the readers of this study are the consumers of the research. Dockrell (1988) argued that the researcher has an ethical responsibility to communicate the research findings in a responsible manner. Accordingly, the commentary and discussion that accompanies the presentation of findings in Chapters 4 to 7 has been consciously framed to apply only to the experiences and understandings of the participants. In this manner, generalizations that can not be warranted by the research design have been avoided. In the final chapter where general observations and conclusions are offered, these are done so following prefatory remarks warning the reader that the warrants provided for the trustworthiness of the findings are not as strong for the general comments as they are for those comments pertaining specifically to the participants.

In research of this nature, judgements as to the generalizability of the findings—the extent to which the findings may apply to other people in other contexts—need to be made by the reader on the basis of the contextual information provided by the researcher and the reader's own knowledge of other contexts to which they may wish to transfer the findings.

Delimitations, Limitations, and Assumptions of the Study

In this section, the limitations, delimitations, and assumptions related to this study are presented.

Delimitations

This study had these delimitations:

1. There were 10 participants selected from senior high schools in two districts in a large city in Western Canada.

2. Data–gathering occurred over a six–month time–frame.

3. The selection criteria effectively delimited participation in the study to those teachers who were working in a collaborative partnership with one other teacher who was also willing to participate.

4. Related to the above delimitation was the exclusion of teachers who would have satisfied the criteria with respect to their collaborations, but who were not nominated by their principal.

5. Data–gathering pertaining to the nature of the individual collaborations was delimited to the perceptions of the participants in the individual collaborations.

Limitations

The transferability of the findings was limited by two main features of the research design:

1. The purposive sampling technique, which precluded the participation of high school teachers who collaborated but failed to meet the five criteria previously specified, limited the generalizability of the findings.

2. The purpose of the analysis, namely to accurately describe the understandings of collaboration as held by individuals, as opposed to the consensual understanding held by all high school teachers who collaborate, was a second limitation.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made at the commencement of this study:

1. The definition of collaboration used in this study is descriptive of the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours of certain teachers who work in senior–high schools.

2. The perceptions of participants, as expressed in interviews and discussions, will be trustworthy accounts of their understandings of teacher collaboration.

3. Acknowledging the potential for self–reporting effects, the assumption was made that the methods of data–gathering, management, and analysis would allow the development of a trustworthy description of the participants' understandings of collaboration.

Conclusion

In this chapter the methods employed in addressing the research questions have been presented. Arguments were offered for the construction of the research questions and the methods that were employed to address them. In addition the limitations, delimitations, and assumptions that applied to the study were presented.

The research questions were justified on the basis of recommendations from the literature and an evaluation of the findings of the pilot study. Literature recommending specific methods in the conduct of qualitative research, as well as an exhaustive description of the actual methods employed, were provided in relation to the following aspects: (a) data–gathering, (b) data management, (c) data analysis, (d) the enhancement of trustworthiness, and (e) the achievement of appropriate ethical standards.

Phillips' (1986) discussion of the importance of explicating the warrants for the assertions made by qualitative researchers has been heeded in the conduct of this study. The generalizations offered in the concluding chapter of this study are presented as being transferrable to other senior high school teachers in other schools. This claim is warranted on the grounds that the conclusions are grounded in the understandings of the participants, each of whom satisfied the researchers' conditions for determining their expertise in commenting about senior high school teacher collaboration. Further, the contextual details provided in the following chapters and the limitations,

delimitations, and assumptions presented above, are offered as warrants and cautions concerning the potential transferability of the conclusions to other teachers in other senior high school contexts.

CHAPTER 4

PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR SCHOOLS

This chapter introduces information about the participants and their schools. This information is offered to allow the reader to contextualize the comments, quotations, and discussion that follow in the remaining chapters. The transferability of the findings of this study is related to the extent to which the experiences and understandings of the teachers in this study are representative of those of high school teachers in other schools and systems. By providing the following information, readers, particularly those familiar with high school teaching, will be able to make judgements about the general applicability of the findings of this study.

First, a description of each of the schools is presented. Next, the age, gender, educational qualifications, teaching experiences, current teaching and extra–curricular duties, and teaching partner are presented for each of the participants. Where additional information, such as that pertaining to career aspirations or broader professional involvement, was provided by the participants during the interviews, this information is also presented. The chapter concludes with a summary.

Pseudonyms are employed to mask the identity of the teachers and their schools. The pseudonyms for teachers and the schools have been chosen so that the surname of the two teachers in each partnership and the name of the school start with the same letter.

Participants' Schools

Table 4.1 shows the names of the teachers in each partnership and their schools. In addition to the use of pseudonyms, details that pertain to enrollments and the number of teachers are presented in general terms so as to further reduce the likelihood that participants can be identified. The following is based on the comments of the participating teachers and certain administrative personnel in each of the schools, information contained in various school publications—newsletters, staff and student handbooks, student registration guides—and observations made during visits to each school.

TABLE 4.1

Participants and Teaching Partners, School Jurisdiction, and Size

Participants	School	Jurisdiction: Catholic or Public	Pupil enrollment	Number of teachers
Patrick Peter	Parkview High School	Public	1500 +	100 – 125
Jenny James	St. John High School	Catholic	500 – 999	25 – 49
Harry Helen	Hindmarsh High School	Public	1 – 499	1 – 25
Anne Alan	St. Agnes High School	Catholic	1500 +	50 – 74
Cathy Christine	St. Clare High School	Catholic	500 – 899	25 – 49

Parkview High School

Parkview is located on a large corner block, one side of which fronts a busy provincial highway. Several receptionists and secretaries worked in the large main office. Hallways were clean and busy. Notice boards carried announcements from different student groups and clubs, while honour rolls, trophy cabinets, and photographic displays of graduating classes attested to the achievements of previous students.

General Characteristics

The school offered programs for students of a wide range of abilities. Students from this school regularly excelled in provincial examinations. In addition to the provincial curriculum, the school offered the International Baccalaureate (I.B.) credential. Many of the teachers, some of whom had published textbooks or held positions of leadership in the provincial teachers' association, were keen to be assigned to the I.B. program. Those on the I.B. program were usually given a lighter teaching load to compensate for the added responsibilities associated with teaching an I.B. courses. Judging from the notice boards, school newsletters, and the trophy cabinets, the school offered a wide range of sporting and cultural activities.

Administrative Organization

The principal, who was relatively new to the school, was assisted by three assistant principals. The assistant principals were clearly required to deal primarily with the students. Their office doors displayed two signs: one showing their name, the other, a range of letters. These letters referred to the surnames of the group of students that had been allocated to the particular assistant principal. Department heads wielded considerable influence over the instructional programs and the assignment and scheduling of teachers. Committees comprising teaching and administrative staff played a significant role in the development of whole-school policy.

St. John High School

Jenny and James taught at St. John High School. Situated in a predominantly working class area, the school served a culturally diverse student population. Significant growth in enrollments had led to obvious overcrowding. The two-storey building was old and had not been upgraded in many years. The floor coverings,

lockers, and furnishings in the classrooms, staff areas, and offices were clean but all showed the signs of age. The hallways were crowded at the change of classes. The teaching staff in the lunch area were congenial and welcoming, and the old chairs and low coffee tables contributed to a sense of ease and informality. Staff work areas were situated throughout the school. Teachers desks were stacked high with papers and books and classroom and sporting equipment were strewn within easy reach.

General Characteristics

The Christian character of the school was evident in the religious symbols that adorned the walls, the atmosphere of the school, and in the official statement of the school's philosophy. Reflected also in this statement was the notion of providing for students a stable environment in the face of social and technological change. A pastoral concern for the students was clearly evident in the school's mission statement, and was further articulated by James when he spoke about what he perceived to be the fundamental role of a teacher. According to James, both he and the principal shared this philosophy and it was the basis of the mutual respect they enjoyed. As was the case with the four large high schools in this study, St John offered a wide range of social, cultural, and sporting programs, in addition to a full complement of provincial high school academic courses.

Administrative Organization

In addition to their administrative responsibilities, the principal and two assistant principals each took responsibility for student welfare and discipline for a specific grade level. Subject department operations were directed by department heads. Specifically, department heads were responsible for program coordination, budgeting for text books and resources, and the maintenance of communications among teachers in the department. Whole–school and subject department committees were often formed to make recommendations regarding policy and procedures for the school and individual departments respectively.

Hindmarsh High School

Hindmarsh High School attracted students from all over the city. The school was situated in a middle–class, residential area. Excellent facilities—gymnasium, well–stocked library, new computers, spacious classrooms—and congenial relations

among staff members contributed to making Hindmarsh a pleasant environment for both students and staff.

General Characteristics

The smallest school in the study, Hindmarsh catered to academically gifted students. Hindmarsh had applied for accreditation that would allow it to offer the I.B. program. As Harry explained, "we've applied for the I.B. program and that will come on stream with a pre–I.B. of 9/10 and a full I.B. of 11/12. I guess you'd call Hindmarsh an academic school in terms of what we offer at the high school level. We do not offer 13, 14 or 16 level courses." The school's mission statement and motto both addressed commitment to academic excellence.

Administrative Organization

Administrative responsibilities were carried out by the principal. There were no assistant principals or official department coordinators. Various staff members volunteered to accept responsibility for certain administrative duties such as budgeting and student advising. Helen, the youngest member of the staff was the "substitute" principal. Subject coordination responsibilities were shared by the staff and in most department areas there was only one teacher.

St. Agnes High School

Recently renovated, the two–storey building was bright and spacious. The offices, library, staff rooms, student cafeteria, and various conference rooms were well designed and comfortably furnished. The school was situated close to community recreational facilities which included a gymnasium, swimming pool, and expansive playing fields.

General Characteristics

The school was one of the oldest and largest high schools in the Catholic school district. Students enjoyed high levels of success in academic and sporting pursuits. A wide range of extra–curricular activities were offered and the staff were all expected to be involved in the provision of these activities.

Administrative Structures

The principal was assisted by three assistant principals and nine subject department coordinators. The assistant principals acted as year advisors to students, with each administrator taking responsibility for a grade level. Department coordinators were assisted by teachers who often assumed responsibility for specific courses within the departments. Alan, for example, was acknowledged as the coordinator of the Humanities courses.

St. Clare High School

St. Clare was a large school that served a wide area of the city. Like the other large schools in this study it offered a broad range of academic, sporting, social, and artistic programs. Students broadcast a music and talk show over the school's public address system during the recess breaks and a video message system displayed notices on monitors throughout the school.

General Characteristics

Student handbooks and school publications attested to both the strong vocational component of the schools programs and the academic achievements of recent graduates. The school was actively involved in the community and had a long standing partnership with a large hospital in the city. A large proportion of the staff had been at the school from its opening, more than 10 years ago. According to Christine, the staff enjoyed good peer relations and generally shared a strong commitment to student welfare.

Administrative Organization

The principal was assisted by two assistant principals. Each member of the administrative team acted as an advisor and reference person to the students of a particular grade level. Department coordinators took responsibility for instructional and curriculum issues within the departments and teachers tended to teach exclusively within their specific areas of specialization.

Description of Participants

This section provides demographic and general information about each of the participants. Tables 4.2 and 4.3 show specific information pertaining to the ages of the participants, their gender, qualifications, years of teaching experience, years at their current school, and teaching and other responsibilities. The information presented here was gleaned from the interview transcripts.

Patrick

Patrick taught both provincial and I.B. Physics courses. He was also the chair of a major planning committee in the school and, along with Peter, was actively involved with other Physics teachers at both the district and provincial level. He was passionate about Physics and said he enjoyed talking about teaching. He saw himself as moving eventually into an administrative position, but was quick to point out that he saw his immediate future being spent happily in the classroom.

Peter

Prior to commencing his teaching career, Peter worked in a variety of positions related to his background in science and computing. At the time of the study he was teaching Physics and General Science and was keen to teach the I.B. Physics courses in the future. His career goals were to continue to gain experience as a Physics teacher and he had no aspirations to be an administrator. He had developed an impressive collection of student notes, overhead transparencies and related materials, all keyed to the content of the various units he taught.

Jenny

Jenny taught English and Humanities and was the only teacher in this study who was employed on a part–time contract. This was the first year that she had not taught French. She said she would prefer to teach both English and French, but there were not enough classes available for her to do so. Her part–time status and the recent return from leave of the other French teacher at her school necessitated a change in Jenny's teaching responsibilities. Jenny was involved in a large number of other activities in the school, including staff and student social committees, student clubs, and the staff professional development committee.

TABLE 4.2

Participants' Gender, Age, Qualifications, and Years of Teaching Experience

Participant	Gender	Age range	Highest qualification:	Range of years of teaching experience 1.
Patrick	M	30–34	Bachelor's Degree	6–10
Peter	M	35–39	Bachelor's Degree	1–5
Jenny	F	35–39	Bachelor's Degree	11–15
James	M	35–39	Bachelor's Degree	16–20
Harry	M	45–49	Bachelor's Degree	16–20
Helen	F	30–34	Bachelor's Degree	1–5
Anne	F	40–44	Master's Degree	11–15
Alan	M	45–49	Bachelor's Degree	26–30
Cathy	F	45–49	Bachelor's Degree	26–30
Christine	F	40–45	Master's Degree	11–15

Note: 1. The current year was counted as one full year.

TABLE 4.3

Participants' Responsibilities and Years in Current School

Participant	Years at current school [1]	Subjects taught	Other responsibilities
Patrick	7	Science Physics	Committee work Science/Physics teachers groups [2]
Peter	1	Science Physics	Science/Physics teachers groups
Jenny	5	English Humanities [3]	Committee work Student Clubs
James	11	Social Studies Humanities	Committee work Sports coaching
Harry	3	Science Computers	Committee work Student clubs
Helen	2	Science Computers	Committee/admin. work Student clubs
Anne	4	English Religion	Student clubs
Alan	3	English Humanities	Coaching Student clubs
Cathy	11	English (Special Ed.)	Committee work
Christine	10	English (Special Ed.) Business St.	Student activities Committee work

Notes: 1. The current year is counted as one full year.

2. These refer to provincial and district associations and groups.

3. Humanities is a combination of the provincial courses in Social Science and English. It does not have a separate curriculum.

James

For the majority of his teaching career, James was content to teach a variety of subjects outside his area of expertise. A Physical Education and Social Studies teacher, James had reached a point in his career where he had decided to concentrate on teaching Social Studies. He had been supported in this decision by the principal and so, for the past three years he had taught Social Studies exclusively. He enjoyed good relations with his colleagues and demonstrated a strong commitment to the care of the students in the school. This commitment resulted in his spending many hours with students coaching sport teams, assisting those with academic difficulties, and counselling students who were experiencing personal and family problems.

Harry

A veteran of several elementary and junior high schools, Harry was new to high school teaching. Harry was educated as a Social Studies teacher, but he was currently teaching Science courses. He was a voracious reader and was enamoured with the methods of science. He spoke with enthusiasm about the importance of encouraging the development of the skills of inquiry and a love of learning in his classroom. Harry hoped that as the school grew in the next few years his long standing ambition to teach high school Social Studies would be realized.

Helen

Prior to gaining a permanent position at Hindmarsh High School, Helen taught for one year at each of two different high schools. She was a highly organized teacher and enjoyed teaching Biology and Chemistry. Helen was a registered nurse before she decided to become a teacher. In addition to her classroom responsibilities, Helen acted as a student advisor and deputized for the principal when the principal was absent from the school. Helen was keen to pursue further studies and was not sure if she saw her long–term future in the classroom.

Anne

Anne had taught in a number of schools both within and outside of the province. She held two master's degrees and was contemplating further study. For Anne, teaching and learning were inseparable and she was torn between her professed

love of the classroom and her desire to engage in further study. Among her many contributions to the school, Anne led a student group that studied philosophy.

Alan

Several years as a district consultant provided Alan with clear views on the purposes of high school education. He was critical of the pressure placed on students to perform well in provincial exams, seeing this as an obstacle to the realization of broader educational goals. Alan was regarded by his colleagues as a dedicated and effective teacher and was acknowledged as the unofficial coordinator of the Humanities program in the school.

Cathy

Cathy was a strong advocate for students with learning difficulties. In addition to establishing a Special Education Program in her school, she was involved in a number of Special Education groups both within and outside her district. She also worked closely with parents and various post–secondary education providers regarding employment and training opportunities for her students.

Christine

Christine had taught Business Studies since she arrived at the school. For the past three years she had also worked in the Special Education program at St Clare. She enjoyed the challenges presented by this change in focus. Christine was proud of her school because of the excellent staff relations, the professional attitude of her colleagues, and the quality of programs offered to the students. She was responsible for the production of the school yearbook and humorously remarked that she had this responsibility in every school where she had worked.

Summary

Teachers from five urban high schools were involved in this study. Three of the schools were in a Catholic school system and two were part of a public school system. The schools ranged in enrollments from under 500 students to in excess of 1,500 students. Two of the five schools—both in the public system—offered the International Baccalaureate (I.B.) credential in addition to the regular provincial curriculum. With the exception of the smallest school in the study, each school

employed two or more assistant principals. In each case these assistant principals were primarily responsible for student welfare and discipline. The four larger schools were organized according to a traditional subject department structure, with each of the departments coordinated by a department head. Further, staff were involved in whole–school decision making by means of an extensive system of academic, student welfare, and social committees.

Each of the 10 teachers—five females and five males—in the study worked in partnership with one other of the study's participants. Three of these partnerships were comprised of a male/female pairing, one was comprised of two females, and one involved two males. The teachers ranged in age from the early 30s to the late 40s. Teachers in three of the five pairings were within five years of age of each other. In the other two pairings the age differences were 7 and 15 years respectively. Years of teaching experience ranged from 3 to 26 while years in their current school ranged from 1 to 11. Six of the 10 teachers had been in their current school for less than five years. Two of the 10 teachers had graduate qualifications and another two stated that they aspired to an administrative position. All teachers expressed moderate to high levels of satisfaction with their current position. All were involved in school related duties in addition to their regular classroom teaching responsibilities. None of the teachers in the study held an official administrative position in their school. Only one of the teachers said that he may leave the profession in the near future. Finally, the teachers in this study were currently teaching subjects in the following department areas: Business Studies, English, Religion, Science, Social Studies, and Special Education. Seven of the 10 teachers had taught subjects outside of their formal area of formal preparation.

CHAPTER 5

THE NATURE OF THE COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings in relation to Specific Research Question 1: What are some of the forms and contents of self–initiated collaboration among senior high school teachers? Three questions were subsumed under this Question: (a) How have the partnerships developed? (b) What tasks do these teachers attend to when they collaborate? and (c) How do these teachers collaborate? The responses to each of the sub–questions are presented for each partnership in turn. The chapter closes with a summary and discussion of the findings. A response to Specific Research Question 1 is offered in the form of a conclusion to the chapter.

Nature of the Individual Partnerships

Peter and Patrick

Peter and Patrick taught in the Science Department at Parkview High School. They were close in both age and years of teaching experience. Patrick had taught at Parkview for several years, whereas Peter, who had taught on a casual basis at Parkview and at other schools, was in his first year as a permanent member of staff.

Development of the Partnership

Peter and Patrick had shared resources and worked together for more than two years. Unlike other partnerships in this study, these teachers began to collaborate prior to their working in the same school. They met on an occasion when Peter was working as a substitute teacher at Parkview. They continued their acquaintance as they both belonged to a local Physics teachers' group. Peter explained "even when I was at a different school last year, we'd get together once in a while and do things and share material." They had a common goal, described by Peter as "fast–tracking learning." They shared resources—unit outlines, student handouts, and the like—and occasionally demonstrated or explained the various uses of different apparatus used in Physics laboratories. Peter and Patrick also discovered that they shared a common interest in mountain climbing and computers. This year they had extended the frequency and broadened the focus of their sharing.

Patrick described his work with Peter as being more mutual and frequent than his previous dealings with other colleagues. For example, when Patrick first arrived at the school he was helped by Paul, a 19–year veteran Physics teacher, but the collaboration "was initially one way. He had all the great ideas and materials and I was just receiving and then slowly I had what I needed and then I would offer him things and he would offer me things, but it was at a much slower rate." Less mutuality was also a feature of Patrick's work with several Biology teachers, whom he contacted for assistance when assigned to teach a General Science class. Patrick felt that he had benefitted from their assistance but that he was "unable to offer much in return."

Realizing that Peter was in need of resources when he first arrived, and aware of the value of the assistance he had received from Jim when he was in a similar situation, Patrick offered to help. Peter reciprocated by assisting Patrick with computer resources and copies of student worksheets, assignments, and tests. Both teachers identified this reciprocity as an important feature of their collaboration. Along with their similar ages, professional aspirations, and other factors described below, mutuality explains why this partnership has continued and developed, while the two other working relationships described above had diminished in their frequency and intensity.

While Peter and Patrick shared similar recreational interests, they seldom socialized or engaged together in these recreational pursuits. Their collaboration had an almost exclusive work–focus.

Collaborative Tasks

Peter and Patrick both stated that their collaboration mostly involved sharing resources and ideas and demonstrating various uses of laboratory equipment. They also engaged in general discussion about teaching and classroom management. Patrick explained their work in this way:

> *There are all sorts of little demos or ways to show how something works. For example, "try this apparatus working in this way and that will demonstrate how the speedometer works." We discuss resources, such as, test item questions, assignment questions, and other computer related materials. We also talk about general teaching and some of the philosophical issues that are involved, you*

> *know, how to deal with certain management issues such as dealing with students who have cheated.*

Peter mentioned that they periodically discussed how to approach colleagues and administrators regarding pupil behaviour. For example, when a student had been suspected of cheating on an exam, Peter's ethical and practical concerns were discussed with Patrick. Sharing such concerns and seeking and giving advice were, according to these teachers, important but infrequent, aspects of their collaboration.

Occasionally, the two teachers worked together to prepare workshops and resources for other teachers in their Physics teachers' group.

> *One major project we're working on together right now is something called a "make and take" where Physics teachers will come from other schools to our school. We're running a workshop where other Physics teachers will construct certain demo apparatus and take them with them when they leave. So Pete and I are working together on the workshop.*

Such sharing was not intentionally confined to teachers outside the school. Patrick mentioned on three occasions during the two interviews how he had endeavoured to include the two other Physics teachers in their school, but had only limited success. He attributed the disinclination of the more senior Physics teachers to join their younger colleagues to the view that they were "comfortable" with what they were doing. In other words, Patrick felt that they had all the materials and resources that they needed.

Peter and Patrick were asked to identify activities that were not part of their collaboration. Both listed discussion about colleagues, especially if it involved "negative talk," observation of each other's teaching, and team teaching. Patrick also mentioned that they tended not to share personal evaluations of their own work. That these more personal aspects of teaching were outside the boundaries of their collaboration was alluded to by Peter when he stated that their working relationship was not "a close friendship."

When questioned why team teaching was excluded, various factors were cited, including potential problems that could emerge because of their different teaching styles and the nature of the subject matter. Both described in detail the differences between their teaching styles. Patrick said he preferred to work with small groups of students

and did not think the dynamics of a large group would match his teaching style. On the other hand, Peter liked to teach to the whole class, structuring his lessons around a carefully prepared package of handouts for the topic. Patrick did not completely eliminate the possibility of team teaching:

> *I would prefer not to team–teach. However, I do enjoy a form of team–teaching that we use in the grade 10 General Science course. It has a Biology component and then a Physics/Chemistry component. Typically what we're doing now is the Physics/Chemistry component is taught by one teacher and the Biology component by the other teacher. And so they're taught in different blocks. Yet we share in as much as the student gets only one science mark. It can be as simple as one person handling the spread–sheets and the other person doing the calculations. What I've found beneficial is that it gives another teacher's perspective on the same kid in the same class. So I guess it's a step towards team teaching and I do like that. It's marvellous to get another person's perspective on the class and individual students.*

Whereas Peter said that he would have no hesitation in having Patrick observe one of his lessons, Patrick was more reluctant. In the second interview, Patrick revisited this issue, attributing his reluctance to be observed to the view that such practices were not a part of the school culture. While planned peer–observation was not a part of their collaboration, casual observation did occur. Peter said that he had observed Patrick teach when he first came to the school. Occasionally, while working in the Science preparation room which adjoined Patrick's teaching laboratory, Peter had seen Patrick teach. Coincidentally, Patrick told how he had also taken advantage of the physical arrangement of the laboratory preparation room to observe Jim. In his first few years at the school, Patrick had frequently sat and listened to Jim and paid attention to how Jim explained concepts and responded to student questions. This covert observation partially accounts for how these teachers were able to describe in some detail how their colleagues taught. Further, there was a general awareness and acceptance that because of the physical layout of the science facilities, laboratory teaching was conducted within the potential sight and hearing of colleagues.

Processes and Frequency

The central aspect of Peter and Patrick's collaboration was the exchange of materials. The preparation of these materials was conducted independently and, as Peter explained, "it takes a lot of work to get the material together. So if there is an exchange—that is, if the other person can reciprocate now and then—that makes it easier."

Additionally, the two teachers talked to each other on a daily basis. Such discussions were the most frequent activity. As was described above, these discussions pertained to classroom matters, but were depersonalized. In other words, the talk was about the unit, the student, the lab, the demonstration, a management issue, or "about something that is going on in the school," and not about themselves or their teaching. This talk occurred between classes and during lunch as Peter and Patrick were rarely scheduled for a preparation period at the same time.

Arranged meetings occurred less frequently and were scheduled after 3:30 pm since both teachers regularly stayed until 5:00 pm, using this time to prepare lessons and labs for the following day. At the planned meetings they typically worked on a joint project, such as planning for the "make and take" activity.

The audio–tape that the teachers supplied of one of their meetings provided further evidence of the high level of mutuality and reciprocity of effort that characterized this collaboration. Both asked questions, offered alternatives, and negotiated mutually satisfactory decisions. The following exchange was typical of their audio–taped interaction. In this excerpt Peter and Patrick were in the process of drafting a letter to their colleagues which outlined the program for their "make and take" meeting:

Patrick: *Yes. Take a break and then that will take us to . . . want to say working projects 'til 9 p.m.?*

Peter: *Yes.*

Patrick: *Or did you want to say eight o'clock?*

Peter: *Make it too late and then they might not want to come, but once they're here if it goes later than the scheduled time, they're already here. 8:30 compromise?*

Patrick: *Sure. So we have a date, we have a time . . . so meet at the office at Parkview.*

Peter: *Have them meet at the office . . .*

Patrick: *If they meet outside the office at least we know that's a kind of a central meeting place and then we can take them down from there.*

These interactions were carried out in a friendly manner and they spoke in a positive tone, seeking, wherever possible, to incorporate each other's ideas with their own.

In summary, Peter and Patrick talked daily about classroom related issues in a congenial way. Arranged meetings occurred periodically and were scheduled after school hours. Such meetings were typically used for either laboratory demonstrations or joint–planning. Independently prepared classroom teaching materials were freely shared in a reciprocal manner.

Jenny and James

Jenny and James were team–teaching one of the Humanities courses at St. John High School. This was the first year that they had worked together, although both had team–taught with others in the past. They were close in age and both had taught at the school for several years. While members of different departments in the school, they knew each other well and referred to each other as friends. Jenny, as was explained in the previous chapter, worked part–time and was the only participant in this study to be employed under such a contract.

Development of Partnership

James approached Jenny toward the end of the previous school year and asked if she would like to team–teach the Humanities 10 course. She accepted without hesitation. The Humanities course was a combination of the Social Science and English programs and as such, tended to be co–taught by two teachers, one from English and the other from Social Sciences. When James' previous Humanities co–teacher formally announced that he would be leaving the school at the end of the 1994–95 school year, the principal asked James to co–opt a replacement from the English department.

Jenny, who was teaching English and French at the time, had been told that she would not be teaching French in the following year because a member of the Languages department was returning from leave. It was at this time that she was approached by James. By accepting the offer Jenny felt she would gain some respite from a "straight English load," and strengthen her position in future part–time contract negotiations. Her contract status, although not a major factor in her reasoning, was she said, "always there, in the back of my mind, whenever I agree or disagree to something."

Jenny and James began team–teaching after the Christmas break. During the first half of the year they had several meetings at which they planned the course. After Christmas they continued these meetings. The focus of their meetings gradually changed from general planning and structure to dealing with more specific classroom issues.

Collaborative Tasks

This collaboration involved three related activities. The first, and most obvious, was team–teaching the Humanities course. Second, Jenny and James engaged in planned meetings, and third, they exchanged resources and ideas on an informal and sporadic basis. A description of each of these activities follows.

Jenny and James structured the Humanities course in a way that allowed for both whole–group and small–group instruction. As Jenny explained in an interview prior to Christmas, "there are places where we won't integrate and it will be my subject when I teach *Romeo and Juliet.* But when I'm teaching the short story or poetry in the midst of Canadian history, I hope that it's ours." During the whole–group instruction lessons both teachers were usually in the classroom. While one did the bulk of the teaching, the other occasionally interjected to make a point. Students were regularly engaged in small group work during these large classes. At these times, both teachers moved from group to group, monitored student progress, answered questions, and gave directions.

At the planned meetings a wide range of issues were addressed. These issues included: (a) discussion about their different teaching styles, the purpose of the humanities course, and how particular lessons or units would be presented; (b) sharing of resources, such as newspaper articles; and (c) lesson planning and the assessment

of students' work. The sporadic meetings occurred less frequently partly because Jenny only worked in the mornings. At these occasional meetings, issues of pressing and practical concern relating to the class were raised.

While this collaboration appeared to address most aspects involved in the delivery of the Humanities course, certain activities were undertaken independently. Jenny said that while she would often "bounce ideas off James," she maintained responsibility for those aspects of the course that were within her specific area of expertise. From his perspective, James believed that there was no reason for Jenny to be involved with, or to relate to the students, in the same manner that he did. Both teachers were keen to maintain independence over areas that they believed to be their comparative, professional strengths: Jenny in her knowledge of the English curriculum, and James in the area of his interaction with students.

Processes and Frequency

The most frequent activity in this collaboration was classroom instruction which occurred several times a week. Formal meetings occurred less frequently, usually on a weekly basis. Jenny's part–time schedule and their different subject department memberships meant that informal meetings occurred least frequently.

Formal meetings involved discussions that ranged from their teaching styles to specific details of planning for lessons. The process of planning invariably involved negotiation. In the following statement, Jenny described an incident where the need for negotiation became apparent:

> *I was mentioning to him that I had found some good poetry selections and I thought it would be a great idea for us to teach poetry through the course rather than what we traditionally do in sort of a modular form. So I was mentioning that I thought it would be really nice to integrate poetry with everything and James was thinking "well aren't the kids going to get confused?" I just thought he would say "great idea, let's go with it." So he wasn't just jumping on my bandwagon. So I guess I will have to do a bit of convincing because I think that is integration—true integration—and I don't think it's teaching something separate to another subject. So we've got lots of things to deal with.*

In addition, James observed that integration demanded the identification or development of appropriate teaching materials:

> *We've exchanged material, mostly from my side because I've already been through the program once and we've tried to attack the integration of Social and English and what Jenny and I would be comfortable with. At this point we're doing a lot of research because we need to find material. It's really the biggest drawback to a new course, just getting information.*

This collaboration was also seen by both teachers as a learning process. The realization that team–teaching required specific skills and that it presented certain challenges was evident in the following extract where James talked about his experiences of team–teaching:

> *We've talked philosophy, we've talked about what our objectives are, we've talked about the reality of being together the first year and not to put too much pressure on ourselves. I was with a wonderful man last year. He was just an incredible teacher but we made some mistakes, some mistakes that I'd love to have back in terms of some direction, some expectation was a little bit too much. Also learning to be in front of 60 rather than 30 students is a change in itself.*

Finally, James noted at meetings between he and Jenny, much of the time was devoted to learning how to work together:

> *I feel that the meetings we do have right now are as much about learning about each other as about where we're going with the curriculum—with the program. In team–teaching it's the chemistry that is the most important thing and being sensitive to one another and understanding one another. Even though we are good friends and we've been colleagues for a few years now, this is a different experience for us.*

Both teachers felt that being good friends was an important factor that allowed them to deal with their differences because, as James explained, "it's easier to accept criticism, it's easier to accept change when you really understand the motives and the person so I think we have an advantage."

In conclusion, Jenny and James felt that their existing friendship was an important factor in their decision to work together. Like Peter and Patrick, they had differences in their teaching style and preferences. These differences, because of the team–teaching focus of this collaboration, presented issues that had to be discussed and resolved in order for the course to be presented. Whereas Peter and Patrick could work around their pedagogical differences and still profitably exchange resources and ideas, Jenny and James found themselves having to work through their differences and come to negotiated solutions. As a result, Jenny and James were learning about themselves and each other and how to teach together. They also derived the benefits of professional support gained from collaboration with a resourceful colleague that were enjoyed by Peter and Patrick.

Helen and Harry

Working in the smallest school in the study, Helen and Harry were wholly responsible for the delivery of the Biology, Chemistry , and Computing courses. The distinguishing feature of this collaboration was that their decision to collaborate was based on a shared belief in the benefits of close cooperation between teachers within a subject area, rather than on a deliberate choice to work with each other. Another factor which distinguished this partnership from the others in the study, was the significant difference in the ages—more than 15 years—of the two teachers involved.

Development of Partnership

Helen and Harry had worked together for two years. The collaboration began soon after Helen's arrival at Hindmarsh. Initially the collaboration was beset with problems. Both teachers were open about the conflicts and their differences in approach, but also noted that in recent months their relations had improved. Helen and Harry attributed their difficulties to their mutual competitiveness. As Helen explained "There is a little bit of tension between us. We're both very, very competitive people and it's not very bad this year, but last year towards the end of the year, it was kind of a tug–of–war over who should get the 30 level classes." Harry was more succinct: "We're both very competitive. She's extremely competitive and I'm a little worse!"

These comments were offered in good humour—another salient feature of this partnership—and despite the "tug–of–war" they managed to resolve most of their

differences in ways that enhanced their professional respect for each other. As Helen said, "we get on better now." While Helen and Harry both stated that they would probably not work together if there were other teachers in their department, they were able to identify specific benefits that they derived from their partnership. While these benefits will be detailed in the following chapters, the point to be made here is that the benefits that accrued to this collaboration did so precisely because of the teachers' ability to deal effectively with their differences.

Two other shared, personal characteristics had a major impact on the direction and growth of this partnership. Both teachers professed to, and recognized in each other, "a love of science." Much of their interaction centred around sharing stories and knowledge about their subject matter. Further, they shared a strong commitment to the future growth and viability of their school. They believed that their collaboration was an important means of ensuring the quality of their teaching and the satisfaction and success of their students.

Without these commonalities it is difficult to imagine why these teachers were inclined to work together. As Helen said, "I work with Harry simply because he and I are the two teachers that teach computers and teach science together." Harry made a similar comment, and at another time he admitted "I've probably irritated the heck out of her sometimes." Interestingly, Helen also admitted, "I think I probably annoy him."

During the interviews with these teachers it became apparent that they frequently identified the same issues and used the same words and constructions to express their ideas:

1. Helen and Harry both referred to Harry's teaching style in the science laboratory as "a real blow 'em up kind of guy."

2. Helen said that she was "very organized" and that she worked probably too hard, Harry referred to her as being "super organized" and commented that she worked too hard and placed too high an expectation on herself.

3. Harry said Helen was used to high school teaching and that meant that she expected the students to work through the content. Helen admitted that she was used to high school teaching and that she expected the students to be motivated enough to work through the content.

4. Harry said he was more effective than Helen with the Grade 9 and 10 students because he was more experienced and could identify easily with students in that age group. Helen said Harry was better with the junior classes as he seemed to relate well to the kids because of his experience.

These were only several of the many examples. Despite their admitted difficulties, the congruence of their insights and observations suggested a high level of familiarity likely gained through an open and substantial professional interaction.

Collaborative Tasks

Hindmarsh had applied for certification to offer the International Baccalaureate (I.B.) program. During the 1995/96 school year Helen and Harry spent considerable amounts of time preparing for the new courses that would be offered if the application were successful. In addition both teachers exchanged programs and resources in a manner similar to that which was described in relation to Peter and Patrick's collaboration. The final aspect of Helen and Harry's collaboration involved occasional, but lengthy, general discussions about science.

The I.B. preparation involved an analysis of existing courses, the I.B. science courses, and an identification of resources that will be needed. One of the tasks involved was the selection of appropriate texts. Helen and Harry decided on several potential texts and then compared their evaluations of these texts before agreeing on which would be best. They also discussed how the programs would be organized, who would be best placed to teach each course, and advised the principal on the courses they felt should be taught by new teachers.

The exchange of resources included sharing worksheets, class tests, labs, pertinent articles from magazines and journals, stories related to particular units that could be used to highlight key points in a topic or engage the students' interest, and entire programs. As Harry explained, "I don't know how I would have got through Bio 20 last year without all the material from Helen." For her part, Helen appreciated the times when Harry gave her a copy of article he had read: "One day he brought in a book on the Ebola Virus to give to me. Also, has photocopied an article that he had read because he thought it might be good for one of my classes." At other times Harry explained how certain labs could be incorporated in a particular topic.

The third aspect of this collaboration was the occasional discussion of matters relating to the science curriculum. These discussions involved the sharing of knowledge and were described as a learning experience by both teachers. Helen's previous experience as a registered nurse and her science degree meant that she had a greater knowledge of Biology and physiology, whereas Harry's wide reading and fascination with science have afforded him with different areas of expertise. As Helen explained,

> *He knows a lot about a lot of things and the areas of Science that he knows a lot about, are different to those areas that I know things about. So a lot of times we'll just have Science discussions that have nothing to do with our curriculum or anything, it's just that we get interested in talking about things.*

These discussions appeared to be the most enjoyable aspect of the collaboration for both teachers. Harry actually defined collaboration as "the sharing of things, and ideas, and its fun."

Both teachers were asked what was excluded from their collaboration. Helen said that she did not observe Harry's teaching, although they had "popped in" on each other from "time to time." She said that his visits did not cause her any concern. In addition she said that she had "heard him teach." This was similar to comments made by Patrick, Peter, and Jenny about their covert observation of their partners' teaching. If she had a criticism of the way Harry was teaching a particular topic, Helen said that she would approach the matter "very carefully" and that she would probably direct her comments "at the topic, not at him."

Harry was emphatic that he would never team–teach as it would encroach on the privacy of the classroom:

> *I like to be the king of my castle and my classroom is my classroom. I've only just, after 20 years, become comfortable with people coming into my room. That is my domain and I don't really like anybody being in there except me and my students.*

Harry was also adamant that he would not talk with Helen about any concerns he may have with her teaching. Such matters were, according to Harry, the responsibility of the administration, not peers. The third activity that Harry said he

would not share in with Helen was the discussion of his personal philosophy of teaching. He spoke at length about the notion of discovery learning and the importance of teaching thinking and problem solving skills. Asked if he and Helen ever discussed these matters, Harry replied that she would not understand what he was talking about because they were "on two different planets."

Processes and Frequency

The main processes involved in this collaboration were talking and sharing resources. Helen and Harry were similar to Peter and Patrick, also Science teachers, in that their collaboration was a process for sharing ideas and gaining knowledge about their subject matter. As Harry said,

> *I see collaboration basically as a sharing of ideas. I don't see it as doing things together, I see it as I've got something that works, try this and you try it. It is generosity and everybody gets better for it.*

In the following passage Harry talked about how this sharing worked. The description was typical of those offered by Harry and the other participants:

> *Helen had been having a little bit of trouble with a grade ten class and she was quite scared to go down and do the lab with them. They are a difficult group. It was a lab that involved balancing chemical reactions and I said, "One thing that worked for me was that I had them balance the reactions as they did them, and actually try to identify what was in the reaction, what the products were, and then we made a little hall of fame where they had to write the balanced reaction and the first group who got it went on the hall of fame." She did it and it went very well. She said she had a really good class. So that was a good feeling. But generally what we've just done is always just given each other materials. As I said before, she's an extremely well organized person and I'm actually learning to be that way. I'm copying it because I just see how good it is.*

As was noted earlier, these teachers had to reconcile some of their differences in order to be able to work together. They managed to develop a compromise position regarding the assignment of classes this year. Harry said in his second interview that he was now surprised at how easily they were "getting on." Clearly, an important

process in this collaboration was the negotiation of some of their differences and the development of compromise solutions to their competing preferences for teaching specific classes.

Anne and Alan

Anne and Alan team–taught English 20—the Grade 11 academic course—at St. Agnes School. They were currently in the second year of team–teaching this course. Anne described their collaboration as the "discovery of ideas," while for Alan it

> *means to share for the purpose of teaching and learning. To do that you have to have some kind of a focus in mind. I speak in passing to a dozen different people each day, and sometimes I'll touch on what we're doing in class or somebody will say "Do you have any ideas for this?" and I'll do the same, and that kind of thing happens. But that's not collaboration. Collaboration is speaking expressly for the purpose of deepening and broadening my own understandings, or helping someone do the same. I think there needs to be a focus and the focus is either imposed, or there's an inherent belief that by interacting with that person, I am going to become a better teacher.*

Both teachers concluded that they were "better teachers" through the "discovery of ideas" that occurred in their collaboration.

Development of Partnership

Major renovations were commenced two years ago at St. Agnes. The school administrators were faced with the problem of having fewer classrooms during the renovation. They approached Alan and asked if he would consider team–teaching English 20. A large room that could comfortably accommodate 60 students was available and by combining two classes the demand for classrooms would be eased. Alan agreed and nominated Anne as his partner when he was asked to suggest another English teacher with whom he would like to work. Anne explained how she was then approached by the principal: "He said when renovations were starting, would I be willing o team teach? And I said with whom? He said Alan. I said I'd teach with Alan tomorrow. I meant it in theory!" She explained that they "used to trade–off a lot and discuss ideas" and she felt comfortable with the prospect of working more closely with her colleague.

In the first year Alan said that they "put in stupid amounts of time," often after school, planning their lessons, discussing various approaches, and learning how to work in the classroom with each other. They described the process of joint–planning in a manner similar to Peter's notion of "double–thinking" wherein they found themselves exploring the justifications for particular classroom strategies.

Having been through the time–consuming phase of their collaboration, Anne explained that they were now "more in sync" and Alan felt that they were "reaping the benefits" of their hard work. At the end of the first year, with the renovations completed, they decided to continue team–teaching English 20.

Collaborative Tasks

Anne and Alan were asked to think about all the tasks involved in teaching English 20. They were then asked to nominate which of these tasks were done alone and which were done together. Both said "we do everything together." When pressed for examples they explained how they taught, presented, planned, evaluated, shared resources, offered each other advice, kept each other on track during the lessons, and even interrupted each other while they were presenting. Anne said that in many ways Alan "is my teacher . . . we learn from each other."

The closest they came to working alone was in the marking of students' work, although Alan did say they talked about how papers should be marked. The discussions culminated in the preparation of assessment criteria. These criteria were then presented and explained to the students when the assignments were given. Alan also explained that they often helped each other with the marking.

Processes and Frequency

This collaboration was the most pervasive of those in the study. The processes of the collaboration extended beyond the complex and interrelated processes of teaching and moved into the realm of discourse. The discourse occurred between the teachers and their philosophies, knowledge, and experiences of teaching and life. Anne explained the process as "talking constantly" and discovering that they had "similar intellectual interests." For Alan it was a process that transcended sharing, it was a "particular type of thinking" that dealt with "why" and not just "what."

The teachers also noted that the process "changes over time." As issues were explored and resolved, Anne and Alan grew in their understanding of their work and each other, which in turn helped them to deal more efficiently with new matters as they arose. It is in this manner that they found the demands placed on their time were easing. As Anne said: "We used to meet every day. It was very, very time consuming." She proceeded to explain that now their collaboration was most intense at the "start of a unit or a semester." Alan noted that now they just met "occasionally over lunch," with the most frequent collaboration occurring in the classroom, but that they still "talk all the time."

A final characteristic of Anne and Alan's interaction was the enjoyment and professional growth they derived from working together in the classroom. They had achieved a level of comfort and trust that allowed them to "joke and have fun" with each other and to share this "fun" with the students. Anne talked about their different teaching styles: Alan was more formal and distant in his interactions with students while she was more interactive. Alan also described this difference and said he admired the way that Anne related to the students. He said that working with Anne helped him to be more relaxed, whereas Anne attributed her growth in being more task–focussed to her observation of Alan's style. They felt that they were modelling healthy adult interactions and that their students appreciated this openness. They believed that their teaching styles were complementary and that their teaching of English 20 was highly effective.

Cathy and Christine

As explained earlier, the results of the preliminary analysis of the transcripts were presented to the participants during a focus–group discussion. One of the discussions that ensued related to the natures and foci of the partnerships. Cathy and Christine stated in their interviews, and reiterated during the group discussion, that their collaboration was best understood as "conferencing about kids." The singularity and substance of this focus differentiated this collaboration from the others.

Cathy and Christine shared the primary responsibility for the Special Education programs at St. Clare. While initially neither were trained in Special Education, Christine had completed a masters' degree program in this area. They shared a

common interest in meeting students' individual learning needs and it was this interest that permeated their collaboration.

Development of Partnership

Cathy had worked at St. Clare since it opened. Christine joined the staff in the following year. Four years ago Cathy started an integrated Special Education program. She explained how the program developed and how Christine became involved:

> *I started the program up on a half–time basis. We brought grade 10s into the program and then as we expanded and had them go into grades 11 and 12, we needed another person. I went full–time the following year and then Christine was brought in on a half–time basis. I was asked if there was anyone on staff in particular that I thought I could work with teaching these children. I wasn't given full range of choice, of course that just stands to reason, but Christine seemed to be an excellent choice right off the bat. She's just a very easy person to get along with, so I knew I'd be able to work with her.*

As they started to work together, Cathy soon realized that "it was the fact that Christine could see each of the students as individuals that I really appreciated and I think that was the main tie to begin with."

Christine explained that they began their collaboration by team–teaching. She found this to be a valuable experience:

> *As a teacher, you don't get the opportunity to watch another teacher teach very often . . . hardly at all, except when you're student–teaching. So I found that really valuable for myself; just to watch her in the classroom as well. I'm not an English major and I'm essentially teaching English, so I needed the sort of background that I got from her.*

Christine became increasingly interested in Special Education. Now in their third year of working together the teachers had established a pattern of meeting regularly to "conference about the students." The content of these conferences is described below. Christine is still engaged on a part–time basis in this program. She said that she would like to teach full–time in the Special Education program but is required to continue to teach Business Studies.

Collaborative Tasks

Cathy identified several tasks as being central to their collaboration. These included developing Individual Program Plans (IPPs) and sharing teaching resources. The teachers also worked together to educate their colleagues about the Special Education program and strategies that could be employed in the classroom to help students who were experiencing learning difficulties. In this extract, Cathy talked about an inservice that they were preparing for their colleagues:

> *We are preparing an inservice for the teachers on staff so that we can once again specify—even though we have given them specific information about our roles and so on, and about the students we teach—to make them a little more aware of what we do and what we can do.*

The use of the words "once again" and her tone of exasperation prompted further questioning about their work with the rest of the staff. As Cathy explained their work with colleagues, further insights into some of the tasks and frustrations these teachers faced in collaborating on a Special Education program emerged:

> *I think they feel that if we approach them about a student or talk to them about a student that we're challenging their ability to teach, and not discussing this child's ability to learn. And we're not doing that. We're simply trying to give them the idea that different things work with different children. Also, at the end of the school year, we timetable our kids for their following school year and in doing so, we're able to put them into a timetable that is very flexible for them and we also try and hand-pick their teachers. And that's not to say that we don't have wonderful teachers on our staff. All of our teachers are very, very good at what they do, but some are just a little more flexible than others or some of them just seem to work with students in a different way and are a little bit more accommodating. So we make the effort to sort of put our students in with those teachers. Now I don't know what that does for the other teachers, but I don't think they really realize it. So it doesn't matter.*

Christine referred to their dealings with other teachers and the administrators in terms of politics, wherein she and Cathy were advocates for their "kids."

Finally, these teachers collaborated in maintaining links with employers and tertiary education providers. Part of their Special Education program involved providing specialized career counselling for the students "on the program" and their parents.

When asked what aspects of their work were not done collaboratively, Cathy said that they no longer team–taught and that the specific aspects of day–to–day teaching were attended to independently. Christine concurred and explained that she would find close curriculum collaboration "more difficult." She attributed this potential difficulty to their different teaching styles.

Processes and Frequency

Each collaborative team provided an audio–tape of one of their conferences. Analysis of the transcribed discussion between Cathy and Christine revealed that the process of "conferencing about kids" involved (a) sharing knowledge about the individual child, (b) negotiating strategies for classroom teaching, including on occasions the involvement of other teachers or the child's parents, (c) providing each other with positive feedback, (d) occasionally challenging each others' ideas, and (e) developing IPPs.

Some of the other processes mentioned by Christine included sharing resources, phoning parents, "help[ing] each other when we're busy," discussing issues related to the appropriate management of the students' classroom behaviours, especially with the view to offering advice to other teachers, and attending Special Education conferences together.

Cathy said that they "get together on a casual basis." More formal meetings occurred in preparation for school reports, which they also did together. Cathy, reflecting Christine's sentiments, said that she felt that their relationship was mutual and that they learned from each other.

Finding time to work effectively was an ongoing problem in all of the partnerships. Cathy and Christine said that they met during lunch, and before and after school. For three years they had requested to be scheduled to have their preparation lessons at the same time but were not accommodated. Based solely on inferences drawn from the teachers' tone of voice and facial expressions when discussing their

dealings with administrators, this seemed to cause the teachers some distress. They concluded that while administrators said that they valued the Special Education program, they were unwilling to offer support by providing the coordinated preparation periods that the two teachers said was highly desirable.

Summary and Discussion

This discussion addresses the sub–questions subsumed by Specific Research Question 1: (a) How have the partnerships developed? (b) What tasks do these teachers attend to when they collaborate? and (c) What is the nature and frequency of the processes employed in these teachers' collaboration?

How did the Partnerships Develop?

The inception and development of the five partnerships can be understood in relation to individual and organizational factors. At the time of inception, a nexus occurred between these factors, providing the impetus and opportunity for the partnership to be inaugurated. The development of the partnerships was then influenced by these factors, some of which changed due to either the operation of the collaboration or external influences. Over time, some of these factors changed to such an extent that they resulted in a new nexus, precipitating a change in either the purposes or processes of the collaboration. These findings are presented graphically in Figure 5.1. This graphic presents the development of the collaborative partnerships through four phases: (a) individual practice, (b) generation, (c) blended collaborative and individual practice, and (d) regeneration. Conceivably, phases (c) and (d) could recur until there was a decisive change in one or more of the organizational or individual factors.

Phase 1: Individual Practice

In this phase the teachers ostensibly carried out their duties individually. Social interaction occurred with other staff members, most frequently within the subject area. The individual teachers were developing an awareness of their own strengths, limitations, needs, and aspirations and those of their colleagues. The two characteristics that were mentioned by each of the participants with respect to their assessments of their colleagues as potential working partners were flexibility and willingness to reciprocate in terms of effort and generosity with materials and ideas.

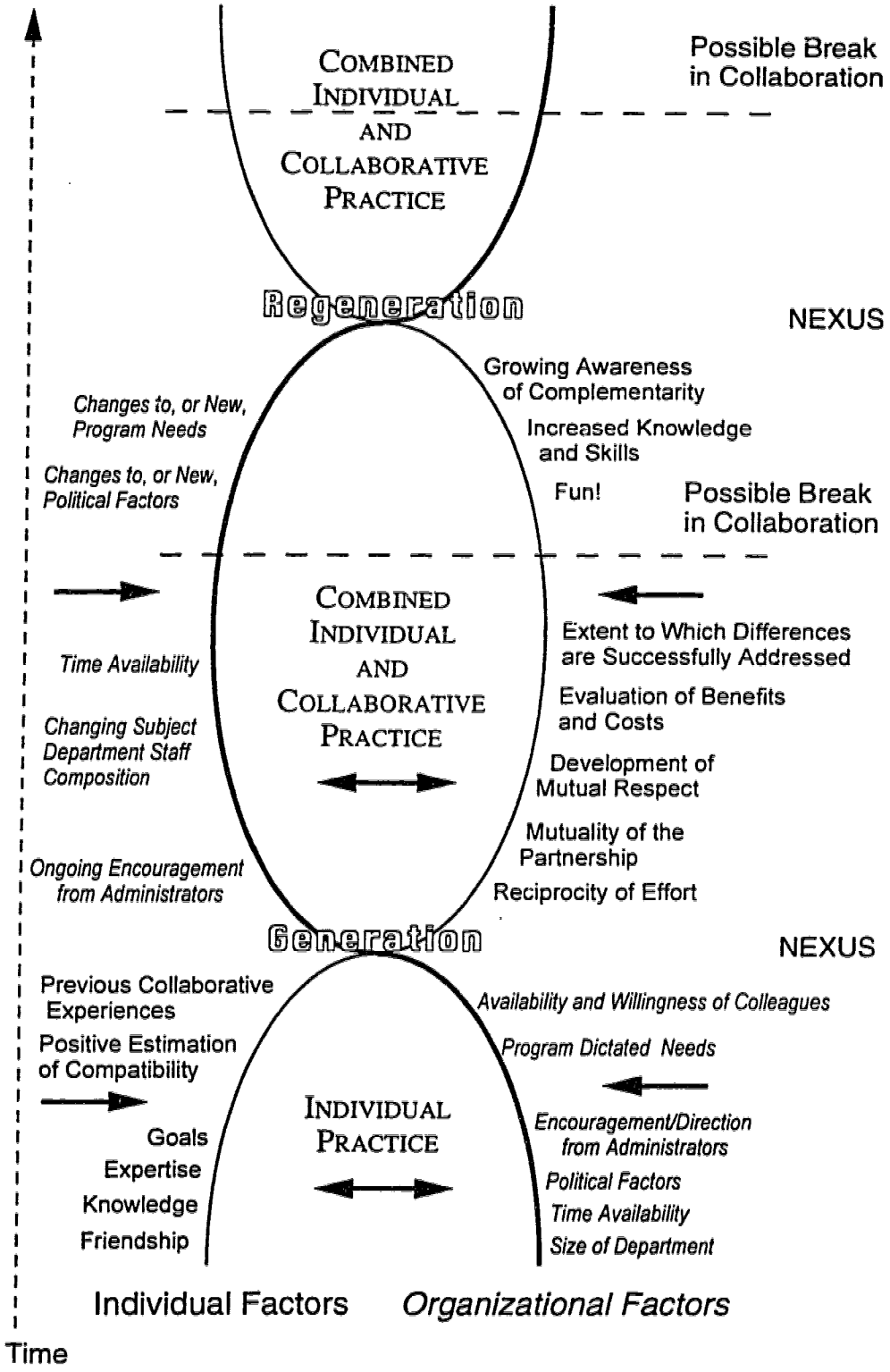

FIGURE 5.1

Developmental stages in senior high school teacher collaboration.

Knowledge of their colleagues was derived from their social and professional interactions and occasionally through covert observation, as was the case with Peter, Patrick, and Jenny. Friendships emerged, like those between the majority of the participants, while other relations remained distant. Occasional sharing of ideas and resources occurred, but these were sporadic and not necessarily reciprocated, as was the case with Patrick and his dealings with other members of the science department. It is important to note that these relations were not limited to the department or the school. For instance, Peter and Patrick's acquaintance and sharing began prior to Peter's appointment at Parkview. Prior to the inception of these collaborations, all of the teachers were involved in at least one other collaborative partnership.

The pre–collaborative interactions were affected to varying extents by organizational factors, such as the nature of the programs, the composition of the departments, the arrangement of the school timetable, school policies, practices and norms, and the actions of administrators. An example of one is the relations among members of the Science department at Parkview which were collegial but distant.

The Individual Practice Phase was seen to either extend over several years, as was the case with Jenny and James, Anne and Alan, and Cathy and Christine, or for only a matter of days after the arrival at the school of one of the teachers, as was the case with Patrick and Pater, and to a lesser extent with Harry and Helen.

Phase 2: Generation

At this point a nexus occurred between individual and organizational factors. The following summaries of the inauguration of each of the partnerships show the complexity of the nexus. Having already exchanged resources and established that they had similar aspirations and interests, Peter and Patrick began their collaboration almost immediately upon Patrick's arrival. The previous personal experience of being assisted by Jim inclined Patrick to offer assistance. The way in which this assistance was valued and promptly reciprocated by Peter came as a welcome change for Patrick and their collaboration was assured. Jenny and James' existing friendship, James' previous, positive experience of team–teaching with another teacher who decided to resign from the school, the principal's decision to allow James to co–opt a partner, and Jenny's part–time contract status and the recent undesirable change in her teaching assignment, among other factors, led to the commencement of their collaboration.

For Harry and Helen, being the only science teachers at Hindmarsh, their "love of science," and their shared commitment to the success of the Science program and the school, were just three of many factors comprising the nexus leading to their collaboration. The beginning of Anne and Alan's collaboration was precipitated by renovations to the school. However, the desire of the administrators to have a class team–taught in a classroom that could accommodate 60 students did not mean that these particular teachers had to be involved. The principal's decision to approach Alan and to allow him to nominate a partner suggests certain judgements on his part; positive assessments of Alan which were no doubt based on observations of Alan's teaching and interpersonal skills. Other factors that comprised this nexus included the pre–existence of a collegial, sharing relationship, shared professional respect—"I'd teach with him tomorrow" and Alan's choice of Anne,—and their estimations of potential compatibility and complementarity in the classroom. Finally, Cathy and Christine's collaboration commenced as the result of several factors. These factors included: their established friendship, Cathy's estimation of Christine's ability, Christine's increasing dissatisfaction with teaching Business Studies, the success of the Special Education program, and the principal's decision to ask Cathy to nominate a partner.

Phase 3: Blended Collaborative and Individual Practice

Individual and organizational factors combined to influence the tasks, process, and frequency of the collaborations. Additionally, these factors accounted for the relative mix between collaborative and individual practices. The final relation between these factors and collaborative and individual practices occurred when the collaborative and individual activities brought about changes in the individual and organizational factors.

The influence of organizational and individual factors on the collaborative and individual practices was relatively straightforward. Presenting lessons together was integral to the team–teaching assignments of Jenny and James, and Anne and Alan. In these partnerships, the nature of the assignment determined that they needed to meet to plan and discuss aspects of their course. Cathy and Christine's responsibilities as teachers of a Special Education program precipitated "conferencing about the kids" and developing strategies to work effectively with other staff members. Additionally, after

one year of team–teaching with Cathy, Christine decided to teach her class independently. She felt that she had learned enough from observing her colleague and that further "close curriculum collaboration" would be difficult because of their differences in "style." Since it was not necessary to deal with these differences in order to "conference about the kids," the processes in this collaboration changed after the first year. Patrick and Peters' relative inexperience, enthusiasm for their subject, isolation within the Physics department, desire to be effective and innovative teachers, and differing views on team–teaching and peer–observation determined, to a large extent, the activities that they did and did not share collaboratively.

The effect of the collaborative and individual practices on the organizational and individual factors can be seen in the following examples. Patrick and Peter's collaboration resulted in the "fast–tracking" of their learning. This affected their assessments of their own future needs for collaboration. Consider, for example, how the frequency with which they would demonstrate different uses of equipment may change in the future. At some time they must approach a point where they have shared most of what they know about the various uses for specific apparatus. This is similar to how Christine decided that she had learned all she could, or needed to, from Cathy and therefore decided to no longer team–teach with her.

As Jenny and James have continued to learn about each other and how they teach, the focus of their meetings gradually changed. Having dealt with some of their differences they shifted to spending more time discussing specific aspects of lessons. In the future, as they become more comfortable with each other in the classroom, it might be expected that on the basis of their pre–existing friendship they will begin to have more "fun." If this transpires then it will mirror Anne and Alan's experience. The enjoyment that Anne and Alan derived from team–teaching encouraged them to continue this mode of teaching after the first year.

Phase 4: Regeneration

This nexus often occurred at the commencement of a new school year when there was a change in the school schedule or program offerings. The above reports of the individual teacher's understandings of their collaborative partnerships revealed that a regenerative nexus occurred when immediate learning or task needs were met. An example was the previously discussed change to Cathy and Christine's collaboration.

Also characteristic of this stage was the removal of the organizational factors that precipitated Anne and Alan's collaboration. No longer needing to work together, they discovered that they shared "similar intellectual interests" and enjoyed each others' company. Further, they realized that they had become better teachers as a result of teaching together. These unexpected outcomes informed the goals of their second year of team–teaching, that is, intellectual stimulation, increased professional satisfaction, and professional growth. These new goals changed the frequency, formality, and topics of their meetings. As Alan said, they began to explore the "why" questions, having already met the pressing need to answer the "what" questions in their first year.

Conceivably, the expected growth at Hindmarsh will mean that Helen and Harry will be joined by one or more new members of the Science department. Jenny and James' team–teaching could end as Jenny's part–time contract is renegotiated. Similarly, the administrators—including the English coordinator—at St Agnes may decide to reassign Anne and Alan to different English classes.

An effect of this regenerative nexus is that it strengthens the partnership. It represents a stage of growth and bonding, and a refocussing not only of the goals of the partnership, but a reaffirmation of the commitment to shared goals.

What Tasks Do These Teachers Attend to When They Collaborate?

The collaborative partnerships under investigation in this study attended to a number of tasks which fell into four main categories of purpose: Pedagogical, Professional Development, Micropolitical, and Individual Support and Relationship Maintenance. These categories are shown with listings of specific tasks in Table 5.1.

Pedagogical

These were tasks directly related to instruction and included team–teaching, joint–planning, resource sharing and development, assessment of students, and evaluation of lessons and courses. These activities were evident in each partnership, although more so in the two that involved team–teaching. This finding supports the conclusion reached by Cohen (1981), in her review of the literature, that team–teaching is a vehicle for greater instructional interaction among teachers. However, there was no evidence to support her other conclusion that teachers who team–taught enjoyed

TABLE 5.1.

Collaborative Tasks by Purpose

Pedagogical	Professional Development	Micropolitical	Individual Support and Relationship Maintenance
Team–teaching	Explaining	Strategizing:	Sharing the workload
Joint–planning	Demonstrating	– Advising	Providing Positive Feedback
Resource sharing	Peer–observation	– Planning	Having Fun
Resource development	Discussion	Dealing with differences:	
Advising	"Double–thinking"	– Avoidance	
Assessment		– Negotiating compromises	
Course Evaluation		Positioning	
		– For favours with others	
		– Opting to collaborate	

higher levels of collaboration with their principals. Of the tasks and activities discussed in this section, the most frequent and pervasive in each collaboration was resource sharing.

Professional Development

These tasks were undertaken primarily for the purpose of expanding the knowledge and skills of teachers. The tasks included were as follows: (a) explaining, for example sharing knowledge about a student, topic, strategy, (b) demonstrating, as was the case with the science teachers in the study, (c) peer–observation, this varied from the surreptitious observations of colleagues to spending extended periods of time in the classroom together while team–teaching, (d) discussion, as was engaged in by all participants and covered specific issues related to the content of the courses being taught, personal philosophies of teaching, and general topics of mutual interest pertaining to education, and (e) "double–thinking" denoting reflection for the purpose of sharing, thinking–out–loud, refinement of ideas, and incorporation of new ideas during discussion.

Micropolitical

The purpose of these tasks was to further the micropolitical goals of one or both of the partners. Micropolitics relates generally to the "conflictive interests that swirl around schools" (Townsend, 1990, p. 208) and specifically with power and how people use it to influence others and protect themselves (Blase, 1991). The position taken here is similar to that presented by Iannaccone (1975) and Ball (1987) when they observed that micropolitical activities are pervasive in educational organizations. Accordingly, the assumption is made that these teachers engage in such actions no more or less frequently than other teachers. It can be seen that some of these collaborations were highly effective in achieving their micropolitical goals. Indeed, the decision to collaborate was akin to the development of political lobby and support groups in larger social contexts. Such groups are often seen to exercise considerably more influence than that achieved by individuals acting independently.

Three categories of tasks were related to the achievement of micropolitical purposes of these collaborations and these are discussed below. While all of these tasks were evident in each of the partnerships, their extent and importance varied.

1. Strategizing. This involved the formulation of plans of action designed to influence the actions of peers, administrators, and others. Cathy and Christine often engaged in development of strategies to influence the actions of other teachers toward students with learning disabilities. They also discussed how to influence administrators to schedule the staff in such a way as to ensure that students were placed with "desirable" teachers. Peter and Patrick had, on occasion, discussed strategies for informing administrators of student misbehaviour in ways which precipitated responses that were in keeping with Peter and Patrick's estimation of justice. These behaviours were evident in all the partnerships.

2. Dealing with difference. Within each partnership, differences between the teachers emerged as a central factor. Recognizing the differences and assessing the extent to which the differences could be or needed to be mediated was evident in the interviews with each of the teachers. As such the micropolitical activities identified in this category pertain to what the teachers did in response to recognition of differences. These activities ranged from: (a) deliberate avoidance of activities or discussions that were likely to bring the differences into sharp relief, most evident in the non team–teaching partnerships; (b) clear statements of the differences in the hope that understanding would lead to acceptance, the clearest example being in the relations between Helen and Harry, and less so between Jenny and James; (c) negotiation of differences, clearly an important task in the team–teaching partnerships; which in turn was a pre–cursor to (d) compromise solutions wherein the differences were seen to be of value and were integrated into the approach, evident to a remarkable extent between Anne and Alan; or (e) mutual adjustment where acceptance of the differences was still tentative, but the intent to reach an integration was still held, as was occurring between Jenny and James.

3. Positioning. While not the most important reason for deciding to collaborate with a specific partner, in each of these partnerships at least one of the teachers admitted to the existence of some ulterior, personal motive. Often this motive was known to the colleague, and on one occasion, while not known, was held by both participants. Throughout the Chapter these motives were alluded to, and yet, to present them here in anything but a very general manner, would pose a threat to the ethics of this research. Suffice to say that some of the teachers saw their collaboration as resulting in their improved positioning with regard to dealings with other employees in the school.

Individual Support and Relationship Maintenance

These tasks had the effect of helping one or both partners in the exercise of their duties and responsibilities in the school. They had the added effect of maintaining the relationship. In one sense, all of the tasks undertaken in these partnerships resulted either directly or indirectly in support and assistance and effected the ongoing nature of the partnerships. Specifically, there were three activities which had support and assistance as their overriding function:

1. Sharing the workload. The division of labour evident in all of the partnerships and the specific instance of Alan mentioning that they helped each other with marking when one of them was particularly busy, are examples of this activity.

2. Providing positive feedback. All of the participants recounted stories of times when they had received praise from their colleagues. While not quoted directly earlier in this paper, Helen mentioned that she saw the letter that Harry had written in support of her application for permanent certification. She said she felt surprise and gratitude on reading his glowing assessment of her professionalism and abilities. This type of feedback was most overt in Anne and Alan's partnership and least overt in Peter and Patrick's collaboration.

3. Having "fun." Several of the participants stated that they engaged in discussion and team–teaching because of the enjoyment they derived from their interaction. This was mentioned most explicitly by Anne and Alan, and Jenny and James. Even Harry and Helen, whose difficulties were described earlier, said that they often enjoyed their interaction and the good humour of their banter.

Conclusion

The concluding comments relate to Specific Research Question 1: What are some of the forms and contents of collaboration among senior high school teachers? The five partnerships in this study varied in their formation, development, composition, purposes, processes, intensity, outcomes, and location in the school as an organization.

The form and content of the collaborative partnerships in this study were determined by a combination of individual and organizational factors. At various times these factors merged to form a nexus which resulted in the formation and later

reformations of the collaboration. The operation of the collaboration and other external factors brought about changes in the forms and content of the collaborations over time.

The degree to which these collaborations were self–initiated varied both within and between the partnerships. The nexus of organizational and individual factors affected the extent to which the individuals involved felt free to initiate or respond to the opportunities to enter collaborative partnerships.

The activities undertaken in these collaborations served four broad purposes: pedagogical, professional development, micropolitical, and individual support and relationship maintenance. Reciprocity of effort and mutuality of outcomes were salient features of all the partnerships. The existence of reciprocity and mutuality was not a feature of each task, but a quality of the partnership as a whole. The activity that was common to all these partnerships was the sharing of educational resources and materials. At this level the importance of dealing with individual differences was far less than when the partnerships involved team–teaching. Where such differences were successfully resolved and such resolutions resulted in the integration of different perspectives, the teachers reported high levels of personal satisfaction and professional growth. The way in which these differences were dealt with was clearly one of the most important determinants of the nature of the evolution of the partnership.

CHAPTER 6

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE COLLABORATION

This chapter addresses Specific Research Question 2: To what extent do selected factors concerning the teachers and their schools appear to influence the collaborations? Four subsidiary questions comprised the Specific Research Question 2: (a) To what extent do factors associated with the teachers appear to influence the collaborations? (b) To what extent do the teachers' assessments of their partners appear to influence the collaborations? (c) To what extent do factors associated with the teachers' instructional and other professional activities appear to influence the collaborations? and (d) To what extent do other factors associated with the school appear to influence the collaborations?

The presentation of findings in this chapter is organized around the treatment of each of the Specific Subsidiary Questions. Comments by participants that related to certain factors subsumed under Question 2(a) and 2(b) are presented in the same manner as was employed in Chapters 4 and 5, that is, they are presented in order for each participant. Elsewhere in this Chapter, that is, for the remaining factors subsumed under Question 2(a) and for all of the factors subsumed under Questions 2(c) and 2(d), findings are presented in an aggregated and general form. This method of presentation is used for two reasons. First, addressing questions pertaining to these factors required interpretation and comparison of the different collaborative partnerships. Second, several participants requested that some of their comments, if quoted in the study, be reported in a general manner to further protect anonymity.

Influence of Factors Associated With the Teacher

This section presents findings and discussion in relation to Subsidiary Research Question 2(a): "To what extent do factors associated with the teachers appear to influence the collaboration?"

The data associated herein are grouped under seven categories. These categories contain those comments and observations of the teachers that pertain to the following aspects: (a) pedagogical beliefs and practices, (b) general experiences of teaching and collaboration, (c) age, (d) gender, (e) subjective estimations of their

efficacy as teachers, (f) professional aspirations, and (g) other factors nominated by the teachers.

Pedagogical Beliefs and Practices

Peter

According to Peter, the purpose of teaching is to "aid understanding." To achieve this purpose, the teacher needed to be well organized and to carefully structure the lessons. He also said that it was important to make the content "interesting."

Patrick

Patrick commented that he enjoyed talking about teaching. He said that he "loved teaching," which he saw as a creative, challenging, and rewarding profession.

> *What I love most about teaching are the creative aspects. For example, dealing with students and finding new ways to approach certain content, finding success in certain new approaches. These things make a big difference and are very rewarding. I also enjoy the intellectual challenges. Sometimes I think I understand a concept and then a student asks a very simple question which I can't answer. I love that aspect, the challenge. The frustrating aspects are the administrative tasks. They are highly monotonous and often totally unnecessary.*

Comparing his own approach to teaching to that of his colleagues—Paul and Peter—Patrick explained, "I love to have labs that don't work. I want them to fail. I want the kids to do a lab that does not work because I think that happens more often to scientists." As well as being more realistic, Patrick reasoned that many discoveries had occurred and theories developed when scientists had reflected on why their experiments had failed. He felt that an unsuccessful lab presented the opportunity for students to think and develop a deeper understanding of the concepts being studied.

Patrick offered two suggestions when he was asked what changes he would make to improve the general practice of teaching. First, he would like to see smaller class sizes. Working with smaller groups, he argued, the teacher would have a more realistic chance of tailoring the program to address individual students' needs. Second, he said that teachers should be given more preparation time. Teachers at Parkview

typically had one or two preparation periods per week. At the time of the interview, Patrick was teaching an I.B. course and had a lighter face–to–face teaching load.

> *You have so many classes. You spend so much time marking, so much time doing administrative tasks, that the creative aspect of your work is minimized. You're in what I call a survival mode. You're just making sure that you have your daily routines covered and if you have something that works you're not going to try to improve it. So I find that it leads to stagnation. I find that when I have my prep, having one less class, not only do I have three extra hours a week, but I have one less class to prepare, one less class to administer and to mark. It frees up so much time and this is the time when I do most of my creative work.*

Jenny

For Jenny, teaching was a way of life. She understood her profession as a vocation that involved service to others, and, like Patrick and several others in the study, she expressed a love of teaching.

> *I think it's a way of life. I think it's a vocation, it's a lot more than a job. You take it home with you every day. It becomes part of your soul because it involves so much giving. I mean, there's a lot of interaction, a lot of giving, and a lot of reflection and I think that these kids' lives become a part of our own. I am never without those thoughts in the back of my mind about how could I do this better, or how could I help that person. I really see it as a service profession. Even though my job is only part–time, I still spend much of my 24 hours thinking about it. It's extremely pervasive. But I love it. I think that the people who enjoy it, and do it well, don't get bugged about it being so pervasive.*

As a classroom teacher Jenny saw herself as a facilitator "not an originator" of learning. She endeavoured to create a climate of cooperative learning in her classroom, whereby students engaged in a variety of activities designed to allow them to "find out things." Jenny also said that teachers had distinctive "styles." She defined "style" as a function of "who you are and how you relate to kids."

James

Like Jenny, James felt that teaching was a pervasive activity, a vocation which required a high level of "commitment to people." He defined this commitment to people as a spirit of genuine caring for students. James spoke at length about the pressures facing young people, and accordingly he felt that it was crucial that teachers provide support and guidance. As a result of his philosophy and approach he said that he always worked well with school counsellors, many of whom he described as his "best supporters in the school." Further, James felt very comfortable with the Catholic ethos of the school which emphasized the "education of the whole child." He was quick to declare that this ethos was not exclusive to Catholic schools and that he had many friends in the public system who shared his commitment to the "pastoral care" of students. In the following extract James provided examples of what "pastoral care" entailed:

> *It's a standing joke that my family says goodbye to me in September. My profession is very dear to me. I've always wanted to be a teacher. It's an honourable profession and I really feel that you need to commit yourself beyond the nine–to–five kind of commitment that most people have to their occupations. It's not that kind of a job. The academic component is only a portion—a large portion, granted—but to be really effective I believe that you have to make it part of your life. I've made it a part of my life, although I do try to separate it. I have students regularly phone me at home regarding personal problems. For example, a student's grandfather died just recently and the student found it very difficult to handle the death.*

James felt that caring for students also involved being honest with them about their abilities. He thought giving them unrealistic assessments of their work was unfair. James said that teachers had to be accountable for their work and that this accountability included being accountable to the students and their parents.

The needs for care, hard work, honesty, and accountability had become even more important to him since he had become a parent. He felt that being a parent had afforded him a new and valuable perspective on the profession of teaching and said that he often evaluated his own work, and his treatment of students, from the perspective of a parent.

Harry

Both the unpredictability of teaching and the relative autonomy of the classroom were important sources of satisfaction for Harry. He offered numerous pithy observations about the profession including, (a) "teaching is best when you're learning," (b) trying to teach to individual student needs was "like trying to teach 180 classes a day," (c) "sharing is part of why you teach," and (d) there is a fundamental excitement to learning.

When speaking about his colleagues it became evident that the two criteria Harry saw as being central to good teaching were a willingness to work hard, and commitment to teaching and students. Like James and Alan, Harry was critical of colleagues whom he judged to be "lazy" and uncaring. As he said,

> *I think that as a generation we're a little bit lazy. A teacher at one time worked 12–hour days and didn't think anything of it. That was the job. We are a profession. People will say "Why can't we end our staff meetings at 2:00 so we can go home early?" I say, "I can see my doctor at 6:00" and if my lawyer has an important document, she'll bring it out to me, and so forth. And here we're saying we don't want to stay one night a week till 5:30. It's frustrating.*

In the following excerpt, Harry talked specifically about being a science teacher. He also mentioned that he loved teaching, although unlike the teachers above who professed a similar sentiment, Harry's sentiments were conditional upon the existence of certain criteria:

> *I do like it a lot. First of all I like science because I like what science is. I like the kind of thinking that's required of a scientist—the doubt, the questions—and I think that's what school should be like at every level, whether it's kindergarten or university. When it's like that I just love it.*

Asked what he would change in order to improve teaching, Harry replied by expanding on these ideas.

> *I think science teaching should be about science. Too often it is about a body of facts. I think kids should come to school to learn. I don't think they should come to school to memorize and write exams. I think enthusiasm, interest in the subject matter, and excitement about learning should be the primary foci. It*

> *shouldn't be whether you are smart because there are people who get good marks who are dull and not interested in science, and there are people who get poor marks who love science and are fascinated and want to discover. It should be about discovery. The way it is in elementary school, when it's done properly, and you watch small children who are all scientists because they're all manipulating and learning. They just want to learn, they want to touch. Somehow I wish that everyday I teach it could be about discovery.*

Harry specified the type of teaching—science teaching—in response to the general question. This was typical of most teachers in this study. Teaching in the high school was understood in the specific context of a subject or department.

Helen

Like Harry, Helen believed that teaching and learning were inextricably linked. It involved hard work—three to four hours each evening—and was ultimately very rewarding. She described herself as a "very intense teacher," which she explained in terms of her high energy levels and high workload.

> *I love teaching. There's something very, very rewarding about teaching somebody something. Every once in a while you'll just see a look go across their face and they've actually understood something. It's a really nice feeling. I like it because I can have a lot of fun in my job, I can be as formal or informal as I want to be, and I never have to teach the same thing the same way twice.*

The main criticism that Helen had of teaching and the education system was that there was too much emphasis on exams. She said she preferred the idea of mastery learning and liked being able to individualize lessons for her students.

Anne

Anne expressed similar sentiments to those of the majority of the teachers in this study when she expressed a love of teaching, said that she thought about teaching "as being a good student," and that she was "constantly open to learning." The theme of the pervasiveness of teaching was expressed by Anne when she declared "it's in my blood." She proceeded to explain what she thought was important about teaching:

> *There is nothing like seeing people experience a world that opens up before them. It's just exhilarating. I also like to think that I could be a positive influence on someone's life. That's very meaningful for me, and dare I say that 30 years from now they may never remember the curriculum, but maybe they'll have remembered something—a warm experience, an insight, something that has been a "life kind" of learning experience. So I love what I do. I don't think I could do anything else.*

Anne said that she liked to engage students in cooperative learning activities. She also felt that there should be more cooperation between teachers in the delivery of curriculum.

Alan

Alan referred to teaching as a vocation. He said teaching was "more than a job" because it involved a commitment to "kid's learning." Like Harry and James, Alan emphasized that teaching was "hard work." He also felt that there was too much emphasis on exams and assessment in high schools and that this made it difficult "to do the right thing" for the students. Doing "the right thing" meant addressing individual learning needs and preferences, as well as spending class time on the important parts of the English course that were not examined. Alan and Anne shared a preference for group–work in their classes.

Alan and Cathy were the only teachers to cast their comments about education in the broader context of provincial curriculum and educational policy. Alan felt that there was too much emphasis on the vocational goals in schools and that too much of the curriculum was imposed.

Reflecting sentiments expressed by James, Alan felt that there was a legitimate place for accountability and openness with regards to teaching practices. As he explained,

> *Everything we do is open. First of all to the students that we're working with. Our responsibility is not to ourselves, it's to the kids and for that reason, I think everything has to be available. I have no qualms about everything I do being available to the students, their parents, and the administrators. I mean, that's my responsibility.*

Cathy

Cathy described teaching as an amazing profession which involved a wide variety of activities and which required the teacher to perform a number of different roles. She felt that teaching Special Education students was especially rewarding. Recognizing differences between students, Cathy felt that teachers must work together and share knowledge about instructional strategies that were effective with each child. Like James, she spoke about the pressures on students and how these pressures demanded that teachers do more than "teach content."

Cathy was critical of the extent to which education policy was being directed by economists. She felt the focus had moved from meeting student's needs to meeting budget targets and achieving "business plan" goals. Education, according to Cathy, "has become a business."

Christine

Christine echoed the sentiments of the other teachers in the study who spoke about their love of and commitment to teaching. She said that she and Cathy shared a similar philosophy of education and this contributed to the success of their collaboration. Their shared philosophy encompassed a commitment to meeting the needs of individual students.

Christine also spoke about the generally excellent staff relations at St. Clare. Belonging to a caring and competent team was an important source of satisfaction and support for her. She contrasted the excellent relations she currently enjoyed to those at her previous school and concluded that teaching was so much more enjoyable when teachers related well and supported each other.

General Experiences of Teaching and Collaboration

Patrick

Patrick's teaching experience was confined to Parkview. He was the only teacher in the study who had not taught in another school. As was described in the previous chapter, Patrick had worked cooperatively with Paul, one of the senior Physics teachers, and with several Biology teachers prior to his collaboration with Peter. He described his interactions with these other colleagues as "seeking assistance

from" rather than collaborating or sharing with them. These consultations were conducted "at arms' length" and they lacked mutuality.

Like the other teachers in this study, Patrick's collaboration with Peter did not preclude other professional cooperative relations. He continued to share, albeit at "a slower rate," with other colleagues both within the science department and in the wider community of Physics teachers. His involvement in local and provincial Physics teachers' groups afforded him the opportunity to exchange materials with, and learn from, a number of other teachers.

Patrick attributed his willingness to work with Peter to the positive experiences of being assisted by colleagues when he first joined the staff at Parkview. He believed that he was "open to more collaboration" with other Physics teachers because of how much he had gained from his collegial interactions.

Peter

At the school where Peter worked prior to Parkview, he developed a sharing partnership with a relatively inexperienced, female, Physics teacher. This partnership continued and at the time of the interviews Peter was meeting with her three or four times a month to share resources and offer advice. She worked in a smaller school and was unable to find a colleague in her school who was able to provide the assistance that she required. Peter described that working partnership as being more one–sided, and less frequent than his partnership with Patrick.

Peter said he had observed several of his colleagues in previous schools and had learned a great deal from watching how they taught. He regarded peer–observation as an excellent means of collaboration and implied that he would be like to continue this practice at Parkview.

Peter attributed his initial openness to collaboration with Patrick to his positive experiences of sharing with other colleagues. Both Peter and Patrick had learned that sharing with colleagues was an excellent means of improving their own teaching. Additionally, both realized that, in order to sustain collaboration, such sharing needed to occur frequently and to be reciprocated.

Jenny

Jenny had taught in two other high schools in the district prior to commencing work at St John. Two years previously she had been co–assigned with a female colleague to teach an English 10 class. The teachers taught the class on alternate days. She said that she enjoyed the experience and found that she and her colleague had a similar teaching style. Jenny reflected that while this similarity enabled them to maintain a consistent approach in the delivery of the program, she had come to the conclusion that there could be benefits to be gained from working with colleagues with different, but complementary, styles.

In the following extract she described how the teachers in the Languages department worked together to develop new programs and share resources:

> *The people I have worked most closely with in the last couple of years have been members of the Languages department. We have done a fair amount of department sharing, especially since we have had to introduce a new program of studies. It has forced us to put our heads together and come up with some new ideas for program delivery. We have talked about resources and that kind of thing.*

James

Prior to teaching at St John, James taught at a K–9 school. He had taught a wide variety of subjects to students in grades 5 to 12. James recounted several instances of collaborative work with colleagues. These collaborations were rich and rewarding experiences for James. Many of these work–focussed partnerships had developed into close friendships.

James found his work with Joseph—the teacher with whom he had team–taught in the previous year—to be especially rewarding. He explained that they had different approaches to teaching and would often discuss these differences, locating them within broader philosophical discussions about education. James enjoyed these discussions and found them intellectually stimulating. A significant level of trust and respect clearly existed between these teachers. This is evident in the following extract, where James described how they would challenge and encourage each other:

James: I really admired Joseph , but one of the things that really bothered me about him was how hard he was on himself. At times it translated into the classroom and he just drove himself bananas. Finally, in one of those frank discussions, when the time was right, I said to him, "one of the observations I have is that you really have to let go a little bit." I don't know if it was right or wrong, but it was certainly my opinion and that's how I approached it. At about the same time I had asked him: "Could you give me some feedback?"

Interviewer: And did he do that?

James: Yes. He was so positive. So I said, "Joseph , I really want an evaluation, which means I want both sides."

Harry

Harry's first teaching assignment was in an elementary school. He explained that during his first years of teaching he worked in isolation. "In elementary I was the only grade six teacher and the other teachers were all significantly older and they were not cooperative at all." Next, Harry moved to a junior high school and there his working relations improved. Three of the four teachers in the science department worked together as a team. Harry valued the sharing and cooperation that was a characteristic of that Science department. He also formed a working relationship with one of the district consultants:

When I started to teach science at the junior high level I really relied on consultants. At that time there was a very good consultant and he was a tremendous help to me. On the science staff we had some excellent teachers, like [name] who later became a consultant, and then after my second year, a new man came on staff . He is a terrific person and we did a lot together. Then there was another fellow, [name], who came on staff. He was a recipient of the Outstanding Teacher Award and he and I collaborated a lot together. So over the time we shared so much. It's quite funny actually because [name] is still at that school and he hands out his material to students and it's all mine! The students then come here and they bring it with them and they say this is what my teacher did with me and I say this is mine! I've got all his material too. So we did a lot of sharing back and forth and they were really good people. They never had an idea that they didn't want to share. They enjoyed doing it.

Later in the interview, Harry offered further insights into the amount of sharing that occurred among science teachers in the district:

> *All my tests came from two other high schools and in fact, I have tests from every high school in the city, plus I have tests from two other rural districts. It's quite amazing how much people will share. All you have to do is ask! A young fellow came out here from another school in the city and he was teaching science for the first time. He has taught for a number of years, but he did not have any science resources. He had been to another junior high to see a person who was supposedly a friend of his. The guy hadn't given him anything. I gave him a photocopy of my whole grade nine binder. It is a tradition in this district. When the Science department heads get together at our meetings somebody always says well I've got material on that, I'll bring it next time or I'll check something out for you. One of the schools had a tremendously high bill for getting rid of hazardous wastes and the teacher had no idea why and couldn't seem to figure it out. One of the other department heads said, "I'll call and find out why." It turned out that the Science department had paid to get rid of all the paint from the Art department.*

Helen

Helen worked for a short time at two different high schools prior to her appointment at Hindmarsh. When talking about her experiences of teaching and working with colleagues in high schools, Helen was eclectic in her approach to learning. For example, she was asked what role, if any, teachers should play in each others' work. She replied, "I think the learning part. It doesn't matter if we teach the same subject, I can walk by another person's classroom and I can see them doing something and think wow, what a great way to do that."

In the following extract, Helen described her experiences with colleagues and how these experiences influenced the way she worked with Harry. While an unusually lengthy quotation, it is presented in its entirety because it is indicative of the beliefs expressed by all the teachers in this study regarding the importance of sharing and the frustrations they encountered in having to work with colleagues who were not similarly inclined. As the youngest and least experienced teacher in this study, Helen was the most open in expressing the frustration voiced by all the participants.

Helen: In my first school there were probably 10 or 12 of us in the Science department and everyone got along. There was no tension, no animosity between anybody. You felt as comfortable talking to one person as to another.

Interviewer: Was there much sharing of resources and ideas?

Helen: Oh definitely. In that school I started a week into the semester and I just had people throwing materials at me saying "here, this will help you." A couple of us stayed after school one day to design a Chemistry lab and it was just total cooperation. Then I moved to John Williamson High School where there were 21 of us in the science department and people made value judgements. There was one woman in the department who, when she found out I was coming into the department, decided that she didn't like me because of my educational background and my age. Her comment when she was told that I was going to be on staff was "Well I hope she doesn't think she can come in here and run the place." Like I said before, there were a group of four of us who were young and were willing to try new things and we were just dismissed by the rest of the staff. It was totally ridiculous.

Interviewer: So do you think that the positive experiences in your first year of teaching influence your work now? Have you continued to cooperate because that is so much better than what it was like at John Williamson?

Helen: You know, even though Harry and I don't see eye to eye on a lot of things, we still both make an effort. When I was at John Williamson, when one of us would walk in the door, conversation would stop. For example, take something as simple as sharing an exam. We were each in charge of making up different exams for different units and everyone was supposed to contribute any exams they had. There was one case where I was making an exam and I went around and got all the exams and chose the best one and then another one of the teachers—the day that we were going to give the exam—said, "Oh I don't like that one, I'm going to give this one." It was one she had and she hadn't given it to any of us. She had kept it solely for her class. So there's all kinds of things like that going on and it seems such a shame to me because nobody benefits and the students are the big losers. It's just so cut–throat. I couldn't

believe it. Even when I was at my first school, I taught Bio 30 and Chem 20. They were going to give me Chem 30 but they wanted to make my load easier.

At John Williamson I was the new one in the department and because of my background I lucked out and I got some Bio 30s, but I was also the queen of Science 14. There was a gentleman who came in from a junior high school the year after I left. He had all Science 14 and Science 24. It's his third year there now and he's finally getting a Bio 30. These other teachers who have been there for a long time feel it's their right to have all the 30 level courses and none of them teach the 14s and none of them teach the 10s. It just seems so ridiculous to me.

Interviewer: I understand.

Helen: That's why I think it's really nice that Harry and I make compromises. Remember how I said he was originally supposed to teach Bio 30 this year? He said, "well with the group of kids we have, I think it's better if you do it because you've done it before."

Interview: That must have impressed you!

Helen: Yes. The only thing was, he said, "if I do this this year, then next year I want to teach a Bio 30 course," and I said, "sure, fair enough."

Interviewer: So you work it out?

Helen: Yes, but at a lot of schools, there isn't the opportunity to work it out.

Anne

At her previous schools, Anne did not experience close collaborative relations with her colleagues. She explained that collaboration "wasn't part of the culture" of those schools. She did mention that there was occasional sharing of resources, but this was inconsequential compared to the thoroughgoing collaboration with Alan.

When she first arrived at St. Agnes, Anne co–taught a Humanities course with a woman from the social science department. Unlike her current team–teaching partnerships with Alan and Len, this co–teaching rarely involved the two teachers being in the classroom together. They divided the Humanities course into its constituent

English and Social Science components and taught it in discreet blocks. She said that she was "very leery" about team–teaching as a result of that experience and said that should would not team–teach again with a woman because "it's the same dynamic." She shared her ideas about the effect of gender on collaboration and these are presented later in this chapter. Her experiences of team–teaching with another woman were different from those described by Jenny, who quite enjoyed the experience, but the two teachers had come to realize that there were definite benefits to working with a male colleague.

Anne explained that, apart from Alan, she also worked closely with another man with whom she was now team–teaching Humanities. While this was a more satisfactory partnership than her first collaboration in the Humanities, it was not as rewarding or intensive as was her collaboration with Alan. She attributed the difference in the nature of the partnerships to philosophical compatibility. This compatibility seems to have been related to the subject department affiliations: Anne and Alan taught in the English department, whereas Len taught in the Social Science department.

Alan

Alan taught in a junior high school for 15 years. From there he moved to a consultancy position in the district which he held for several years before returning to the classroom. At the time of this study he was in his third year at St. Agnes. During the first 15 years of his teaching, Alan worked closely with another teacher. Their professional relationship continued and they still discussed educational issues. Alan described this long–term partnership and the effect that it has had on his work with colleagues at St. Agnes in this manner:

> *Alan: I worked very closely with a friend in my junior high years. I coached at that school as well. I coached the girls' basketball, he coached the girls' volleyball, and we both taught English. I would attend his games and practices because I would be scouting for my girls, and then after his season finished he'd come and watch mine. We would end up spending a lot of time—after school, after practice, 6:30, 7:00, 8:00—just sitting and talking about pedagogical issues and why we were doing the kinds of things we were doing in the class. Even though he and I didn't teach necessarily in the same way, there were some very strong similarities to the point where even now, we*

haven't been in the same school since about 1988, we still talk quite regularly on the phone about things that we're doing in class and we pick up suggestions and ideas from one another. It's a consistency check in terms of making sure that we're on track as to why we're doing what we're doing.

Interviewer: The positive experience you just described, do you think it has had any bearing on your willingness to work collaboratively with other teachers?

Alan: Oh, absolutely. I've come to appreciate how much I can learn from the other people around me and how important it is to be able to verbalize my own thoughts about why I'm doing what I'm doing. It doesn't just mean why I'm reading this story or that story. It means why I'm reading stories at all. So very definitely it does have an effect.

At St. Agnes, Alan had team–taught Humanities with two teachers, of different gender, and English with Anne. Like Anne, he found that the Humanities team–teaching was less rewarding, an outcome he also attributed to different philosophies and subject department affiliations.

Cathy

As one of the original staff members at St. Clare, Cathy was hired as an English and Special Education teacher. Cathy brought considerable experience of teaching in elementary and high schools to her new position. The collaborative experiences she described were all related to her involvement in the Special Education program. These collaborations involved working with other Special Education teachers both in her school and other schools in the district. They also extended to networks she had established with employers and higher education institutions. The consistent theme of these relations was that they all involved "conferencing about kids."

Cathy clearly understood her collaborative relations as having evolved in response to the needs of her students. In the following extract she described some of her collaborative experiences and how they had influenced her collaboration with Christine:

Cathy: Because I've come through several years of teaching Special Education, I have worked quite closely with a number of individuals. At the junior high level when we did the IOP—the Integrated Occupation Program—it was a

necessity that you sit down and work closely with other individuals because the students' individual needs were such that you really had to share.

Interviewer: Do you think that having had experience in the past working with people on that program has influenced the way that you and Christine work together?

Cathy: I think so. You learn that your classroom has to be a far more open environment and your teaching has to be open to suggestions. What works with one child is not going to work with the other child and you really have to be open to suggestions.

Cathy's collaboration with Christine, to the extent that it displayed a "deprivatisation of practice" and an "openness to scrutiny," corresponded to the definition of collaboration employed in this study. While the other relations that Cathy described, namely those with other Special Education teachers, prospective employers, and further education providers, did not exhibit the same degree of openness to the inspection of pedagogical practice, and accordingly, despite their mutuality, are not considered collaborative, relations with parents conform quite closely to the definition of collaboration adopted in this study.

Cathy described the frequency and intensity, and implied the openness, of relations between her and Christine and their students' parents in this manner:

When we started the program we realized that we had to maintain constant feedback with the parents. Christine and I call our parents on a very regular basis—either just to let them know if there's a problem or, especially when we do the updates, to let them know how well they're doing. It's really important for them to get positive feedback, not just "your son's been skipping classes," or "your daughter's been missing her assignments," but, "your son or daughter has succeeded really well, they're doing this well, they're doing that well." So we spend a lot of time phoning our parents and working with them in that way.

The transcript of the conference between Cathy and Christine provided further evidence of the nature of the conversations they had with parents. In phone conversations and interviews with parents, Cathy and Christine both explained and justified strategies they

were using to help the student and in turn, the parents had clearly explained the approach they had taken with the student, offered advice to Cathy and Christine, and asked for advice about practices at home.

Christine

Prior to St. Clare, Christine had not experienced close, collaborative, work relations. She described four other teachers with whom she had worked at St. Clare. The first was with another woman, and she explained that relationship in this manner: "When I first started teaching at this school, I did gravitate to one of the teachers. When I felt more comfortable with everyone on staff, I didn't like that close relationship anymore." She then spoke of another teacher, a man who taught in the Special Education program. While both Cathy and Christine respected him, they did not "conference with him about the kids." He elected to maintain his close relations with teachers in the Math department and did not identify with the Special Education program. A third teacher that Christine mentioned, also a male, had provided assistance with computers. He was described as being extremely helpful and had helped Christine learn how to incorporate the use of computers in her Business Studies class. Business Studies was subsumed in the larger Career and Technology Department at the school and she found him to be one of the most helpful colleagues in that department.

Christine spoke about staff relations like these in a general manner when she said:

> *I get support from other teachers for different things. We may not work together specifically, but we do provide each other with personal support. Sort of affirmation, you're O.K. as a person. I get that from other teachers. But it's nothing to do with our profession or what we did in the classroom or with any of the students. It's just friendships I guess and I have a lot of friendships on staff. Not that I do anything with them outside of school.*

She proceeded to explain that she had a very good friend who taught English. After the first year of team–teaching with Cathy, Christine realized that she had more in common with this friend, and that for the past two years she had worked with her on curriculum and instruction issues, while continuing to collaborate with Cathy, diagnosing student's learning difficulties, contacting parents, and advocating for the

needs of the Special Education program with other teachers and the school administrators. In this sense Christine was like both Anne and Alan who had close collaborative relations with two teachers.

Age of the Teachers

Participants were not asked a question regarding the effect of age on their collaboration. However, several did raise age as an issue when describing their partnerships. The findings presented below are based on these three sources, (a) unsolicited comments made by the participants, (b) inferences made by the researcher concerning the possible relation between the participants' stated ages and observed differences among the collaborative partnerships, and (c) comments by the participants in attendance at the focus–group discussion.

Age Variation Within Partnerships

The age range of each of the participants was presented in Table 4.2. Participants in three of the five partnerships were within five years of age. Partnerships within the five–year age range were those between Peter and Patrick, Jenny and James, and Anne and Alan. Cathy and Christine, had an age range of between 5 and 10 years. The remaining partnership, that between Harry and Helen, had an age range in excess of 15 years.

Relation Between age of Participants and the Nature of the Collaborations

The only participants to mention age as a factor in their collaboration were Peter, Patrick, Helen, and Harry. Coincidentally, these teachers were in the partnerships that exhibited the extremes in age range. Both Peter and Patrick said that their closeness in age was a factor that explained why they collaborated. This is understandable in their case given that the other two Physics teachers at Parkview were at least 15 years older. Helen said that the difference in age between her and Harry was "a part of why" they had difficulties in their partnership.

When the issue of age was raised at the focus–group meeting, each of the teachers said that age was an important factor. They described its effects in relation to stages in a teacher's career, and explained that as teachers gain in experience they are more likely to feel comfortable and confident enough to share with a colleague.

The needs of the three youngest teachers in this study were somewhat different to those of the other teachers. Peter and Patrick were keen to "fast track" their learning, while Helen looked to Harry for advice regarding classroom management issues and specific labs. The collaborations that involved these people remained entirely within the professional domain, and each said that their partnership was not a friendship in the general sense of the word. In contrast, the three other partnerships, which involved older, more experienced teachers who were close in age, were broader in their professional scope, more intense and more frequent in the interactions, and were based on, and contributed to the further development of, personal friendships.

Finally, comments made by the teachers that have been quoted earlier regarding the ages of other members of their departments, especially those made by Harry, Helen, and Patrick about their respective early experiences of teaching, suggest that relationships exist between a teacher's age, the age of their colleagues, and the nature and focus of collaborative partnerships. Age–related factors alone obviously did not account for all the differences between the collaborative partnerships. Other issues, such as gender and previous experiences of teaching, combine to effect the collaborations. As Harry said, when questioned about the effect of the difference between his and Helen's age, "she has taught in the same number of schools as I have."

Gender of the Teachers

The gender composition of the each of the collaborative partnerships is presented in Table 4.2. In summary, three of the five partnerships involved a male and a female teacher, one involved two male teachers, and one involved two female teachers.

While each participant had specific opinions about the effect of gender on collaboration, the data allow very few generalizations. Four saw it as critical, but for different reasons; three saw it as one of several factors that influenced collaboration; and the remaining three saw it as relatively unimportant when compared to other factors such as openness to new ideas and the extent to which the two teachers shared similar philosophical orientations.

Both Anne and Alan saw gender as an important issue. Alan said he preferred to work with women, even though the teacher with whom he had enjoyed the closest

and most enduring professional relation was a man. He said that working with other men tended to be "fairly cut and dried," whereas he found that his collaborative relations with women teachers were more thoroughgoing and enjoyable. He said that he felt more comfortable talking with female colleagues about serious issues and found that he learned more from women colleagues than men because of their different perspectives. Anne echoed these sentiments, casting her comments within the Jungian notions of complementarity of the sexes. She also had more positive experiences of working with men than women.

Two women, both of whom had worked collaboratively with men and women, said that they preferred to work with women. In contrast, no men said that they preferred to work with men. One of these women saw gender as being an important factor in the micropolitics of her school and said that the men on the staff tended to relate more easily with the all male administrative team. For her, it was important to maintain good working relations with male colleagues, but her closest colleagues had always been women.

The remaining participants said the gender of their colleague was not an issue and further, one of the men said that he hoped it was not perceived by his partner to be an issue. During the focus group discussion, the issue of gender caused considerable interest. The teachers concluded that, all else being equal, mixed gender partnerships were more enjoyable and professional satisfying, especially among more experienced teachers, than were same gender partnerships. Further, they realized that their earliest collegial relations had been with teachers of the same gender who were close in age.

Comparison between each of the partnerships, and analysis of the conference transcripts revealed that the three mixed gender partnerships tended to be more broadly focussed and complex than were the two same–gender partnerships. This finding was supported by each of the participants in the focus–group discussion. The mixed gender partnerships included frequent discussions about issues that were only peripherally related to the classroom. Examples included Anne and Alan's philosophical and pedagogical discussions, and Helen and Harry's discussions about general science topics. Several teachers likened the complexity of the partnerships to that of a marriage. They used this metaphor to explain how it was important to respect and value differences and to maintain open communication. Both men and women in the mixed gender partnerships made comments to the effect they liked their colleague and

held that person in high professional regard. They considered that both of these factors were important in their decisions to collaborate.

Teaching Efficacy

The teachers were asked to estimate the extent to which they conformed to their own criteria of being a good teacher. Two of the younger teachers gave themselves a grade of between 6 and 8 out of 10, whereas the remainder rated themselves as being either an 8 or a 9. In other words, according to their own estimations of good teaching, these teachers thought that they were moderately to highly effective. The typical teacher in this study had these characteristics: (a) described himself or herself as a professional, who was "strong" in the classroom; (b) enjoyed good relations with students; (c) was well regarded by respected colleagues; and (d) had clear goals for further improvement. The two younger teachers who reported comparatively lower estimations of efficacy were clear about the aspects of their teaching that they wanted to improve and were confident of making reasonably quick progress in these areas.

When this finding was reported to the focus group, the participants commented that it made sense because teachers who felt confident about their own teaching were less likely to feel threatened by working clo ely with a colleague. Though not stated by any of the participants, the support and positive feedback that these teachers received from their partners seemed to contribute to their high sense of efficacy. In this manner, the relation between efficacy and collaboration appeared to be bidirectional.

Aspirations

All of the participants said that they aspired to continue improving their instructional skills, and most mentioned that they would like to teach particular courses. Other aspirations included the desire to attain an administrative position, the intent to teach entirely within the teacher's preferred subject area, and the wish to see a particular program or the whole school grow and be successful. Responses of the participants to the question regarding their professional aspirations are presented in Table 6.1.

TABLE 6.1.

Participants' Stated Professional Aspirations

Patrick	• Eventually move into administration • Continue to develop skills and knowledge as a Physics teacher • Continue to teach in the I.B. Program
Peter	• Happy with what he is doing now • Would like to be more involved in the I.B. Program • "Fast–track" learning as a Physics teacher
Jenny	• Desire to see students succeed and have a positive attitude • Maintain viable part–time contract, i.e. 0.5 F.T.E. • Be regarded as a talented teacher
James	• Be a good teacher • Meet students pastoral and academic needs
Harry	• Help young teachers • Teach I.B. classes in Social Science • See Hindmarsh grow and be successful
Helen	• Continue to improve as a teacher • Teach 30 level Biology and Chemistry • Teach the I.B. Biology and Chemistry Courses • Move into an administrative position • Graduate study
Anne	• Continue to team–teach with Alan • Continue to engage in graduate study • Possibly teach at university
Alan	• Continue to work collaboratively with Anne • Encourage more team–teaching at St. Agnes • Contribute to the success of the Humanities Program
Cathy	• Promote the cause of Special Education • Influence colleagues to be more attuned to Special Ed. students • Continue to meet the individual learning needs of students
Christine	• Teach entirely in the Special Education program • Continue to enjoy good relations with colleagues

Other Factors

During the interviews several teachers spoke about other matters pertaining to themselves that they believed influenced their collaborative activities. These factors are presented below.

Preference for Teamwork

Several of the teachers mentioned that they preferred to work as members of a team. For these teachers, positive staff relations and the support they received from colleagues were important sources of professional satisfaction. Patrick's statement, "I work quite well with people," and Christine's, "I work much better as a team member—it's part of my personality," were typical of comments made by most teachers in this study.

Commitment to Ongoing Learning

Although all of the participants talked about the importance of learning in their lives, Harry, Patrick, James, Anne, and Alan were the most explicit about the importance of this aspect of their professional growth. Patrick felt that learning was important and that without it one would stagnate. Harry, a voracious reader, was enthusiastic about learning and discovery, and he and Helen shared this enthusiasm. Both Anne and Alan spoke at length about how much they had learned from each other, and as was shown in Chapter 5, learning was the central focus of their second year of collaboration.

Desire to Work With Student Teachers

Patrick, Harry, James, and Alan all said that they enjoyed supervising student teachers. As well as deriving satisfaction from assisting a neophyte, these teachers said that they all learned from observing beginning teachers, and found that giving advice often caused them to think more deeply about their own classroom practices.

Collaboration to Meet Student Needs

Cathy, Helen, and James felt that it was increasingly important for teachers to collaborate with each other, and according to Cathy and James, with parents, in order to meet students' needs. Cathy's comments about Special Education and "conferencing about kids" have been mentioned several times. Helen and James shared Cathy's

sentiments. Helen emphasized that responsibility for student learning ought to be seen as being shared between the student, the student's parents, and the teachers who teach that child. James was adamant that teachers had to work together with families to guide, counsel, and teach young adults in high schools. The decision to work collaboratively was not just a personal preference for these teachers, it was required if student needs were to be met.

Teachers' Perceptions of Collaborative Partners

The findings presented here address the Specific Research Question 2(b): "To what extent do the teachers' assessments of their partners appear to influence the collaborations?" The teachers were asked to identify characteristics of their partner that encouraged them to want to work with that person. As the responses to this question were probed during the interviews, each of the teachers made comments regarding the characteristics of an ideal teaching partner. Accordingly, the responses to what then became two separate interview questions are presented for each of the participants.

Patrick

Assessments of Peter

Patrick attributed his willingness to work with Peter to the following aspects: (a) their closeness in age, (b) the existence of similar professional and recreational interests, (c) his "openness to new ideas," (d) his "willingness to share," and (e) his need for resources. Patrick explained that "openness" did not just mean that ideas were invited and accepted, but that Peter would actually employ these ideas in his own teaching.

Characteristics of an Ideal Teaching Partner

Patrick felt that an ideal collaborative partner would have the following characteristics: (a) a predisposition to work–focussed, as opposed to socially focussed interactions, (b) common interests and purposes, (c) an interest in people, (d) complementary teaching styles, and (e) slight dissatisfaction with, or dissonance caused by, current practices. This last observation was offered in the context of a discussion about other colleagues in the Physics Department. Patrick said that collaboration was less frequent and mutual with these people because they were "comfortable" with what they were doing and that they "didn't need" to share.

Peter

Assessments of Patrick

Peter felt that while he and Patrick shared a number of characteristics, there were some in which they differed. Like Patrick, Peter identified their similar ages, common interests, and their willingness to share as being fundamental to the success of their collaboration. Some of the differences that he mentioned related to their different teaching styles, but, like Patrick, he felt that these different styles were complementary. Patrick also felt that Peter was "more of a perfectionist" than he was.

Characteristics of an Ideal Teaching Partner

In addition to each of the factors that Peter mentioned in relation to Patrick, Peter implied that he would like to work with a teacher who shared his desire to observe colleagues while they were teaching. He clearly felt comfortable with Peter, and said that he hoped that eventually they would be able to observe each other in the classroom. The purpose of this peer–observation would be to learn from, rather than provide feedback to, his partner.

Jenny

Assessments of James

Jenny said she liked James, they had been friends for several years, but she acknowledged that they had some difficulties because of their "different teaching styles." She was confident that these difficulties would be overcome and that their collaboration would be successful: "Our partnership will be successful because we share a common desire for our kids." She also observed that they were "willing to listen to each other and try new things."

Characteristics of an Ideal Teaching Partner

Being friends and belonging to the same department were the first requirements for collaboration. Once these criteria were met, Jenny rated the existence of similar philosophical orientations, values, and goals related to teaching, as being the most important prerequisites for successful collaboration between high school teachers. Also mentioned, although not as critical, were the issues relating to gender and teaching style. While she did see benefits in working with a male teacher, her preference had

been to work with another woman. Differences in teaching style were not an impediment to successful collaboration provided that these differences were complementary or reconcilable.

James

Assessments of Jenny

James saw Jenny as being "adept," and said that they shared similar goals and values with regards to teaching. He said that they were both open about their strengths and weaknesses and were equally committed to working through their differences. While he noted that Jenny was "not as structured" in her teaching, he did not see this as an obstacle to their successful collaboration. Jenny's part–time status caused James minor concern as it meant that she was not available for meetings in the afternoon.

Characteristics of an Ideal Teaching Partner

James identified the following as characteristics of an ideal collaborative partner: (a) a similar commitment to teaching, the students, and the partnership; (b) the existence of a "Chemistry " between the two teachers—expressed variously as the propensity for enjoyment, fun, and the like; (c) a willingness to spend time working together; (d) a friendship based on mutual, professional respect and resulting in a high level of comfort; and (e) a person who was comfortable debating the merits of different instructional approaches and who was flexible enough to modify practice on the basis of such debates and activities.

Harry

Assessments of Helen

Harry mentioned on several occasions that he had "a great amount of respect" for Helen. He had come to the conclusion that Helen was committed to being a good teacher and to the success of the school. With respect to their occasional difficulties, he attributed their ability to resolve their differences to the above–mentioned qualities which they shared. In a self–deprecating manner, he said that she was better qualified to teach Biology and Chemistry—"she actually has a background"— and that she was "real, real smart." Harry also noted that their philosophical orientations and understandings of what constituted desirable teaching practices also differed. These

differences tended to limit the focus of their collaboration. In other words, certain discussions and sharing were excluded from their interactions, but their differences did not preclude other forms of sharing and cooperation.

Characteristics of an Ideal Teaching Partner

In order to collaborate effectively with another teacher, Harry concluded that he would have to teach the same subjects and "think the same" as his partner. Talking about the importance of discussing philosophical issues, Harry said:

> *I think we spend too much time when we get together as teachers, talking about the trivial things and not talking about two important things, the specific needs of our students and why we teach. We do at conferences and that's why we always come back from conferences feeling renewed because we sit and we discuss why we are teachers. In fact sometimes it's almost as valuable as the actual content of the conferences.*

Helen

Assessments of Harry

Helen said that she respected the depth of Harry's knowledge and his reading habits. She appreciated Harry's patronage, particularly when he wrote a glowing reference in support of her application for permanent teacher certification, and said she admired the way that Harry had conceded on the issue of who would teach the Biology 30 class that they both wanted to teach. Like Harry, she was able to identify numerous areas in which they differed, and said, "about the only thing we have in common is our love of science and our wanting to talk about it all the time."

Characteristics of an Ideal Teaching Partner

Helen's ideal teaching partner: (a) would have the "right attitude to new ideas," (b) be compatible in terms of "what we see as being important," (c) would like "getting involved" and "working together," and (d) would "get excited" about teaching, ideas, and working together.

Anne

Assessments of Alan

While Anne said that she and Alan had some differences in their teaching styles, these were accepted and respected because of the congruence of their philosophical approaches to education. She said that Alan was respected and highly regarded by colleagues because of his commitment and ability. Their intellectual compatibility was such that Anne said, "I can't think of a thing where we differ philosophically." Anne also said that she learned a lot from Alan regarding the importance of clearly explicating assessment methods and learning goals.

Characteristics of an Ideal Teaching Partner

Having a similar philosophy of education was the characteristic of a teaching partner that Anne thought was essential for effective collaboration and team–teaching. She emphasised the importance of philosophical congruence when she said, "I wouldn't work with them otherwise." Anne also mentioned that she would prefer to work with someone who had the following characteristics: (a) was flexible in both their thinking and teaching, (b) was innovative in the classroom, and (c) was prepared to question the "taken for granted" aspects of teaching.

Alan

Assessments of Anne

Alan agreed that he and Anne were similar in their philosophical orientation, but thought that they differed in their "thinking." By this he meant that they often saw different ways in which they could approach issues in the classroom, while still agreeing on what they were trying to achieve. Alan recognised the differences between Anne's teaching style and his own, which he described as being "more aloof," and said that he had modified his own style as a result of seeing the benefits of Anne's approach.

Characteristics of an Ideal Teaching Partner

Alan emphasised the importance of sharing the same "focus" and "direction." Like many other participants, Alan felt that the "ideal" colleague would be flexible and willing to commit time to the collaborative work. Finally, he was the only teacher who

mentioned that he thought that teachers who were willing to "take on student teachers" made good colleagues because they were open about their own practice, and prepared to share their time and knowledge with others.

Cathy

Assessments of Christine

Cathy felt that Christine was "very easy to get along with." The differences in teaching style—"I'm a stronger disciplinarian, but kids need the range in styles"—that Cathy noted were not an obstacle to their collaboration because Christine's concern and "empathy for the individual student" allowed Cathy to recognize that their styles were complementary. Cathy particularly appreciated the specific nature of the feedback on her teaching that she received from Christine and found this feedback more helpful than that she had received from administrators previously.

Characteristics of an Ideal Teaching Partner

The two characteristics of an ideal teaching partner that Christine mentioned as being essential were a compatible philosophical orientation and an "easy–going," flexible manner. For Cathy, her ideal teaching partner would have a philosophy that highlighted the importance of focussing on the students as individuals. Other factors, such as gender, age, and previous teaching experiences, were unimportant in comparison with the person's philosophy and approach.

Christine

Assessments of Cathy

Christine also noted, and agreed on the nature of, the differences between her and Cathy's teaching style. Christine admired Cathy's ability to "get things done" in an efficient and business–like manner, and said that Cathy had served as a good role–model. Christine felt that they worked well together because of their shared concern for the students and their commitments to professional development and improving the Special Education program.

> *We have a similar philosophy which centres around the students. We want the students to achieve. We have the same kind of belief in the students and we feel that we're there to support them. We also do a lot together in the area of our*

professional development. We attend conferences and workshops together. We can take these things back to school and we discuss them and how we're going to implement them in our program.

Characteristics of an Ideal Teaching Partner

Like all the teachers in the study, Christine said that one of the most important prerequisites for a successful collaborative partnership was the existence of similar goals and philosophies. She also mentioned the importance of having a professional attitude and approach to teaching. She explained this professional approach as entailing a serious attitude to work and predisposition to avoiding negative talk about colleagues.

Influence of Factors Associated With the Teachers' Professional Responsibilities

This section addresses the Specific Research Question 2(c): "To what extent do factors associated with the teachers' instructional and other professional activities appear to influence the collaborations?" The teachers were asked to describe their teaching and other responsibilities but they were not asked to estimate the effect that these responsibilities had on the nature of their collaboration. Rather, the method adopted in addressing this question was to make judgements on the basis of their teaching responsibilities and a comparison among each of the partnerships to identify what similarities and differences could be attributed to the different responsibilities of the participants. These observations were recorded and presented to the participants and are included as Appendix I. Each of the findings presented below was assented to by the participants to whom the findings applied and who were present at the focus–group discussion.

Subjects Taught by Participants

The subjects that each of the participants were teaching at the time of the study are presented in Table 4.2. In summary, teachers in this study taught in one or more of the following subject areas: English, Social Science, Humanities, Science, Physical Education, Religion, Special Education, and Business Studies. In four of the five partnerships, the teachers involved taught the same subject as their colleague. In the remaining collaboration, while the two teachers—Jenny and James—team–taught

Humanities, they were responsible for different components, Jenny the English and James the Social Science sections, of that course.

Other Professional Responsibilities

The teachers' other professional responsibilities, commonly referred to by the teachers as extra–curricula activities, are also listed in Table 4.3. The following observations are offered on the basis of the data presented in the Table:

1. All the teachers nominated at least one extra–curricular responsibility.

2. None of the teachers held a formal administrative position in their school, although Peter and Patrick did hold executive positions in their Physics teachers' associations.

3. The most commonly mentioned extra–curricular activity was committee work, that is, activities that involved working with colleagues.

Relation Between Professional Responsibilities and Collaboration

The data allow three general observations regarding the relation between professional responsibilities and collaboration. First, the participants tended to be either new to teaching the subject, the grade level, or the school. Second, the closest collaborative relations occurred between people in the same subject department, and third, different subject teaching assignments were partially associated with different collaborative processes.

New to Subject, Grade Level, or School

During the school year in which these data were collected, Peter was in his first year at Parkview, so he and Patrick were in the first year of working together as colleagues in the same building. Patrick had been at the school for seven years. Jenny was in her first year of teaching the Humanities course, while James was in his second. The two teachers were in their first year of collaborating together. Helen was in her second year, and Harry in his third year at Hindmarsh. During their time at the school, both teachers were teaching grade levels that they had not taught before. Anne and Alan were in their second year of collaboration and were in their fourth and third years respectively at the school. Cathy and Christine were in the third year of their collaboration—this represented the third year that Cathy had taught Special Education

classes—and further, this represented the longest standing collaboration of any in the study. Moreover, three of the five collaborative partnerships in this study were formed between teachers who had been at the school together for a similar amount of time. The actual difference between the time that each of the teachers in these three partnerships had been at the same school was one year.

Within Department Collaborations

The closest collaborative relations occurred between teachers who taught the same subjects and who were obviously therefore assigned to the same subject department. It was not so much that the participants reported difficulties collaborating with teachers of other subjects, it was that they felt that they had nothing to gain by close collaboration with them. Apparent exceptions to this were expressed by Helen, when she said she learned from teachers of other subjects when she occasionally saw them teach, Harry, when during his second interview, he said that it was important for teachers to talk about students and their learning needs, and both Cathy and Christine, when they spoke about discussions with other teachers regarding Special Education students. Because such interactions do not conform to the definition of collaboration used in this study, the warrants for the assertion that self–initiated high school teacher collaboration will tend to occur between teachers who teach the same subject, remain unchallenged.

Different Subjects Related to Different Collaborative Processes

The Science teachers' collaborations involved the sharing of programs and resources and the demonstration of various labs. Collaborations between English and Humanities teachers, which also happened to be those collaborations that involved team–teaching, included negotiation and resolution of differences, explication and discussion of philosophical orientations, and the sharing of ideas. Sharing of actual materials was less common in these collaborations. The collaboration that occurred between the two Special Education teachers involved conferences about the students. Further, this collaboration involved discussion and planning about how to facilitate the effective involvement of parents, other teachers, and employers for the purpose of meeting students' needs. The participants at the focus–group discussion felt that this finding was self–evident and explained that a teacher's needs for assistance, resources, and the like, were largely determined by the subject that the teacher was teaching.

Collaboration, which was invariably with a colleague who was teaching the same subject, provided the means by which many of these needs could be addressed. As the needs of teachers in different subjects varied, so too did their collaborations.

Influence of Factors Associated with the School

This section presents the findings, in thematic form, in relation to Specific Research Question 2(d): "To what extent do other factors associated with the school appear to influence the collaborations?" Five categories are employed to organize the presentation of these findings. These categories were generated through an analysis of the teachers' responses to the interview questions that were developed to address the Specific Research Question: (a) organization, procedures, and culture, (b) the actions of administrators, (c) the actions of other teachers, (d) the physical design of the school and the nature of the school's resources, and (e) other factors related to the school that were nominated by the teachers.

Organization, Procedures, and Culture

When talking about their collaborative partners the teachers often mentioned the influence of factors related to the way their school was organised, the administrative procedures that were employed, and general observations about the culture of their school. The comments of the teachers related to these factors are presented under five categories: (a) the management of time in high schools, (b) introduction of new programs, (c) culture, (d) school size, and (e) the practice of high school teaching.

The Management of Time in High Schools

The teachers felt that time, and how it was scheduled, was an organizational factor that had a major bearing on their collaborations. Several teachers said that they were not scheduled for preparation lessons at the same time as their teaching partner and this meant that they had to meet at lunch, after school, or briefly between classes. As has been noted, two of the teachers had requested that their preparation time be scheduled to coincide so that they would have the opportunity to do more collaborative work.

The amount of preparation time that these teachers received was a major source of concern. Patrick echoed the sentiments of several of the participants when he said that the lack of preparation time encouraged teachers to be less creative and to work in

isolation. As Alan noted, effective collaboration required "stupid amounts of time," particularly in its early stages, and typically, the teachers in this study regularly worked together for several hours after school.

Introduction of New Programs

One of the organizational factors that had a powerful effect on encouraging teacher collaboration was the introduction of new programs. Examples of the impact of new programs were (a) the influence on Harry and Helen's collaboration of the need to prepare for the introduction of I.B. programs, (b) the fillip for collaboration, and specifically team–teaching, provided by the relatively new provincial Humanities curriculum, (c) one of Jenny's previous collaborations had been precipitated by the introduction of a new languages program, and (d) Cathy and Christine began their collaboration largely as the result of the introduction of the Special Education program at their school.

Culture

The stories that several of the participants told about the effect of the school and department culture on collaborative activities have already been presented. To recapitulate, teachers spoke about previous schools and how the prevailing attitudes of dominant staff members within departments made it difficult for young teachers to share and learn from more experienced colleagues. Others attributed the acceptance by other staff of their collaborative activities to the supportive staff relations that existed in their schools. Another participant attributed his reluctance to engage in peer–observation to the fact that he perceived this activity to be outside the culturally permissable activities—the norms—in his department. In the four larger schools in this study, the department culture, as opposed to the whole–school culture, was reported by the participants as having a strong bearing on their collaborations.

School Size

Helen and Harry, the participants from the smallest school in the study, felt that the size of their school effected their collaboration in the following manner:

1. With fewer teachers, it was important to maintain good relations with all the staff. The collaborative partnership could be affected if one of the partners were to

ostracize another member of the staff. As one of these teachers said of the staff at the school, "we all talk!" Respecting staff loyalties was a complex process.

2. With no formal departments or department coordinators, all teachers were expected to work together to coordinate and manage their programs. As such, cooperation was essential for the smooth administration of the school and delivery of the curriculum. The staff culture—there were no departments in this high school—was therefore one which rewarded egalitarianism and cooperation.

3. With smaller student enrollments, teachers found it easier to "know the kids." One of the most frequent topics of conversation among staff members was individual students.

Comparing the comments made by these teachers to those made by the other participants revealed that another feature of working in a small school was that the teacher had fewer colleagues to choose from if one wished to work collaboratively.

Eight participants worked in schools with enrollments of more than 800 students. Participants from these schools frequently identified the following attributes of large high schools as having a bearing on their collaborative relations:

1. The subject department was the defining organizational structure in each of the schools. The teachers' status among colleagues in the school was largely determined by their departmental affiliation. Participants who taught subjects in more than one department identified "cultural" differences between the departments. Specifically they described different norms of collegial interaction. Patrick said that Biology teachers in his school were more inclined to engage in cooperative and collaborative activities than were the teachers in his Physics department. Christine noted that collegial relations among English teachers were more frequent and helpful than those she had experienced with other members of her Career and Technology Department.

2. An effect of the compartmentalized organization of the high schools was that there was occasional rivalry between departments. This rivalry resulted in pressures for greater solidarity within departments. "Balkanized" high school departments (Hargreaves, 1994) appeared to have the effect of encouraging loyalty among members of a department that in turn provided cultural support for the emergence of collaborative

relations within the department. Conversely, in the one large school where there were good relations between the departments, the teachers mentioned that there were some internal conflicts within their department, however the teachers did not attribute these conflicts to the absence of intra–department conflict.

3. A further effect of the compartmentalized organization of the high schools was that department heads had far greater influence over the day–to–day work arrangements of the teachers than did the principal or the assistant principals. One teacher explained that the principal was fully occupied in dealing with the school budget, parent council, and district administrators, while the assistant principals spent most of their time dealing with student discipline. Department heads, on the other hand, had a considerable influence on the tone of the department, decided who would teach various classes, administered the department budget, and dealt with, or more often than not according to some of these teachers, failed to deal with, intra–department, staff disputes. The role of the department coordinator was mentioned by the majority of the participants as having a major impact on their working life.

4. Because there were more teachers to choose between, the participants from larger schools made deliberate decisions about with whom they would and would not collaborate.

5. As there was often more than one teacher assigned to teach a subject to a grade level, the opportunities for team–teaching and subject specific collaboration were restricted to large high schools. Even so, in such schools, teachers of elective subjects may find, as Christine did with Business Studies, that they still do not have the opportunity to work collaboratively to the same extent that they would if they were teaching the core subjects.

The Practice of Teaching in High Schools

Several teachers had worked in elementary or junior high schools prior to teaching in high schools. These teachers made observations about how the practice of teaching in high schools had an effect on collaboration. The teachers who had taught in elementary schools spoke about how the collegial interactions that occurred in elementary schools were focussed on issues relating to the grade level. They said that teachers of different grade levels would exchange information about classes of students as they progressed from one year, and one teacher, to the next. The collaboration in

elementary schools they had experienced tended to be "about the kids." Collaboration in junior high schools was "about the kids" and about the subject, whereas in high schools the collaboration was almost entirely focussed on the subject first and where it extended to the students, it did so within the context of the subject.

As was shown earlier in this Chapter, and in Chapter 5, the collaborations in this study, with the exception of the partnership between Cathy and Christine, dealt almost exclusively with matters related to teaching a specific subject. Further, three of the most experienced teachers in this study held the view that high school teachers were under enormous pressure to be more concerned with "getting through the course" and preparing students for the exams than were teachers in elementary or junior high schools.

When the teachers in this study talked about concern for students, they tended to describe students who were in extreme need of counselling or specialized instruction. Subtle differences between students, such as differences in learning styles and individual students' responsiveness to different motivational strategies, were mentioned in detail by only one of the participants. This teacher bemoaned the insensitivity of his colleagues to the uniqueness of each student and deplored the tendency of high school teachers to blame students when lessons were not successful. This teacher felt that high school teachers needed to spend more time talking about the students so that they could learn from each other the types of strategies that were likely to be successful with different students. While not stated, the teacher implied that such collaborative activities were essential if teachers were to develop the more sophisticated skills needed to identify the subtle differences between individual learning styles.

Actions of Administrators

Teachers in this study praised their principals. Comments such as, "the administrators are excellent," "we have a close relationship," "I get positive feedback," "they set a good tone," "I'm very fortunate because the principal understands," "she and I agree," and "I feel very supported" were typical. They had less to say about assistant principals, although again, what was said was largely positive. As alluded to above, where these teachers had criticism about the administrators in their schools, these criticisms tended to be made about subject coordinators as it was these people who had the most significant influence on the teachers' work. This finding became

apparent in the interviews when the teachers were asked to describe the extent to which their collaborations were effected by the actions of administrators.

When teachers were questioned further to provide specific examples of how principals were supportive or how they created a positive climate, they related stories of incidents that revealed the importance that these teachers attached to the influence of the principal on their individual and collaborative work. What emerged was not so much less flattering of principals, but more accurately understood as indicative of the complexity of interactions between administrators and teachers.

Specific quotes have not been employed here as they reveal information that could easily identify the participants. Therefore, comments that are offered have been generalized, aggregated, and paraphrased to safeguard anonymity.

When questioned about the importance of receiving positive feedback from their principals, several teachers said that while it was nice, it did not count for much. These teachers said that although their principals thought that they knew what was happening, they lacked specific knowledge of what was occurring in the classroom, and therefore, the positive feedback that was offered was superficial. The extent to which administrators knew what was happening in the schools appeared to have been related to the size of the school.

Paradoxically, several teachers complained about the inaction of administrators in dealing with important inter–staff and inter–department problems. This was paradoxical because the teachers assumed that the principal knew what was happening with regards to the staff and had decided not to act, whereas their actions with regard to instructional matters were assumed to be uninformed by knowledge of specific classroom practices in the school.

Two teachers observed that in their schools the administrators tended to affirm only those teachers who had a "high profile." While one of these teachers said that she had been commended by the principal from time–to–time, she had never heard anything from either he or the assistant principals about her classroom teaching. She said that she "would love it if one of them dropped in" to her classroom.

Some teachers said that they knew what the principal in their school expected of the staff, even though these expectations were not made explicit. These teachers said

that principals were delighted if they "thought their teachers were collaborative, innovative, and were actively marketing their courses to students and parents." Realizing this, these teachers made sure that their principal was informed of what they were doing. Armed with this information, the principal was able to further promote the school to prospective parents and other administrators in the district. These teachers said that they used this to their advantage in promoting certain of their own initiatives in the school.

Other teachers were critical of the responses of administrators when teachers went to them seeking assistance. Some of the teachers said that they no longer talked to administrators about students who were causing concerns in the classroom because the administrators would deal with the student as though all problems were discipline problems. One of the teachers said that, "he just goes mad at the kid and tells him not to do it again and then thinks that solved the problem!" As a result of reaching this conclusion, these teachers had resorted to seeking advice and assistance from like–minded members of their department.

At the focus–group meeting, consensus was reached that principals and assistant principals can help create an environment which is conducive to teacher collaboration, but they can not make teachers, who are otherwise disinclined, collaborate. The administrators who appeared to have the most potential for affecting the norms and conditions that affected these collaborations were the department coordinators. In the larger schools, the principal and assistant principals were perceived to be responsible for dealing with parents and students. Department heads had the most direct influence on the daily work of the majority of teachers in this study.

Several of the teachers said in their interviews that administrators could easily constrain collaborative relations by things such as not supporting certain scheduling requests or by holding individual teachers, as opposed to departments, accountable for student learning outcomes. The sentiments of the majority of the participants in this study can be summed up in the following paraphrase of one of the participant's comments: "They can mess it up but they can't make it happen."

Actions of Other Teachers

The teachers' descriptions of experiences of their collaboration and work in high schools reported above have addressed the effects of the actions of other teachers

on the forms, processes, and tasks of collaboration. The following findings are offered in a thematic manner rather than being reported directly for each participant.

Norms of Privacy

All of the participants alluded to, or reported directly, the persistence of privacy in the daily work of the majority of their colleagues. While several reported congenial and supportive social relations among their school or department staff, attempts at involving colleagues in intensive, frequent, instructionally based, collaboration were often unsuccessful. Teachers would politely let it be known that they were not interested in such interactions: "I've tried to bring them in, we'll do something together, and then it's right back to where we started." Another said that he and his partner would meet in their staffroom and openly discuss some aspect of their team–teaching. The intent was to try to engage their colleagues in an open discussion about pedagogical practices. The teachers present, he felt, were interested in what was being said, but did not, or could not, contribute by sharing stories of their own.

A corollary of the pervasiveness of privacy was that the teachers said they rarely received any positive or negative feedback from colleagues about their teaching. As one said, "you don't offer anything unless you're asked." On the other hand, teachers were usually very generous in acknowledging each others' extracurricular services.

When the teachers related such stories, they were asked if they thought that their colleagues could influence the nature of their collaborative activities. The teachers felt that this was highly unlikely, and one said, "I wouldn't let the other's opinions stop me if I believed in it." From these comments it was concluded that while the preference for privacy of colleagues was often pervasive, the widespread adherence to this way of teaching and working had little effect on the actions of teachers who were inclined toward collaborative practice.

The "Flexibility" of Other Teachers

Many of the participants felt that their colleagues were disinclined to work collaboratively because they were inflexible and unwilling to change the way that they had always taught. One felt that this inflexibility and unwillingness to work together negatively affected the work of all the teachers in the department. Another expressed

this sentiment bluntly, saying, "if some other teachers changed, we'd be more effective."

Age Differences

The effect of the relative ages of colleagues has already been presented. It is mentioned again here because it was a common theme in many of the stories that the teachers told about their dealings with colleagues. One experienced teacher felt that older teachers should "put themselves out" and help their younger colleagues.

Qualified Respect

As is no doubt evident by now, these teachers, and particularly the most experienced, had many criticisms of some of their colleagues. These criticisms were not revealed immediately. Typically, a teacher would say, "I've got a lot of respect for my colleagues, they're all very professional." Later in the interview, when certain stories were being recounted, the teacher would say, "most of my colleagues are very professional." Occasionally, a teacher would conclude a particularly unsavoury story with words to the effect, "I have no time for lazy teachers," or "they just don't seem to care," or "I don't see why such teachers should be able to remain in schools. There are plenty of good, young teachers who can't get a job."

When these observations were shared with the participants at the focus group meeting, they said that they were often frustrated by teachers who were lazy, uncaring, and inflexible. They maintained that the vast majority of teachers did not fall into this category. It should be noted that when the teachers spoke about their colleagues in this manner, they spoke in general terms and did not mention names or specific details. The older teachers had clearly come to a point in their career where they were comfortable enough to acknowledge that not all their colleagues were as professional as they ought to be. Collaboration, for these teachers, provided an opportunity to work closely with admired and respected colleagues, and to avoid contact with those less well regarded.

Physical Resources and Design

The obvious requirement for integrated team–teaching is a classroom that can accommodate a large number of students. When asked if they would be interested in team–teaching one of their courses, participants in two of the schools said that there was no suitable classroom in their school. At St. Agnes, the existence of such a room,

created the opportunity for the administrators to approach Anne and Alan and ask them to team–teach for one year while other classrooms were being renovated.

The design of classrooms and the location of preparation rooms in the schools determined the extent to which covert observation of colleagues was possible. One of the participants said that classrooms should be designed so that "you can see into them." This teacher felt that such a design would contribute to greater openness and would allow younger teachers to learn by being able to observe colleagues without having to be in the classroom and disrupt the lesson.

Several participants said that collaboration could be facilitated if staff rooms were designed in such a manner as to accommodate all members of a particular department. These teachers said that members of their departments were "spread out in rooms all over the school," thus making it difficult for them to work together. One teacher said that his colleague was "way up on the third floor, I'm in the basement." He wished that their classrooms and work areas were closer as he thought they would collaborate more frequently.

Other Factors

The following findings were gleaned from the interview transcripts and are presented here as they pertain to other factors related to the school that have a bearing on the teachers' collaboration. Again, some of these findings have been alluded to in earlier sections.

The Effect of Examinations

Many of these teachers said that they felt enormous pressure because of the importance of the provincial examinations. They felt that these pressures restricted their freedom to design programs to meet their students' needs and limited the time that they could spend on topics that had captured their student's interest. One of the most basic functions that their collaborations served was to allow these teachers an opportunity to vent their frustrations regarding these external constraints. The teachers also exchanged ideas about how they could make their programs interesting and relevant and still cover the mandated curriculum.

Provincial and District Financial Constraints

Two of the teachers bemoaned the current financial constraints that were affecting school education. Districts were responding to shrinking budgets by reducing consultancy services, a response decried by one participant after his second interview, as having potentially disastrous effects on young teachers who were often in need of expert advice and support. He theorized that these constraints may have the effect of encouraging more teachers to seek assistance form their colleagues, thus inadvertently encouraging collaboration. Another said that the current economic conditions, and particularly the poor prospects for youth employment, meant that high schools were increasingly being required to provide programs for a divergent student population. These demands for more vocationally oriented education, and the widening range of abilities of students in core courses, were presenting new challenges to teachers. The need for professional support, advice, and consultancy was growing at the time when resources for such services were diminishing. One participant concluded that "because of the needs of these kids, teachers can no longer afford not to collaborate."

Positive District Initiatives

Recent initiatives in one of the two districts in this study—to foster stronger professional relations between schools in each part of the city—were welcomed by participants in that district. Three of the teachers thought that the sharing and cooperation that were emerging as a result of this initiative were very positive. Two of the teachers had already begun to meet with teachers in other schools in their area.

Students

At various times the teachers all spoke about the relation between their collaborations and the students. First, some teachers saw students as a reason for collaborating. These teachers said they wanted to collaborate so that they could provide better instruction. Second, students were seen to be among the beneficiaries of collaboration. As described in Chapter 7, the participants felt that the students gained when their teachers worked together to develop interesting programs and resources. The Science teachers provided more varied and frequent labs, the English and Humanities teachers were able to present new perspectives, and the Special Education teachers were well briefed about the students and were able to tailor work specifically to meet students' individual needs. Finally, the teachers who team–taught felt that they

were modelling cooperative behaviour and that their students learned from and enjoyed seeing the two teachers work together.

Summary and Discussion

The following summaries pertain to the four Specific Research questions. The findings are summarised and discussed in relation to each of these questions in turn.

Factors Associated With the Teacher

This summary and discussion are offered in response to Specific Research Question 2(a): "To what extent do factors associated with the teacher appear to influence to the collaborations?" The first and most striking feature of these collaborative partnerships was the frequency with which certain themes emerged in their (a) understandings of teaching their, (b) experiences of being high school teachers, (c) age or the number of years they had both worked in the same school, (d) understandings of the importance of gender as an issue in collaborative partnerships, (e) sense of efficacy, (f) professional aspirations, and (g) other related factors.

Pedagogical Beliefs and Practices

Teachers in this study tended to explain their current teaching practices, including their collaborations, in the light of their reflections about their teaching careers. Teachers in each partnership shared at least one aspect of either their philosophy or practice in common with their partner. That part which was shared appeared to correspond to the nature of the collaboration. In other words, where there was a high level of philosophical agreement between the partners, their collaborations included discussions about such issues. Where they had similar ideas about what constituted good pedagogical practice within their discipline, they tended to assist each other with ideas and resources that were in keeping with these practices. Further, differences in belief and practice corresponded to those aspects of the partnership that presented potential conflicts.

General Experiences of Teaching and Collaboration

Other experiences of teaching and collaboration had an effect on each of the teachers and their collaborations. Whether these were substantially positive—as was the case with Peter, or mixed, as was the case with most participants, or even where

they had been largely negative—the teachers had developed a clear idea of the type of teacher they liked to work with and what purposes the partnership ought to serve.

The majority of the teachers in this study reported that they had been involved in collaborative relations with colleagues since the outset of their careers. Only two of the teachers said that they had not experienced such relations, although both attributed this to the lack of a suitable collegial partner in their previous schools. This finding supports Lortie's (1975) contention that early collegial experiences may have a positive effect on promoting norms of collegial interaction throughout a teachers career.

A further feature of these experiences was that the teachers collaborated almost entirely with teachers in their subject area. Other close working relations were more often established with teachers who taught the same subject in other schools than they were with teachers of other subjects within the same school. None of the collaborations studied were exclusive. In other words, close collaboration did not seem to preclude other work–focussed professional relations. According to these teachers, exclusiveness was a problem in some partnerships that they had either been involved in or had observed.

Age and Years at the Current School

In each of the partnerships, the participants were either close in age or had been at their school for a similar number of years. This finding can be explained in terms of the fact that in general, where these teachers were of a similar age, they tended to have similar professional and social interests, and where they were of different ages, but had been at the school for a similar length of time, they appear to have supported each other in learning about the school and establishing their credibility with colleagues.

Another feature of some of the partnerships that can be related to age is that the older teachers articulated a clearer idea of what constituted acceptable professional standards of teaching. Through their collaborations they found support from like–minded colleagues and were effectively buffered from those colleagues who were less well respected.

Gender

The relation between gender and collaboration appears complex. As noted in Chapter 2, gender refers to both biological sex and learned social behaviours. While a

person's biological gender is more or less obvious, the extent to which their attitudes and behaviours conform to socially determined roles is a matter of interpretation. While teachers had varying interpretations about the relative importance and effect of different gender compositions in collaboration, two generalizations were supported by the data, and confirmed by the participants at the focus–group discussion. The first was that mixed gender collaborations in this study were more thoroughgoing and complex. The second generalization was that the earlier collaborative experiences of the teachers in this study tended to be with teachers of the same sex.

Participants' comments about the complementarity that was evident both professionally and socially in two of the mixed gender partnerships in this study suggest that for older teachers, such partnerships provide a socially and professionally acceptable opportunity for the development of mutually rewarding relationships.

Efficacy

The participants judged themselves to be good teachers. The younger teachers tended to not rate themselves as highly as the more experienced participants, but even these teachers expressed a high degree of confidence in their ability to improve in the areas they had identified as needing attention. The moderate to high levels of efficacy explain why these teachers felt comfortable with close collaborative partnerships with respected colleagues. Efficacy, to the extent that it betokens a sense of self–confidence, further explains why teachers like Anne and Christine were clear about the types of teachers they would not work with.

Also noted in each of the partnerships was the bidirectional relation between efficacy and collaboration once the collaboration had commenced. No teachers reported, or appeared to the researcher to have suffered, a decline in their levels of confidence as classroom teachers as a consequence of working collaboratively with their colleagues. The conclusion is offered that teachers who engage in collaborative partnerships possess high levels of efficacy. This finding is consistent with Rosenholz's (1989) speculation that there is a link between collaboration and high levels of efficacy. This is not to conclude that all efficacious teachers work collaboratively. Rather, those who choose to collaborate possess high, and are in the process of possessing higher, levels of efficacy.

Ross (1994), in his review of the literature on teacher efficacy noted that research that has reported links between high levels of efficacy and collaborative behaviours have been prone to the problem of the direction of causality. The findings reported here suggest that a moderate to high levels of efficacy may be both a prerequisite for, and outcome of, collaborative relations.

Professional Aspirations

All the teachers aspired to improve their teaching. They were positive about teaching as a career and felt they were performing an important social and academic service. In this regard, the participants reported attitudes to teaching that have been described by Little and McLaughlin (1993) as "norms of continuous improvement." This finding is consistent with the description of each of the collaborations presented in this and earlier Chapters in that they all served the purpose of facilitating improved classroom teaching. Further, were any of the participants disinterested in "continuous improvement," they probably would not be prepared to commit the time and energy that maintenance of these partnerships requires.

Other Factors Nominated by the Teachers

Several participants stated a preference for teamwork. While not all the teachers in this study would like to team–teach, the data warrant the conclusion that all the participants in this study prefer to attend to some of their teaching responsibilities in collaboration with respected colleagues.

Related to the "norm of continuous of improvement" mentioned above was the importance that these teachers attached to learning. As was shown, several participants saw teaching and learning as being indistinguishable. Further, these teachers all appeared to be committed to ongoing learning about teaching their subject. Unlike those teachers that Patrick described as being comfortable with their current practices, these teachers experienced discomfort: They were doing well but not well enough. The ways that these teachers approached their learning was consistent with the literature on adult learning and teacher professional development (eg., Boyd, 1993). This literature notes that adults are pragmatic in their approach to learning, practically oriented, and that they prefer to learn by asking others rather than by enrolling in formal courses or reading. These teachers learned from each other. They were each able to identify an area of comparative expertise or strength that their partner possessed.

The third additional characteristic nominated by some of the teachers was the importance they attached to supervising beginning teachers' practice. Four teachers said that they liked to have "prac teachers." While they said that it resulted in more work, they felt that they gained from the experience because it forced them to reflect on their own teaching. They also learned new approaches through watching their junior colleagues in the classroom and derived satisfaction from the knowledge that they were assisting another teacher. The desire to assist young teachers appeared consistent with their professional ethic of collegiality.

The final factor that was characteristic of several teachers in this study was their strong student–focus. For many of these teachers, especially the older participants, collaboration provided a means by which they could more effectively meet individual students' needs. These teachers do not entirely fit Levin and Young's (1994) generalization that "secondary teachers see themselves more often as teachers of subjects" (p. 261). These teachers see themselves as teachers of *particular subjects* to *particular students.*

Factors Associated With the Teaching Partner

This summary and discussion are offered in response to Subsidiary Research Question 2(b): "To what extent do the teachers' assessments of their partners appear to influence the collaborations?" Teachers' assessments of their teaching partners affect their collaborations in two ways. These teachers assessed their colleagues according to predetermined criteria in deciding to work with that person. Once the collaboration was established, its nature and development was seen to be related to a further set of evaluative criteria.

As we saw earlier, the most basic condition for potential collaboration, was the colleagues' teaching responsibilities. Limiting close collaborative relations to teachers of the same subject, the next condition was the extent to which the teacher's philosophy of teaching and professional development goals were in congruence. This condition could equally be described as the existence of similar constructions of professionalism. The more highly these were correlated, the more likely it was that these teachers would enjoy mutual, professional respect.

The conditions of "teaching the same subject," "similar constructions of professionalism," and "mutual professional respect," were applied to identify potential

collaborative colleagues. The next set of conditions were used to determine how the collaboration might proceed. These are additional to those already identified in earlier discussions, such as willingness to reciprocate and share, age, years in the current school, and the pre–existence of friendship. The criteria that are related specifically to these teachers' assessments of their colleagues the following:

1. *Flexibility.* All of the participants identified flexibility as an important characteristic of their collaborative partners. Flexibility was explained as an openness to new ideas and a willingness to incorporate colleagues' suggestions and materials in their own teaching. Comments of several of the participants suggested that these teachers frequently estimated their colleagues' openness to new ideas. When a participant suspected that advice in certain areas was not being heeded, that teacher was disinclined to offer further such advice. Conversely, when teachers reported back to their colleagues that they had implemented the advice they were given, or showed enthusiasm for "new ideas," their colleague was pleased and inclined to offer further assistance and advice.

2. *Teaching style.* The perception of the extent to which a colleague's teaching style was similar or complementary was related to the extent to which the collaboration involved specific attention to classroom teaching matters. In the collaborations where the teaching style was judged to be relatively incompatible—the partnerships between Cathy and Christine, and Helen and Harry—little time was spent addressing specific classroom teaching matters. A lack of complementarity did not serve to preclude collaboration, rather it had the effect of defining the parameters of the collaboration.

3. *Teachers' learning needs.* Where teachers perceived that they had learning needs which could be addressed by their colleague, the collaborations included a professional development focus. This was most clearly the case in the collaborations between Anne and Alan, Peter and Patrick, and Harry and Helen. Again the existence of this feature did not preclude collaboration, it influenced the focus of the collaborations.

4. *Social compatibility.* This final feature refers to the extent to which the teachers perceived that they were socially compatible. Like the other features listed here, high levels of social compatibility did not preclude collaboration, although in partnerships where there was less compatibility, the frequency and intensity of the

collaborations was less than that which was evident in partnerships where both partners said that they liked each other and enjoyed each other's company.

Factors Associated With the Teachers' Teaching and Other Responsibilities

The following summary and discussion pertains to Specific Research Question 2(c): "To what extent do factors associated with these teachers' instructional and other professional responsibilities appear to influence their collaborations?" Several issues are worthy of note here. Some of these observations have been offered or alluded to earlier in the discussion. They are repeated here because they pertain equally to this research question. The issues that are related to this Research Question are identified below:

1. These teachers' classroom teaching responsibilities, specifically the subjects that they taught, influenced their collaboration to the extent that they defined the set of teachers with whom collaborative, as opposed to more general collegial relations were possible. Teachers collaborated with other teachers who taught the same subject.

2. The findings suggest that collaborative partnerships are likely formed to meet the needs of teachers who either find themselves teaching new subjects, new grade levels, or in new schools. This finding is offered as a further sophistication of the observation offered earlier that these collaborations conformed to a pattern of being formed between teachers who had been teaching at the school for a similar length of time or who were close in age.

3. These teachers' relations with colleagues outside their subject area were confined to extracurricular activities and did not conform to the definition of collaboration employed in this study. In other words, work–focussed relations with colleagues on extracurricular tasks were often collegial, but never collaborative.

4. The *contents of the collaboration*—what the teachers attended to when they worked together—were directly related to the subjects that they were teaching. Science teachers collaborated about different things than did English teachers. There were differences between the ways in which tasks were addressed and while these were associated with the subject teaching assignments of the participants, it is not possible to attribute these differences to the subjects in question. These procedural differences seem more likely to be related to other factors mentioned in this Chapter, such as age,

gender combination, philosophical orientation, and the extent of complementarity of teaching styles.

Other Factors Associated With the School

This summary and discussion are offered in response to Specific Research Question 2(d): "To what extent do other factors associated with the school appear to influence the collaborations." Findings pertinent to this Question are presented in summarized form below.

Organizational Procedures and Culture

The influence of the following factors was presented in this Chapter:

1. *The management of time.* The timetable and the amount of preparation time the teachers were scheduled had significantly influenced the frequency of collaborative activities.

2. *Introduction of new programs.* The introduction of new programs often served as a catalyst for collaboration within departments.

3. *Culture.* The culture of departments influenced collaborative relations. Culture, to the extent that includes the norms of accepted practice, appeared to be understood by the participants as varying between departments within the one school. For this reason, to talk of a high school as having a collaborative culture seems to make less sense than when such a description is applied to elementary and junior high schools, as it has been in the effective schools literature (e.g. Maeroff, 1993; & Rosenholz, 1989)

4. *School size.* The size of the high school appeared to affect the collaborations in several ways: (a) the relations between staff, (b) the nature of the relations within and between departments, (c) the roles taken by and the influence of administrators, (d) the number of potential collaborative colleagues, and (e) the opportunities for certain collaborative activities such as team–teaching.

5. *Senior high school teaching.* Several teachers had worked in elementary or junior high schools. They said that high school teaching differed from teaching in other schools. These differences were related to what Cohen (1991, p. 98) referred to as the "subject as organizing passion" when she was concluding her study of five veteran

high school teachers. Accordingly, those teachers who expressed a strong concern for students often expressed that concern within the context of the subject that they taught.

The Influence of Administrators

Teachers were positive about the general influence of principals. There was evidence that some principals unwittingly operated at the level of transactional leadership (Burns, 1978) and therefore inadvertently encouraged collaboration by bestowing favours upon those who collaborated. In the large high schools in this study, the administrators who had the most influence on collaborative relations were the department coordinators. The teachers tended to be less magnanimous in their assessments of the effectiveness of these middle managers, criticising them for among other things, not dealing with inter–staff conflict.

While these teachers felt that administrators did influence their collaborative relations, this influence was not as significant as that exercised by the factors related to the teachers themselves and the subjects that they were teaching.

Actions of Other Teachers

These teachers reported that many of their department colleagues operated within the norms of privacy (Lortie, 1975) traditionally associated with teaching. Further, one of the criteria they employed to judge their colleagues was flexibility. Teachers who were inflexible were not sought out for collaborative relations, nor for that matter, were they held in high regard by the more experienced teachers in this study. Based on this and other observations offered by the teachers about their colleagues, collaboration appeared to serve the additional purpose of providing satisfying professional relations with respected colleagues while, at the same time, buffering them from relations with less respected colleagues.

The teachers who caused the most frustration for many of the participants in this study were those who had a strong sense of personal ownership of their resources and ideas. As a result of their construction of proprietorship, these teachers were often unwilling to share. Further, they seemed to operate from a different set of values, one which emphasized individual accountability over collegial responsibility and accountability. In the light of these interpretations, the conclusion is offered that there is an important, if subtle, difference between carrying out the tasks of teaching

autonomously and operating as if autonomy were a guiding ethic. While in certain circumstances the former would be judged by these teachers to be acceptable, unavoidable, or occasionally even desirable, the latter would always be judged to be unacceptable.

Helen's recounting of her experiences of working with colleagues, which were indicative of the sentiments of all the participants, highlighted both the highs and lows of colleagueship in subject departments in high schools. The way in which she and Harry were able to cooperate, compromise, share, and learn together, serves as an excellent example of what is possible when two teachers of different ages, genders, and aspirations commit to collaboration for the benefit of their students, their school, and themselves. Further, their achievem[illegible]points to their admirable professional ethics.

Physical Resources and Design of the School

The most obvious effect of the design of the school and its physical resources on collaboration was that some forms of collaboration, such as team–teaching, require specific resources, such as a classroom that can accommodate two classes. Other aspects of the physical design of the school that have an indirect effect on the staff culture, or more precisely, department cultures that influence collaboration are the openness of classrooms, that is the extent to which they afford opportunities for observation, and the design and layout of staff work areas.

Other Factors Cited by the Teachers

The teachers mentioned several other school–related factors that they believed had an influence on their collaborations. These were (a) the constraining effects of the pressure of Grade 12 provincial exams, (b) the effects of provincial and district financial constraints, (c) the positive effects of district wide initiatives that are designed to facilitate collaboration between schools, and (d) the needs of the students in the school.

Conclusions

These concluding remarks are offered in the form of a response to Specific Research Question 2: "To what extent do selected factors concerning the teachers and their schools appear to influence the collaborations?" Numerous factors have been identified that appear to have an effect on these collaborations. In the light of these factors, three concluding observations are offered:

1. While the effect of individual factors varies from collaboration to collaboration, the effects of these factors on each partnership are interrelated and complex. Factors, such as the teachers pedagogical beliefs and practices appeared to have a comparatively direct effect on the collaborations, but even these effects were moderated by other factors. No factor or set of related factors totally explained the collaborations.

2. To the extent that certain of these factors pertain more specifically to high schools and high school teachers, they are of interest because their effects suggest that collaboration among high school teachers may be substantively different to collaboration among teachers in elementary, and to a lesser extent, junior high schools.

3. Given conclusions 1 and 2, where educational administrators attempt policy, administrative, or leadership initiatives designed to promote greater teacher collaboration in high schools, and where these actions are not informed by an understanding of (a) the number and complexity of the interrelations of factors that influence such collaborations, and (b) the unique aspects of high schools, such initiatives are likely to be ineffectual.

CHAPTER 7

OUTCOMES OF COLLABORATION

This chapter addresses Specific Research Question 3: "What do the teachers understand to be the outcomes of their collaborations?" Related to this question were the following Subsidiary Research Questions: (a) "What do these teachers understand to be the outcomes of their collaborations with regard to themselves and their teaching?" and (b) "What do these teachers understand to be the outcomes of their collaborations with regard to others and their school?"

Tables are included to show the outcomes of each collaboration as perceived by its participants. Following the presentation of these findings, a summary and discussion are offered which specifically address the Specific Research Questions. The Chapter closes with concluding comments about Research Question 3.

Personal and Professional Outcomes

The information provided below relates to Specific Research Question 3(a): "What do these teachers understand to be the effects of their collaborations with regard to themselves and their teaching?" The findings presented here were offered by the teachers during their interviews and in the focus–group discussions. The pertinent comments of each participant are summarised in Table 7.1. The themes which emerged from analysis of these comments and these are presented below. In discussing these themes, frequent reference is made to the findings identified in earlier Chapters.

Personal Satisfaction

All of the participants reported deriving moderate to high levels of satisfaction from their collaborations. Several mentioned that they had "fun" working with their colleague, others said that they enjoyed being able to offer assistance, all felt supported and encouraged by their colleague, and most openly stated that they "liked" their teaching partner. These teachers' preference for collaborative modes of work seemed to be attributable to their enjoyment of such interaction as much as it can be seen to be attributed to other factors such as their professional development needs or assessments of gains in efficiency and effectiveness. Several participants at the focus–group meeting supported comments made by one of the older participants in his interview

Table 7.1

Participants' Understandings of the Personal and Professional Outcomes of Their Collaborations

Participant	Outcomes
Patrick	Enables better student assessment Helps reduce workload Provides opportunities to learn from colleagues Facilitates greater creativity in teaching
Peter	"Fast–tracks" learning Increases the likelihood of teaching I.B. courses
Jenny	Makes classroom teaching more satisfying Is time consuming now, but will be more efficient Allows me to learn from watching others teach Presents some concerns regarding team–teaching Increases knowledge of self, partner, and teaching
James	Facilitates learning through watching others teach Enables me to learn how to team–teach Provides opportunities to receive honest feedback Encourages professional growth Provides intellectual stimulation
Harry	Results in my being better organised Affords me access to new classroom teaching resources Satisfying to be of assistance Allows me to learn from working with someone who is different Provides enjoyable interactions
Helen	Results in better lesson and unit planning Creates the need to "rethink things" Planning, setting exams, etc. are all more efficient Allows me to learn a lot Encourages me to include more labs in my teaching Teaches me how to work effectively with different people

Table 7.1 (Cont.)

Participants' Understandings of the Personal and Professional Outcomes of Their Collaborations

Participant	Outcomes
Anne	Team–teaching results in my being less spontaneous, more structured, & better organised Learning from each other Synergistic Fun "Discovery of ideas" Support and respect from respected colleagues Provides a growth experience
Alan	Tremendous growth experience Enjoyable interactions Able to "be myself" Encourages reflective thought Appreciative of what can be learned from others Results in improved instruction We experience shared learning Receive positive feedback from partner
Cathy	Learned that your classroom and teaching has to be open to others Clearer understanding of own professional development goals Good feedback from parents and students Good feedback from partner Better understanding of students
Christine	Learned about new subject "Learned two things at once" (How to team–teach and about English) More effective at student assessments More efficient with individual programming Realize that "I have a lot to learn" Support from a number of teachers for different things It has "made teaching fun"

who said that as he had grown older, enjoyment of work had become increasingly important. This meant taking time to work with colleagues and realising that other approaches to teaching can be just as effective as his own preferred style.

Experience of Community

An important source of the satisfaction that the teachers derived from their collaborations was the experience of community they gained. Feeling that they were part of a community of teachers was also an integral component of the construction of professionalism expressed by several of the teachers in this study. Collaboration was a means by which these teachers gave expression to the importance they attached to colleagueship and community. Peter and Patrick, as was described in previous Chapters, clearly had a sense of community with Physics teachers in other schools. Their active involvement in Physics teachers groups and their willingness to assist specific colleagues in other schools are indicative of their collegial values. Jenny and James spoke about their commitment to teaching and their relations with other teachers in other schools. For Jenny these included her relationship with her parents who were also teachers, whereas for James, professional relations involved specialist student counsellors as well as other teachers. Harry and Helen also recounted stories of their associations with teachers in other schools with whom they had formed close working relations. Anne and Christine, both of whom had not experienced any significant colleagueship prior to working in their current schools, had developed several rewarding partnerships. Alan maintained contact with other colleagues with whom he had taught, and Cathy had an extensive network of colleagues with whom she collaborated in the delivery of the Special Education program at her school.

Learning

Each of the teachers mentioned that they learnt [illegible] working with their colleague. What these teachers learned ranged from skills and knowledge directly related to courses being taught to learning about themselves, how to work with a colleague, and the development of deeper philosophical understandings.

Subject Specific Learning

These teachers continued to learn about their area of subject expertise. This was particularly the case for the four science teachers in this study. Patrick attributed much

of what he had learned about Physics since he began teaching to what he had learned from his colleagues:

> *Patrick: When I've gone to conferences and met teachers from all over the country or gone done to the States and met teachers from the States and from Canada, I have realised that the knowledge I've gained in the last seven years is enormous compared to a lot of other teachers who work in isolation. For example, if they're from a small school where they're the only Physics teacher, I'm amazed at how many more labs, how many more ways of doing things that I know.*
>
> *Interviewer: And you attribute that to working with colleagues rather than perhaps your own capacities, your inclination to being a creative Physics teacher?*
>
> *Patrick: Yes, because what I'd find is that there would be a certain apparatus and I'd use it in one way and then Paul would see me and say, "Oh, great you can use it that way," or and he'd tell me three other different ways to use the same apparatus for possibly two or three different demonstrations.*

Learning to Teach Subjects Outside Area of Formal Training

Subject–specific learning was reported as a major outcome for participants who had been assigned to teach subjects outside their area of training. Harry, who was trained as a Social Science teacher and whose first appointment was in an elementary school, learned about teaching science in high school from his colleagues in the junior high science department to which he was assigned. Appointed to his third school—Hindmarsh—this learning continued and Harry reported that he benefitted from Helen's expertise in Biology and Chemistry. Christine's undergraduate teacher training was in Business Studies. She reported that when she was assigned to the Special Education Program at St. Clare she learned a great deal about teaching English from team–teaching with Cathy and from collaborative partnerships with other English teachers.

Learning About Students

In addition to learning about their teaching subjects, four teachers said that they developed a better understanding of specific students as a consequence of sharing their

perspectives with colleagues. Cathy and Christine had this aspect as the focus of their collaboration and were able to develop effective learning programs for individual students partly due to the way in which they shared insights and perspectives during conferences. Harry said that he valued discussions with colleagues in which information was shared about students in a professional manner. This information, Harry believed, was important as it allowed teachers to improve the effectiveness of various instructional strategies. Patrick reported that he developed a better understanding of students as a result of working collaboratively with other teachers in assessing student performance when he co–taught a Grade 10 General Science course.

Learning Instructional and Management Strategies

Several participants said they often learned about instructional and classroom management strategies from watching their colleagues. For example, Alan said that he was trying to change his instructional approach in the classroom after having observed Anne's more relaxed style; Anne said that she had become more structured in the delivery of her lessons as a result of observing Alan; Helen said that she had learned about different management techniques from observing several colleagues, including Harry; both Peter and Patrick said that they had learned how to explain concepts more clearly and respond to student questions from observing other Physics teachers. Jenny, who expressed similar sentiments with regards to her observation of a previous team–teaching partner, described what would happen when she observed her colleague:

> *Seeing each other in action enabled us to really reflect on how we were presenting the course. I wasn't evaluating her. We all have our strengths and weaknesses and she was good at almost everything. She was really very, very capable. I was reflecting on how I was teaching and if there were a different way that I could approach a particular classroom issue.*

At the focus–group meeting, participants said they agreed with the sentiments expressed in the above quotation. When these teachers observed their colleagues they apparently were not thinking about or evaluating what the colleague was doing as much as they were thinking about and comparing how they respond to various incidents and issues that arose during the lesson. In this manner this finding is consistent with Walen and DeRose's (1993) conclusion, in their study of teacher peer–appraisal, that teachers "gained more from observing a peer than from being observed" (p. 45).

Learning as Reflection

Another facet of the learning that these teachers described was related to reflection. Reflection, for these teachers, was synonymous with "thinking about thought." Patrick's idea of "double–thinking," Christine's description of "learning about two things at once," Helen's conclusion of "having to rethink things," and Alan's notion of addressing the "why" questions, all point to the nature of the reflective thought that these teachers engaged in during the course of their collaborations.

Intellectual Stimulation

Not surprisingly, several of the teachers reported that they found their collaborations to be intellectually stimulating. Learning about their subject, honing their instructional skills, and reflecting on teaching at times resulted in the joint exploration of ideas that produced feelings of excitement and satisfaction. James, Anne, and Alan specifically reported intellectual stimulation as an outcome of their collaborations.

Synergy

While Anne was the only teacher to mention "synergy," other participants hinted that they also sensed that the positive outcomes of their collaborative work exceeded the sum of their individual contributions. Peter, Patrick, James, Christine, Harry, and Alan all referred to what they had learned and how they had become better teachers because of their collaborative *interactions* with other teachers.

Learning how to Work With Colleagues

Another aspect of these teachers' learning was the development of skills and understandings related to working with colleagues. This learning involved developing an understanding of the importance of reciprocity, respect, trust, support, and compromise in maintaining rewarding collaborative relations. Passages quoted earlier in the dissertation, including comments by (a) Peter and Patrick about mutuality, (b) Jenny and James in relation to negotiation, compromise, and learning how to teach together, (c) Harry and Helen regarding compromise and dealing with their differences, (d) Anne and Alan regarding the amount of time they committed to planning and discussing philosophical issues in order to team–teach effectively, and (e) Cathy and Christine regarding how having a similar commitment to the students was the most important ingredient to their successful collaboration, all support this finding.

Improved Teaching

A third major outcome of the collaborations reported by these teachers was improved teaching. Each teacher provided one or more of these grounds for this conclusion: (a) more accurate and thorough evaluation and assessment of student learning; (b) deliberated practice; (c) greater creativity in the instructional techniques and the development and use of resources; (d) better organization, sequencing, and timing of topics which is a critical issue when teaching students preparing for provincial examinations; and (e) more thorough evaluations of lessons, topics, and programs.

In the previous Chapter the issue of teacher efficacy was raised. One conclusion in that Chapter was that the teachers developed higher levels of efficacy as a result of their collaborative efforts. As well as receiving positive feedback from their colleagues, the belief that they were more effective teachers as a result of their collaboration further supports the relation between collaboration and improved estimations of teaching efficacy.

Micropolitical Outcomes

In the discussion at the conclusion of Chapter 5, three micropolitical purposes of these collaborations were presented: strategizing, positioning, and negotiating differences. While few of the teachers referred directly to these as outcomes of their collaborations in the second round of interviews, the achievement of micropolitical goals was implicit in some of the other outcomes that the teachers reported. Reports of enjoying higher status within a department, the development of collaborative working partnerships with colleagues who were held in high esteem by other teachers and by administrators, and the success of specific activities designed to influence decision–making both within the department and at the school level, were all mentioned at various stages during the interviews. When this finding was reported at the focus–group meeting the researcher gauged that there was reasonable support for it on the basis of the non–verbal gestures of participants, namely, head–nodding and smiles. However, few comments were offered.

Efficiency and Effectiveness

All the teachers in this study reported that either aspects of their work were being attended to with greater efficiency and / or effectiveness or they anticipated that

they would work more efficiently and / or effectively in the future as a consequence of their collaboration. Peter and Patrick, Anne and Alan, and Cathy and Christine all reported increased effectiveness and efficiency in the conduct of their daily work. Harry and Helen placed more emphasis on increased effectiveness although they did say that preparation of exams and resources was probably more efficient. Finally, Jenny and James were certain that their team–teaching would be effective although they did report that their collaboration was time–consuming and therefore probably less efficient than if they were teaching alone.

Other Outcomes of Collaboration

The findings presented here relate to what the teachers understood to be the other outcomes of their collaborations. The interviews revealed that the teachers based their assessments of the outcomes of their collaborations on their students, departments, and schools on a variety of data. These data included comments from students and parents, evaluations of programs, comparison of their program evaluations with those of other teachers, and examination of student results. These perceptions were further reinforced by feedback some of these teachers received as external markers for provincial exams or when discussing their teaching with colleagues at conferences and meetings. These data sources were described during the interviews when the teachers were asked what evidence they had to support their observations about improved student learning or higher quality of instruction as outcomes that they directly attributed to their collaboration.

The comments made by participants that pertained to the outcomes of their collaborations as they perceived them for others and their schools are summarised in Table 7.2. Analysis of these comments and consideration of the data and findings presented in previous Chapters revealed four themes, and these are presented in the following section.

Table 7.2

Other Outcomes and Comments Regarding Collaboration

Participant	Other outcomes and comments
Patrick	Students perceive a difference when their courses are well coordinated Does not feel he could offer and receive advice as freely with other Physics teachers as he can with Peter Physics teachers group provides an excellent opportunity for sharing and collaboration 2 out of 4 Physics teachers in his school "miss out"
Peter	Good feedback from students about the quality of materials and labs.
Jenny	Positive feedback from students about team–teaching: "The kids liked it." Positive effect on "status:" Perceived as innovative and progressive Friendships
James	Good feedback from the students Enjoy the social interaction
Harry	Benefits for the school if young teachers are encouraged and supported to be collaborative Good feedback from students—they enjoy the labs and the stories
Helen	Has contributed to a good relationship with the principal. "She knows what I am doing and she supports me." Students enjoy the labs Better for the students and the school if teachers cooperate
Anne	Positive effect on work relations with students Very threatening teaching in front of others. Teachers should not be forced to team–teach.
Alan	Good feedback from the students Good for principals—they like to see teachers working collaboratively Have to guard against being seen to be exclusive in collaborative relations
Cathy	Positive feedback from parents and students In students' best interests if teachers work collaboratively to meet their needs
Christine	Good feedback from students Good collaboration because it is open, it is not exclusive

Students' Assessments of Collaborative Efforts by Teachers

Each participant reported the results of their collaborative efforts were appreciated by their students. Teachers based their conclusions regarding students' assessments on comments made by the students and on students' reactions to particular lessons. As was reported earlier, the teachers who were involved in team–teaching collaborations said that their students enjoyed seeing the two teachers interacting in the classroom and appreciated the modelling of cooperative behaviours.

Several participants said that students had told them that the work they presented in class was innovative, interesting, or fun. Patrick, Peter, and Harry all said that they received positive feedback from their students and that they were perceived as being innovative teachers. Each of these teachers attributed their innovativeness to what they had learned or gained from colleagues.

Patrick expressed the view that students were especially perceptive of the extent of collaboration and cooperation between teachers in different departments. He said that students who were studying Biology were aware and appreciative of the excellent organization and coordination of the Biology labs. In contrast, he observed that in Physics there was little coordination of labs and that different classes studying the same subject were often doing totally unrelated activities and labs. Awareness of this caused the students to have some concerns regarding the course. While several participants spoke about the need for collaboration in the coordination of classes within departments, Patrick was the only participant to include the issue of student perceptions of program quality in his arguments for such coordination.

Issues of Inclusion and Exclusion

Inter–school and Inter–district Networks

The extent to which these teachers collaborated with other teachers in other schools has already been presented. The involvement of Peter and Patrick in their Physics teachers group and the networks of colleagues with whom Alan, James, and Cathy interacted were reported in Chapter 5. Many of these teachers were involved in collaborations which extended like a web through their district, the province, across the country, and even internationally. The relations that these teachers had with many of their department and school colleagues were less collaborative than those that they held

with teachers in other schools. The most extreme example of this related to Harry who shared resources with and sent copies of programs to a colleague who taught in the United States. Harry arguably has more knowledge of this teacher's pedagogical practices and is more likely to influence and be influenced by this teacher than any other teacher, with the possible exception of Helen, in his school.

Within Department Collaboration

Within the subject departments at each of the schools certain teachers were included and others excluded, apparently of their own volition, from collaborative networks. While each of the participants were accepting of those who chose not to be involved, there was a sense, expressed directly by Patrick, that these teachers "miss out." None of the participants recounted stories wherein they had willfully excluded certain teachers from their joint work. On the contrary, many told how they had tried to include others.

Collegial and Collaborative Expectations

Despite the disappointment that several of these teachers expressed regarding teachers who chose not to work collegially, they all felt that teachers should not be forced to work collaboratively. This was particularly the case when teachers talked about team–teaching. However, the participants thought it was reasonable to expect teachers to cooperate with other teachers in their departments and to be reasonably generous with their time and resources. The distinction between collaboration and less intense forms of collegial interaction was evident in these teachers' construction of professionalism.

Status and the Maintenance of Positive Professional Relations

Three participants reported directly and two others inferred that their collaborations pleased their principals. Principals, these teachers felt, delighted in the knowledge that teachers were engaging in collaborative, work–focussed partnerships. These teachers said that they received direct and indirect feedback from their principals to this effect. One participant speculated that a reason for principals' enthusiasm for teacher collaboration was that principals promoted their schools to colleagues and parents on the basis of the collaborative work practices of the teachers. For these principals, collaboration and team–teaching were synonymous with innovation and

reform. The teachers were conceivably serving the role of being positive exemplars of the values and work habits that principals were endeavouring to promote in their schools. This complicit leadership role afforded some of the teachers a certain status in their departments and schools. All the participants reported that they had a generally positive relationship with their administrators. The researcher inferred both from what they said and did not say when they talked about their work in the schools that the majority of these teachers were influential and effective in securing support and resources from their school–based administrators.

Outcomes for Schools and Departments

Given that the teachers felt that their collaborations were an effective means of improving the quality of their teaching, they appeared to feel that their collaborations had a positive impact on their departments and schools. While the participants did not cast their comments regarding the outcomes of their collaboration in such broad terms, other comments they made and stories they told, contained elements that warrant this assumption.

These teachers seemed to feel that collaboration was associated with generally supportive and amiable staff relations. The stories that they told about previous and current experiences of working in schools often related to "what it felt like" to work in a certain department or school. Clearly the "collegial cultures" that they described were preferred by the teachers and they felt that collegiality, sharing, and support were characteristics of "good schools."

Summary and Discussion

Some of the research questions required teachers to describe their working relations in practical terms—frequency and nature of interactions as an example—whereas others presupposed reflective thought. When asked what they judged to be the outcomes of their collaborations, the teachers frequently were hesitant. During the second round of interviews, the teachers tended not to have analyzed their work relations in the clinical terms that were presupposed in the wording of the interview question (see Appendix E). While all the teachers were able to respond to the questions, the researcher sensed that the participants were tempted to say what they expected the researcher wanted to hear.

Further, responses to the interview questions that sought understandings as to why the teachers collaborated were similar to the responses with regards to what they judged to be the outcomes of their collaborations. For example, where the main purpose of the collaboration appeared to be to facilitate learning about teaching a particular subject, the teachers reported that an outcome of their collaboration was that they learned about teaching a particular subject. An obvious explanation for the high level of congruence between the purposes and outcomes of these collaborations is that the collaborations survive over time precisely because the collaborations are effective in meeting the needs of both partners.

Another possible explanation is that the teachers only reported those goals which had been met. In other words, when asked why they collaborated, these teachers answered in terms of what they judged to be the positive outcomes. If some individual goals were not being met, there was few data to suggest what these goals might have been. Perhaps the teachers were constrained or disinclined to voice whatever dissatisfactions may have existed.

In the light of these comments, the evidence for the findings presented in this Chapter, which are summarised and discussed below is not as strong as that for the findings presented in Chapters 5 or 6. Further, the findings presented here may not include all the outcomes that the teachers attributed to their collaborations.

Personal and Professional Outcomes

The teachers reported personal and professional outcomes of their collaborations. Their descriptions of these outcomes were analyzed and have been presented in relation to six themes.

1. *Satisfaction* was reported as an outcome of collaboration by all participants. They generally enjoyed their interactions with their colleague and found them to be both socially and professionally rewarding.

2. The *experience of community* was both a source of satisfaction for these teachers and an expression of the value they placed on colleagueship and being a member of a professional community. In other words, there was a high level of congruence between the communitarian values they espoused and the behaviours they described in relation to their collaborations.

3. *Learning* was mentioned by all the participants as an outcome of their collaborations. The teachers, especially those who were relatively inexperienced or who were teaching subjects for which they had not been trained, reported that they learned about their "subject." Several teachers mentioned that they learned about instructional and management strategies. Mentioned less frequently was the outcome of learning about specific students and how to modify instructional programs and teaching strategies to meet these students' needs. The learning that occurred was often found to be intellectually stimulating, based on reflection, and was occasionally attributed to perceived synergistic qualities of certain collaborations.

4. *Improved teaching* was reported by all teachers to be an outcome of their collaborations. They felt that their teaching was improved as the result of one or more of the following: (a) the better understanding the teacher had of the subject, (b) the use of more creative approaches to instruction, (c) the higher quality of organization of units of work and the overall program, (d) the development of teaching strategies that are sensitive to individual student needs, (e) the employment of carefully developed instructional resources, and (f) more thoughtful and deliberate teaching practices.

5. The achievement of micropolitical goals was implicit in the teachers' reports of enjoying higher status within a department, the development of collaborative working partnerships with colleagues who were held in high esteem by other teachers and by administrators, and the success of specific activities designed to influence decision–making both within the department and at the school level. These outcomes were consistent with the micropolitical processes, reported in Chapter 5, of strategizing, positioning, and negotiating.

6. The teachers believed that they were or soon would be more *effective* and / or *efficient* in their day–to–day work as a result of their collaborations. Where the teachers believed that they were more effective in their work, they warranted such assertions on the grounds presented in points 3 and 4 above. Improvements in efficiency were qualified to the extent that they applied to the sharing of resources and assessment items that were generally prepared in isolation. Such sharing was thought to be more efficient as it represented a form of division–of–labour within the joint–work partnerships.

Outcomes for Students and the Schools

Four themes were presented in response to Subsidiary Research Question 3 (b): "What do these teachers understand to be the outcomes of their collaborations with regard to others and their school? The themes were based on an analysis of the comments of the participants summarised in Table 7.2 and on pertinent comments and findings reported in previous Chapters.

1. *Positive student assessments of collaborative work* were reported by the participants. The students assessments were reported by the teachers when they recounted what students had said to them or shared their analysis of student behaviours and lesson or program evaluations. In summary, the teachers felt that the students had positive assessments of teacher collaboration.

2. *Issues of inclusion and exclusion* arose frequently during the interviews. Collaborative networks were seen to exist both within schools and between schools. These teachers often had closer working relations with colleagues in other schools than they had with colleagues in their own departments. While these teachers did not consciously exclude others from their collaborative work, they did recount stories wherein other teachers were seen to work in exclusive collegial partnerships. An important distinction emerged with regards to these teachers' expectations of their colleagues. While the participants did not think that teachers ought to be forced to collaborate, they did feel that teachers had a responsibility to their students, school, and/or profession to participate in less threatening forms of collegiality such as within department cooperation and resource sharing.

3. Several participants felt that their collaborations afforded them a certain *status* with both their colleagues and with school–based administrators. They enjoyed *positive professional relations* with other colleagues and some believed that the influence they had in their school was partially attributable to these outcomes and to the complicit leadership role they played as exemplars of the work habits that their principals were keen to encourage in the school.

4. *Outcomes for schools and departments* were inferred from the comments made by teachers regarding the professional outcomes they described. Only one teacher explicitly talked about the benefits of collaboration for the whole school.

Conclusion

Relevant comments made by teachers during their interviews and feedback from the participants who were present at the focus–group discussion that pertained to their perceptions of the outcomes of their collaborations were presented in this Chapter. The following conclusion is presented in the form of an address to research Question 3: "What do the teachers understand to be the outcomes of their collaborations?"

The participants in this study derived personal and professional satisfaction and support from their collaborative work. Collaboration afforded them with an experience of community which was in keeping with their personal and professional values. All of the participants reported learning more about one or more of the following: (a) their subject content, (b) teaching methods, (c) individual students, and (d) how to work collaboratively with different colleagues. Related to the theme of learning was the frequent reportage of reflective thinking as a feature of collaborative interactions.

Each teacher specified at least one aspect of their work in which they were more efficient and or effective as a consequence of their collaboration. Understandably, all of the teachers said that they were better teachers as a result of their collaborations. Further, they felt that their students benefitted from their collaborative work and they each received positive feedback from their students about their collaboration. In this manner, the suggestion offered in Chapter 6 that collaboration resulted in increased estimations of teacher efficacy was further supported. The positive outcomes of these collaborations for schools and departments were cast in the light of the improvements to teaching, knowledge, and efficiency.

Teachers reported that their collaborations were inclusive in their orientation. Networks of collaborative relations were described both within and between schools. The ability of these teachers to form effective collaborative networks was perceived by some of the teachers to afford them a certain status within their schools, and many of the participants partially attributed their good relations with school–based administrators to their administrators valuing of collaborative work.

CHAPTER 8

OVERVIEW, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

An overview of the study of senior high school teacher collaboration is presented in this chapter. Key areas where this study has contributed to the literature on teachers' work and collaboration in senior high schools are then identified. In the final section, recommendations for practice and further research are proposed.

Each of the preceding results chapters has closed with a discussion, summary, and concluding statement with respect to its key points and arguments. The purpose of this chapter is not to restate those summaries and conclusions, but rather to offer more general conclusions. The summaries, discussions, and conclusions presented in each of the results chapters were directed at the five collaborative partnerships under investigation. In this chapter, the general conclusions offered are those judged by the researcher to be transferable to other senior high school settings.

Overview of the Study

The purpose of the study, methods that were employed in addressing the research questions, and an indication of the findings presented in earlier chapters are presented in this section.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to identify and describe the understandings of collaboration held by senior high school teachers who were engaged in collaborative work with a colleague. Collaboration was defined as a form of collegial interaction among teachers that denoted joint–work, shared responsibility, and high levels of trust, respect, and mutuality. The General Research Question was: "What are the understandings of collaboration held by senior high school teachers who are engaged in self–initiated collaboration with a peer?"

Specific Justifications for the Study

While abundant literature exists about collaboration, the study was justified on the basis that little of the current literature specifically addressed senior high school contexts. Further, the limited amount of literature in this category was either based on

studies that were not directly focussed on collaboration as a form of teachers' work, or was the product of expert opinion.

Further justification for conducting the study were identified in the literature. Two observations, both by Little (1990), were instructive in the conception and focus of this research. First, she noted that "studies focussed directly on the phenomenon of collegiality and collaboration have given precedence to form over content" (p. 523). Second, she advised that "a harder look is in order at what might be meant by collaboration, at the circumstances that foster or inhibit it, and at the individual and institutional consequences that follow from it" (p. 510).

Method

Ten teachers, comprising five collaborative pairings, who were identified using a purposive sampling technique, participated in this study. The teachers worked in two different school districts in a large urban centre in western Canada. The five schools at which they worked ranged in size from under 500 to over 2,000 students. The teachers' ages were in the range of 30 to 50 years, 5 were male and 5 were female, and they taught a wide range of subjects to students in grades 9 to 12.

The teachers were interviewed individually on two separate occasions. Interview schedules were developed for each of the interviews (Appendices C and E). In addition to the transcriptions of these interviews, data in the form of transcripts of conferences between the pairs of teachers, field notes made by the researcher following the interviews and after several visits to each of the five school sites, information gleaned from pertinent school documents, and the comments and feedback from each of the participants at a focus–group meeting and following their reading of Chapters 4 to 7, were collected.

These data were analyzed according to (a) the responses of teachers to each of the scheduled interview questions and (b) the development of categories containing other factors identified by the teachers as related to their collaborative work. A matrix was developed upon which all the data was recorded that pertained to each factor or category by each participant and partnership. This form of representing the data allowed for both single–case and cross–case analysis, as described by Patton (1990).

The accuracy of both the data and its analysis was attested to by the participants using standard member–checking techniques of interview and conference transcripts, the presentation of findings at a focus–group meeting, and the presentation—for the purposes of feedback and critique—of the four findings chapters of this dissertation to each of the participants. Trustworthiness was also enhanced by the corroboration made possible by the comparison of the description of each collaboration offered by both participants, the transcripts of the conferences, and the researcher's own field notes.

Finally, the conduct of a pilot study provided the opportunity to "fine–tune" the data–gathering and analysis techniques and to identify important issues for consideration in this study.

Findings

Findings in relation Specific Research Question 1, "What are some of the forms and contents of self–initiated collaboration among senior high school teachers?" were presented, summarised, and discussed in Chapter 5. Four of the teachers worked in team–teaching collaborations; the remaining six teachers were involved in self–initiated partnerships that were related to their specific teaching responsibilities. The manner in which the collaborations were formed and developed was presented in Figure 5.1. This figure showed that a nexus leading to the formation and reformation of the collaborations occurred between organizational factors and individual factors. A number of activities, including resource sharing, talking, planning, and advising were identified in relation to the collaborations. A key factor in the development of these partnerships was the way in which conflicts and differences were resolved. Finally, the collaborations were seen to serve four broad purposes: pedagogical, professional development, micropolitical, and relationship support and maintenance.

Findings in relation Specific Research Question 2, "To what extent do selected factors concerning the teachers and their schools appear to influence the collaborations?" were presented, summarised, and discussed in Chapter 6. A wide range of factors and their relationship to the collaborations were identified. Of the factors, those related to the individual teacher, and specifically, the extent to which the individual teachers' philosophies of education were complementary, seemed to have the strongest relation to the formation and contents of the collaborations under study.

Findings in relation Specific Research Question 3, "What do the teachers understand to be the outcomes of their collaborations?" were presented, summarised, and discussed in Chapter 7. All the teachers found their collaborations to be both professionally and socially rewarding. Further, they believed that their collaborations resulted in improved teaching and student learning, and in increased efficiency in relation to their duties.

Conclusions

The conclusions presented here are offered in addition to those already presented at the end of each of Chapters 5 through 7. These conclusions relate to broad themes and are of a more general nature than those offered in the preceding chapters. Specifically, the conclusions presented here relate to staff cultures within high schools, varied expressions of teacher autonomy, observations on the problem of time with respect to collaboration, and, finally, a general conceptualization of high school teacher collaboration. Before proceeding with a discussion of these conclusions, some comments are offered regarding the transferability of these and other findings and conclusions reported in this study.

Chapter 3 concluded with the assertion that, based on the methods described therein, the findings reported in this dissertation were a trustworthy representation of the understandings of the participants. Transferability of findings in studies that adopt the method that was employed in this study is another matter. Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings may be presumed to apply to other subjects in other contexts. The problem stems from the nature of the sampling procedure. Using a purposive sampling procedure, the researcher is able to identify participants on the basis of the extent to which they exhibit desired characteristics. While this method has obvious advantages, it does not allow the researcher to determine the extent to which the participants are representative of other teachers in other contexts.

While the researcher has no way of knowing the extent to which the findings may be transferred, one of the purposes of presenting detailed information about the participants, their schools, and experiences, was to allow readers to develop a detailed understanding of the contexts of this study so that they can make informed judgements about the extent to which the findings may translate to other contexts with which they

are familiar. In other words, the reader, and not the researcher, is often best qualified to decide on the matter of transferability to other *specific* contexts.

Teachers' Motivations for Engaging in Collaborative Practices

While these teachers reported positive outcomes for themselves, their teaching, their students, and their schools, the conclusion that these teachers' decisions to collaborate and their collaborative processes can be explained entirely in terms of the outcomes they perceive and report is not warranted. They appeared to collaborate for a number of reasons, most prominent being that they simply prefer to work closely with a respected colleague. The theme of "fun," reported in this chapter and each of the two preceding chapters, bears repeating as it seems to offer the most robust insights into these collaborations. These teachers collaborate because they derive satisfaction from working collaboratively!

The source of satisfaction for each teacher cannot be determined precisely because these teachers do not seem to have made such a determination themselves. In this sense, despite the frequent reporting of reflection about their teaching as an outcome of collaboration, this reflection did not appear to extend to their collaborative work. Put another way, these collaborations do not seem to have emerged as the result of calculated assessments made by the teachers of the differences between the costs and benefits of collaborative modes of work.

The decision and capacity to collaborate appears to have been inextricably bound with the teachers' notions of themselves, their values, their work, and their related constructions of professionalism.

The Relationship Between Collaboration and Time

Among the factors cited by both teachers and theorists as being a major problem in the development of greater collaboration and collegiality in schools has been the awareness that collaboration is time–consuming. As Hargreaves (1994) noted in his analysis of teachers' work and his explication of the "intensification thesis," time is a finite and increasingly overtaxed resource for teachers in schools. In previous chapters, teachers were quoted as saying that their collaboration took "stupid amounts of time," especially in their early stages of development. Other teachers said that they

would do more collaborative work either if they were given more time or if their preparation time was scheduled more effectively.

Time as a Reason or Excuse for Not Collaborating?

In the pilot study (Riordan, 1995) that preceded and informed this research, the conclusion was drawn that teachers may occasionally attribute their disinclination toward collaboration to the fact that they lack time, when it appeared that they were more often uncomfortable with the prospect of exposing their work to the scrutiny of others. While the teachers in this study similarly attributed their lack of even more thoroughgoing collaboration to a lack of time, their claims seems to be more defensible. The issue of time bears further consideration in the light of the outcomes presented in this chapter.

The extent to which collaboration is uniquely time–consuming. Perhaps the reason that collaboration is so frequently reported as being time–consuming can be understood in relation to the outcomes described in Chapter 7. The improvements in instruction and the learning outcomes that the teachers reported, even given the synergistic quality of some of these collaborations, do not come from nowhere, nor do they occur without effort. Surely it is very time–consuming to be reflective about practice, to plan carefully, to evaluate lessons, to prepare resources, and to learn new things. Professional development and effective teaching take time whether they are attended to collaboratively or independently. Perhaps what is time–consuming about collaboration is not collaboration but the professional development and effective teaching that may occur as its consequence.

As reported in Chapter 5, these teachers' collaborations served four broad purposes: pedagogical, professional development, micropolitical, and individual support and relationship maintenance. Further, these purposes were addressed during the combined collaborative and individual practice phase of the collaborations in a number of ways, including formal and informal conferencing, sharing resources and ideas, planning, and team–teaching. The practices that would place additional time demands on a teacher, who is committed to norms of continuous improvement and who is working collaboratively, would be those related to the fourth category of purposes, namely, those related to the development and maintenance of the collaborative partnership. Even these tasks however do not seem to persist as being particularly

time–consuming. When the partnerships were compared, relationship building and maintenance tasks became less time–consuming and central as the partnerships developed.

The Relation Between the Time Demands of Subjects Taught and Collaboration

In Chapter 4 it was reported that each teacher collaborated in the process of teaching either English or Science — allowing, that is for Humanities and Special Education to be counted as English subjects. Coincidentally, the research by King and Peart (1992) that was reported in Chapter 2 showed that these were the two subject areas wherein teachers in senior high schools in Canada reported spending the most time on planning, preparation, and marking (p. 68). Two implications of this are, first, that if effective teacher collaboration were in and of itself a time–consuming task, then we would not expect that teachers of the two most time–consuming subjects to be the only ones identified, or even to be identified at all, by their principals as conforming to the theoretical definition of collaboration. The second possible interpretation is that it is precisely because of the amount of out–of–class work involved in teaching these subjects that these teachers look to their colleagues for assistance, support, and work–sharing.

What relationships exist between the subject being taught and the need to seek collaborative assistance? Could it be that the out–of–class demands related to teaching specific subjects, and in particular the weight of those demands felt by those teachers who are committed to norms of continuous improvement, cause them to look to respected colleagues for the purpose of work sharing? The contention is offered that future exploration of these questions will reveal further important insights into collaborative modes of teachers' work in high schools.

Alternate Conceptions of Time

The deliberations above have been framed within a "technical rational" (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 69) conception of time. Hargreaves suggested that there are three other interrelated dimensions of time that can usefully be employed in the study of teachers' work. Two of these, micropolitical time and phenomenological time, are considered below.

Micropolitical time. Time can be seen as an indicator of the micropolitical power or importance of an individual, group, or subject. The denial of requests made by certain participants for special consideration in the school timetable so as to allow them to use their preparation time for collaborative work was interpreted by those participants as indicative of the value that their administrators placed on teacher collaboration. However, this lack of tangible administrative support did not stop the teachers from collaborating. What it may have contributed to though is the strengthening of the micropolitical purpose of the collaboration. Specifically, the two teachers involved in the special education program seem to have determined that they needed to work together to advocate for their program and their students. This advocacy was not only directed at other teachers in their school, but also at the school building administrators who did not support them by providing synchronised preparation periods.

Phenomenological time. This conception of time emphasizes differences in its subjective estimations by people. As Hargreaves (1994) observed, "Subjective variations in our senses of time are grounded in other aspects of our lives: in our projects, interests and activities, and the kinds of demands they make upon us" (p. 100). While the hours spent talking, planning, and generally working together can be thought of from a quantitative perspective, phenomenologically this time was not generally perceived by these teachers to be problematic. Indeed, for many, it was a cherished source of enjoyment and professional satisfaction. The researcher did not sense that these teachers begrudged the time that they spent on their collaborative work. Rather, the conclusion was drawn that in light of these teachers' constructions of professionalism, collaborative work did not place unwarranted demands on their time. For others, not so inclined, even a fraction of the time that many of these teachers devoted to the collaborations would be considered too onerous.

The consensus evident in the literature on teacher collaboration is that the development of effective collaboration among teachers is severely constrained by a lack of time. The preceding discussion gives cause to question the existence of a direct relation between the provision of time and the emergence of effective collaboration in high schools. While all of the teachers in this study would have welcomed the provision of more time for collaboration, its absence did not preclude such activities. Further, to the extent that time is perceived subjectively, these teachers did not judge the

time that they spent on their work to be particularly onerous, nor did they substantially attribute their failure to develop even more thoroughgoing collaborations to time factors. Rather, the extent, content, and development of their collaborations is best understood in terms of the teachers' own professional and personal values, their estimations of their colleagues, and their own professional needs.

Endemic Isolation

As Hargreaves (1994) has pointed out, there is little scholarly opinion that seriously challenges the view that teaching is an isolated profession. Indeed, in the literature review, the work of scholars of the calibre of Lortie (1975), Goodlad (1984), Connell (1985), Little (1987), and Rosenholz (1989) was cited in support of the conclusion that isolation and "norms of privacy" are pervasive, if not endemic, features of the profession. Further, these writers lead one to conclude that collaboration is rare, fragile, and unlikely to seriously challenge the hegemonic culture of teacher individualism, without massive reform efforts on the part of teachers, school systems, and teacher preparation institutions.

Even writers such as Huberman (1993) and Hargreaves (1994), who have identified and questioned the values implicit in the way that teacher isolation has been reported and who have argued that isolated practice is preferable for "teachers as artisans" (Huberman, 1993) or for teachers who are the subjects of sinister administrative contrivances (Hargreaves, 1992, 1994), do not question this shibboleth of the teachers' work literature. Rather, to the limited extent that they judge teacher isolation to be a problem to be solved, rather than a sanctuary for the hounded and virtuous, Huberman (1993) and Hargreaves (1992, 1994) tend more often than not to imply that changes need to be made to the school, to its administration, and operational features. While the complexion, cause, and effects of teacher isolation have produced some fascinating and clever debate, the existence of "teacher isolation" is arguably one of the few things in the whole of education literature that is uncontested.

On the basis of comments made by several teachers in this study it became clear that there may be ways in which the "teacher isolation" theory can be questioned. First, several of these teachers clearly delineated between teaching in the classroom and other aspects of their work with regard to the areas of their work in which they felt peers and administrators ought to be involved. Following from this, it could be argued that while

classroom teaching is largely carried out beyond the "sight and hearing of colleagues," other aspects of these teachers' work are not. In other words, if one defines teaching as those activities which take place in a classroom, then clearly, even the majority of the teachers in this study, identified on the *basis* of their skill at collaboration, work in isolation. However, if one adopts a broader definition of teaching, then it can be seen, from these teachers' experiences with current and former colleagues, that within these two school jurisdictions alone, there are elaborate and wide–reaching networks of colleagues in which "work" is shared.

Next, the evidence of covert observation by teachers of their colleagues' work, along with findings of other studies of high school teaching such as that by Cohen (1991), suggests that while classes may be taught by one teacher, they are not taught in "private." Thus, while norms of "privacy and isolation" may appear to be honoured on their face, they do not appear to experienced in the reality of the high school. As Cohen (1991) concluded, and as the teachers in this study admitted, teachers know how their colleagues teach.

Jenny's comments, that she was anxious about negative comparisons by students of her teaching in relation to that of James, and comments offered by Anne and Alan, and Harry and Helen all suggest that teachers unwittingly influence each others' practices through the medium of the students. The process appeared to work in this manner: Helen felt the need to include more labs in Science classes because her students were aware that Harry's students were doing more lab work. Helen's students demanded that she do likewise. Further, Anne and Alan's students became used to Alan's excellent assessment practices. Possibly not wishing to appear less competent, Anne incorporated Alan's methods of assessing student writing. It was in this context that Anne said of Alan, "He is my teacher."

These arguments are not offered to suggest that senior high school teaching is not an isolated profession (Levin & Young, 1994), but rather that perhaps we have not fully recognised the cooperation and sharing that is evident if we take a broader view of teachers' work. Further, even though teaching is usually done by one teacher in a classroom, the teacher is not alone, nor is the teacher working outside of the indirect knowledge and influence of colleagues.

Collaborative School Culture

The effective schools literature (e.g., Rosenholz, 1989; Bliss, Firestone, & Richards, 1991) has consistently reported that one of the distinguishing features of effective schools is the existence of a collaborative culture among teachers. In the light of this study, the assumed relation between a whole school culture of collegiality and collaboration and the emergence of effective and satisfying teacher collaborations is questioned. The way in which the teachers in this study understood their collaborative work is at odds with the effective schools literature to the extent that they did not attribute their collaboration to the existence of a particular school culture, nor did they state that the attitude of other teachers or the norms of practice in their schools would fundamentally influence their preference for collaborative work forms.

To the extent that school culture did seem to factor into these teachers' constructions of collaboration, it did so at a department level. In other words, while cultural factors had a limited effect on collaboration, the strongest of these weak cultural influences were felt at the department level and not at the school level. The way in which the subject subculture appeared to influence collaboration was in determining who would and who would not, be involved in collaborative activities. Additionally, the subject subculture was seen to influence the purposes of two of the collaborations in this study. In this manner, the subject subculture is important to the extent that it can define the micropolitical context in which the collaboration occurs. This context is external to the collaboration, not integral to it.

Subject Subcultures

With respect to subject subcultures, it appears that these are not confined to school buildings, nor are they necessarily shared. Awareness of the often extensive and elaborate network of colleagues with whom these teachers were involved suggests that they developed their cultural identity and were susceptible to cultural influences not from the particular department within the building wherein they work, but rather from their interactions with respected colleagues throughout their teaching careers.

With these considerations in mind, the assumption that a principal in a high school can exert anything like the robust influence presumed by the current wave of advocates for symbolic and transformational leadership (e.g., Bolman & Deal, 1994;

Leithwood, 1994) needs to be challenged. Principals and district administrators, taking the advice offered in this literature, may be setting themselves up for failure.

To the extent that norms of collegiality and professionalism can be developed at a communal rather than an individual level in high schools, efforts aimed at encouraging these norms should probably be directed horizontally across school systems at the subject level and not vertically in schools at the building level.

While this recommendation is offered below, it is mentioned here as it is appropriate in the context of this discussion: Principals in senior high schools should work with their department coordinators and encourage them to foster cooperative networks with similar schools across school systems. Professional development resources could more profitably be directed at these endeavors, rather than at potentially futile activities in school buildings that require teachers to work "collaboratively" with teachers from other "subcultures." This is not to say that there are not important issues that need to be addressed at a whole–school level in high schools, rather the argument is being made that professional development collaborations are not among them.

Within this literature, a robust role for the principal is both assumed and asserted (Huberman, 1993). This is particularly the case in the development of a shared culture that is conducive to collaboration. In this study, the principal at each of the schools where these teachers worked was seen to have a minimal effect and an indirect influence on the development and contents of the collaborations.

Toward an Understanding of Senior High School Teacher Collaboration

The task of trying to capture the essence of these teachers' experiences and understandings in order to the present a depiction of the possible character of senior high school collaboration is made difficult by the number of issues that the teachers identified and by the seeming complexity of the interrelations between these issues and factors. The interrelations between factors can best be presented in diagrammatic form, as in Figure 8.1. This figure contains a propositional statement that was tested against the researcher's knowledge of each of the partnerships in the study. It was found to be robust enough to account for the variations in and the existence of each of the partnerships in the study.

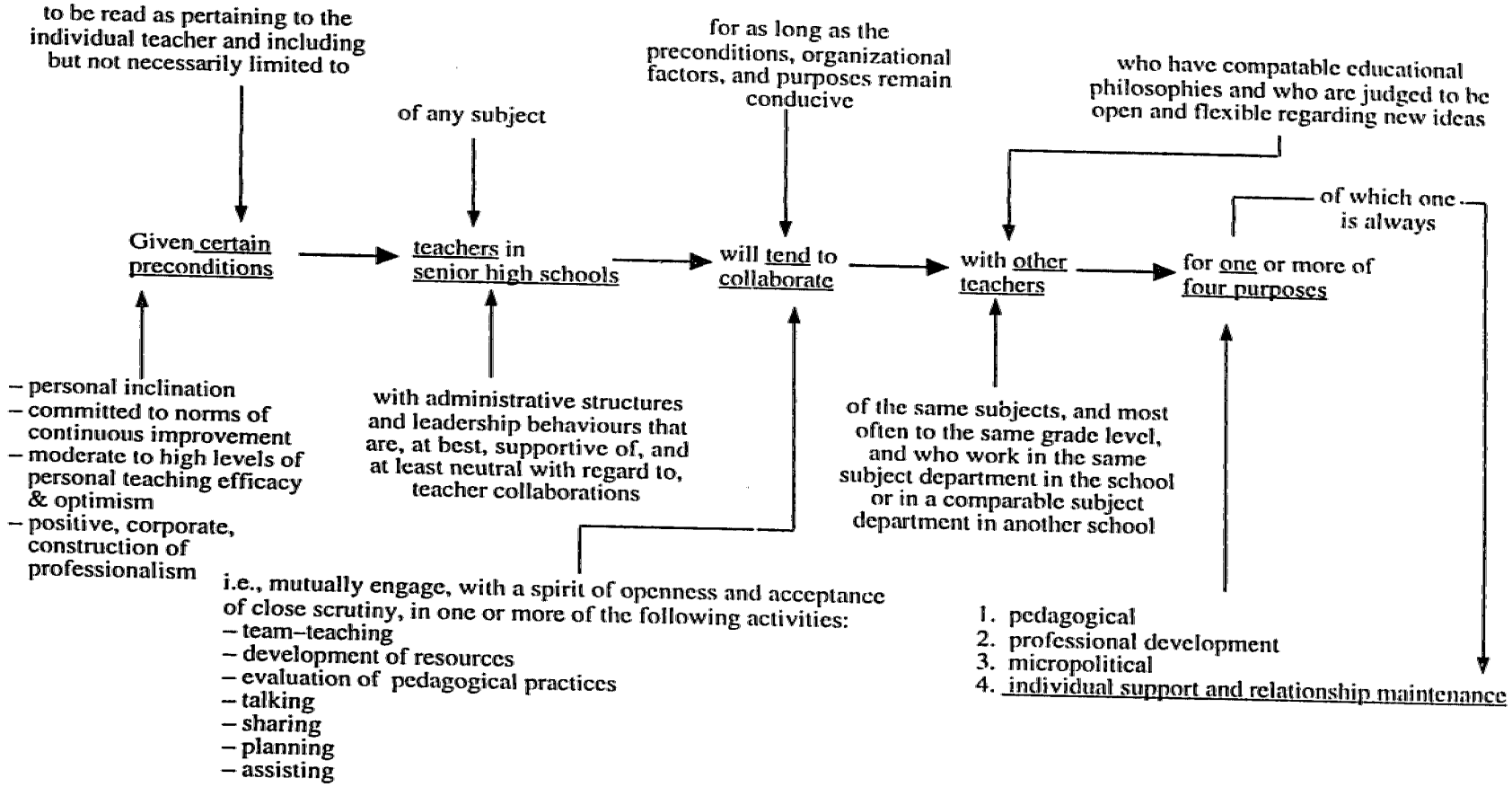

FIGURE 8.1

Conceptualization of senior high school teacher collaboration.

In the propositional statement, each underlined word is modified by the clause or phrase that is connected to it by the arrow. The caution is offered that while this propositional statement accounts for all the collaborations studied, it cannot be determined how fully the account is made. Further, to the extent that all data are "underdetermined" (Phillips, 1986), other propositions may also account for the data gathered in the course of this study.

Recommendations for Practice

The following recommendations are offered for consideration by school district administrators, high school teachers, department coordinators, and principals.

Teachers

1. Teachers wishing to experience increased personal and professional satisfaction in their work, especially as it relates to enhanced student learning, may benefit from a collaborative work relationship with a colleague, not necessarily in their own school, who teaches the same subjects and shares similar educational philosophies. On the basis of findings presented in Chapter 6, teachers are challenged to consider the possible benefits that may accrue were they to enter into collaborative relationships with teachers of different subjects. Collaborative relationships with such colleagues, who are similarly committed to norms of continuous improvement, may also result in valuable outcomes for the teachers involved and their students.

2. Beginning teachers are advised to seek the support and existence of a mentor early in their careers.

3. Teachers who are content with current teaching practices and who feel they have reached a high level of expertise could derive significant personal and professional satisfaction from working collaboratively with a beginning teacher. By mentoring the young teacher, the experienced colleague may assist the beginning teacher develop a view of professionalism that includes a preference for collegial work forms.

4. Teachers unwilling to team–teach or to collaborate in other forms of shared instruction may still derive significant benefits from collaborations with colleagues.

the forms and outcomes of teacher collaboration. This recommendation is consistent with the views of Lortie (1975) cited earlier in this thesis.

School and District Administrators

The following recommendations are addressed to district and school–based administrators:

1. This first recommendation is based on the finding reported in Chapter 6 that all of the participants had previous collaborative experiences and that the majority of these teachers had worked with a mentor in the early years of their teaching. School and district administrators who are responsible for hiring new teaching staff, and who wish to employ teachers with the greatest propensity to engage in collaborative work practices, should include in teacher selection procedures, some specific strategies for identifying candidates who have worked collaboratively in the past. Resumes and references should be analyzed for evidence of previous collaborative work. During interviews, candidates should be asked to describe previous collegial experiences. Beginning teachers could be asked to describe situations during their teaching practicum, or other work experiences, in which they worked collaboratively and or sought assistance from colleagues.

2. School and district administrators are advised to inform their policies and practices aimed at facilitating collaboration work practices with a knowledge of the variety and complexity of factors that were shown to influence effective collaborations.

3. Principals in senior high schools should work with their department coordinators and encourage them to foster cooperative networks with similar schools across school systems. Professional development resources could more profitably be directed at these endeavors, rather than at potentially futile activities in school buildings that require teachers to work "collaboratively" with teachers from other "subcultures."

Subject Department Coordinators

The following recommendations are specifically addressed to subject department coordinators in high schools and are based on the finding reported in Chapter 6 that the majority of the teachers were critical of the human relations management activities of department coordinators and that the teachers attributed more weight to the influence of department coordinators on their collaborations and general

work environment than they attributed to the actions of principals and assistant principals.

1. Department coordinators should act with the awareness that they may have comparatively higher influence over the work and culture of their subject department than do the other administrators in the school.

2. Department coordinators should proactively engage in management and leadership activities directed toward (a) maintaining positive work relations among teachers; (b) encouraging and rewarding collaborative work, including cooperative activities with similar departments in other schools; (c) attempting to accommodate scheduling and other requests from teachers when such requests are made for the purpose of increasing the opportunities for collaborative work; and (d) creating the norm of group rather than individual accountability for student learning.

3. Based on the descriptions and positive evaluations of the collaborative networks among science department coordinators offered by one of the science teachers in this study, and the finding reported in Chapter 6 that collaboration in high schools tends to occur among people of similar philosophies and who teach and/or have similar professional responsibilities, subject department coordinators seeking collegial relations should consider the opportunities for networking with other department coordinators of similar departments in other schools.

Recommendations for Further Research

In addition to the standard recommendation of replication of the study in other contexts, the following four recommendations are offered for further research:

1. All researchers, whether knowingly or otherwise, favour certain theoretical perspectives (see Burrell & Morgan, 1979). The theoretical perspectives that guided the formation of this study, and that were applied in the analysis of the data were taken from the (a) the management literature, (b) the sociology literature, and (c) the micropolitics literature.

Accordingly, the recommendation is offered that high school teacher collaboration be studied from a further variety of perspectives. The social psychology literature has the potential to offer valuable insights into the psychological motivations of teachers and the relation between these and the nature and extent of the teacher's

collaborations. Equally, the literature on work groups in organizations (e.g., Scott & Cohen, 1995) might lead to fruitful insights in a further study of teacher collaboration.

2. Theoretical orientations also influence the selection of methods of inquiry. Researchers skilled in the constantly evolving methods of quantitative analysis may wish to construct studies that further our understanding of collaboration by surveying a large sample of teachers in a variety of school systems. The factors identified as being related to collaboration, some of which are conceptualized in Figure 8.1, could inform the construction of a survey instrument that could be used as a means of addressing a wide variety of research questions.

3. It would be worthwhile to further explore the importance of collaboration and collegiality as characteristics of effective high schools. Researchers should address questions such as what forms of collegiality, if any, emerge as being characteristic of effective high schools? The Teacher Peer Relations Continuum presented as Figure 1.1 proved helpful in this study and could be applied in further research. One question which has interested the researcher, and which could be explored in such a study, is the extent to which the emergence of too many collaborative relations in a high school might begin to have a detrimental effect on school effectiveness. Not all forms of collegiality in general, and not all collaborations in particular, nor their widespread adoption as a norm of practice in all school contexts, may lead to improvements in school effectiveness. Forms and contents of collegiality and collaboration in "ineffective" schools could also be sought and studied. Various forms of peer relationships probably exist also in these schools.

4. Studies designed to examine the relationship between teacher collaboration and student learning are recommended.

5. While none of the teachers mentioned that they used the Internet as a medium for the exchange of ideas and resources, the participants' descriptions of the often elaborate and widespread professional networks to which they belonged suggest that as internet access and computing skills become increasingly common in high schools, the Internet has the potential to be an invaluable aid to interschool teacher collaboration. A case study of a group of teachers who use the Internet in such a manner, or an action research project, wherein a group of teachers of the same subject in different schools were trained in the use of the Internet for communication and

manner, or an action research project, wherein a group of teachers of the same subject in different schools were trained in the use of the Internet for communication and resource sharing could reveal important findings and recommendations regarding the best use of this technology as an aid for the furtherance of collaborative networks.

Personal Comments

I have felt uncomfortable with the view that collaboration among high school teachers is rare. While my study has not endeavoured to quantify the extent to which collaboration exists in high schools, it has given me cause to think anew on this topic. Such conclusions seem, to me, to imply that teachers are individualistic—even self–absorbed—and that they are incapable of, or unwilling to, enter into effective, work–focussed relationships with their colleagues. Yet many of my former colleagues and many of the teachers whom I have met in other places and at other times have impressed me with their openness to others, their willingness to offer help and assistance to colleagues, their level of community involvement, their generosity and compassion for the children they have taught, and their advocacy for democratic and participatory instructional methods and forms of school governance. Despite these friendships with individual high school teachers, my reading on teacher collaboration, the comments offered to me by so many people during casual conversations, at conferences, and in meetings, and even my own reflections on some of the occurrences that occurred during the 11 years in which I worked in three high schools, all seem to support the very conclusion that I have questioned. Perhaps thoroughgoing collaboration among high school teachers truly is rare.

But why? Subject subcultures? "Balkanization?" Teacher preparation and selection procedures? Time? Personality type and combinations thereof? Gender issues? Administrative interference? Externally imposed curriculum? Fear of scrutiny? Years of service? "Moving" or "stuck" schools? Varying individual needs for relationships with other adults in schools? Teachers' constructions of professionalism? The hegemonic dominance of norms of privatism? Some of these factors, and several others seem to play a part. However, as I speculate on this issue I am not satisfied that they explain, either individually or collectively, why high school teacher collaboration, in its fullest sense, is rare.

This issue, more than any other, has increasingly troubled me during the process of this study. As I reflected on what the 10 teachers had told me about their work with their colleagues, I have come to agree with Benne, Bennis, and Chin (1969), when they said that

> collaboration is always an achievement and not a gift. Collaboration is usually attained through open and gruelling confrontation of differences, through conflicts faced and resolved, through limited areas of collaboration growing into larger areas of collaboration as trust develops. The ways of collaboration must be learned and they typically call for achievement of more complex skills and understandings. (p. 152)

Teaching is work. It is done with students. However, it may be done more enjoyably, and possibly more effectively, if the experiences of the 10 teachers in this study are anything to judge by, when it is shared in collaboration with a colleague. These potential benefits do not accrue without a price. This price is exacted in the challenges faced as the teacher learns how to work with a peer, how to deal with differences, how to trust and be trustworthy, and what wisdom demands is best held in private. All these require the expenditure of considerable effort, for collaboration is work.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A:

Notes for Initial Telephone Conversations With School Principals

1. Introduction

2. Purpose of the call

    - seek help in identifying participants
    - set a date and time for next contact

3. Criteria for selection

    - working collaboratively with at least one other teacher
    - have been working with their partner for at least one school year
    - they must be prepared to provide an audio–tape of one of their meetings
    - their collaboration must be substantive in terms of mutuality, openness, and content
    - both teachers in the collaborative partnership have to be willing to participate

4. Answer and note questions.

5. Set date and time for next contact

Appendix B:

Letter of Consent

Geoff Riordan
Department of Educational Policy Studies
University of Alberta
Edmonton
Alberta, T6G 2G5

[Date]

ph. 430–0433 (h)
492–4913 (w)

Consent to Participate in the High School Teacher Collaboration Study

Dear colleague,

Following our recent discussion during which you agreed to participate in the High School Teacher Collaboration study, I am requesting that you acknowledge your consent by signing this letter. I have enclosed two copies so that you can keep one for your records.

As a participant in this study you will be required to provide an audio–tape of a conference or work session between you and your partner. You are also asked to allow me to interview you on two separate occasions, at a time and location mutually convenient to us both. Finally you are asked to participate in a discussion with myself and the other participants. The interviews should take approximately 40 minutes and the discussion up to one and a half hours. It is anticipated that these activities will take place between October, 1995 and the end of January 1996.

You may at any time withdraw your consent to participate in the study. You are also granted veto rights over the transcripts of the interviews and conversations that you are involved in. The transcripts of these conversations will be returned to you to allow you to check their accuracy and decide if you would like to exercise your right of veto. Should you decide to exercise either your "opt–out" or "veto" right, you may do so be either phoning me on one of the numbers listed above, or by writing to me at the above address.

Following the study you will be provided with a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations. In these, as well as in the dissertation, you will find that certain references, such as the name of your school and your name, have been altered to protect your anonymity.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. I appreciate your generosity in sharing your time and insights. I hope that you find the process to be enjoyable and rewarding.

Geoff Riordan

I, _____ acknowledge that I consent to participate in the study described above.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Appendix C:

Round 1 Interview Schedule

Round 1 Interview Schedule

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. How long have you taught in this school?
3. What subjects are you currently teaching?
4. What other responsibilities do you have in your school?
5. Please tell me what you thoughts are about teaching as an occupation?
6. If you had a magic wand and could do anything at all to improve teaching, what would you do?
7. What role should other teachers' play in the each others work?
8. With which colleague(s) do you work most closely?
9. How long have you worked with this person (these people)?
10. What is it about this person that makes you choose to work with him/her?
11. Do you think [name] views teaching in a similar way? How does his/her view of teaching differ from your own?
12. Do the two of you ever engage in discussion about the fundamentals of teaching, what teaching ought to be like in an ideal world, or what makes a great teacher? Please tell me a little about what you discuss.
13. What things do you do when you work with this person?
14. How often do you do this (i.e., work, meet, talk, exchange resources)?
15. Do you work with other teachers in the same manner and to the same extent as you do with [name]?
16. How are decisions made about what the two of you will do?
17. Do either one of you take the lead?
18. In order to help me understand how the two of you work, would you please describe an incident where there may have been some disagreement about what the two of you should do. (Probe)
19. Please take your time with this one, are there any aspects of your job, any tasks you have to complete, that you would not share with, or even talk about with [name]? Could you give me some examples? What is it about these jobs or tasks that makes them different? (Probe)

Appendix D:
Letter to Participants Following Round 1 Interviews

Geoff Riordan
Department of Educational Policy Studies
University of Alberta
Edmonton
Alberta, T6G 2G5

<Date>

Dear **<Field:first name>**

Again, thank you for making the time in your busy schedule for our recent interview. As promised, here is the transcript of our conversation.

If you find a section of the transcript which you would not like included in the study, please contact me either at work on 492–4919, or at home on 431–0433. If I don't hear from you by next Friday (Nov. 15), I will assume that everything is OK.

Before we can schedule the second interview I need to receive the audio–tape of your conference with **<Field:partner's first name>**. Could you call me on one of the above numbers as soon as you have completed the tape. A 10–15 minute conversation between the two of you that pertains to some aspect of your work will provide me with sufficient information.

Thanks again for your assistance. I look forward to meeting with you soon.

Regards

Geoff Riordan

Appendix E:

Round 2 Interview Guide

Round 2 Interview Guide

Part 1: Recap Transcript from Interview 1

- Was there anything that was said in the first interview that you would like to discuss further?
- Raise issues (if any) for clarification following analysis of Interview 1

Part 2: Discuss transcript of Conference

- I have a copy of the transcript of your taped conference with (partner's name). I would like to look through this with you and discuss what was happening during the conference.
- Was this a typical interaction?
- Discuss pertinent issues, seek clarification of understanding?

Part 3: Focus on Processes (PROBE FOR EXAMPLES)

- Decision making processes
- Leadership/mutuality etc

Part 4: Outcomes (PROBE FOR EXAMPLES)

- What do you think you do more effectively as a result of your collaboration?
- What do you think you do less effectively?
- What aspects of your job, if any, do you do better (quality) as a result of your collaboration? Please explain.
- What aspects of your job, if any, do you do more efficiently (time effort) as a result of your collaboration?
- What aspects of your job, if any, do you do less well (quality)?
- What aspects of your job, if any, do you do less efficiently?
- How has your work with ..... effected your relationship with him/her?
- as above .. other teachers?
- as above .. administrators?
- as above .. students?

Part 5: Conclusion

- Briefly summarize understanding of what the teacher has said and ask if what I heard was accurate.
- Clarification.
- Ask if there is anything that has been missed, anything that they may like to add.

Appendix F:

Letter to Participants Following Round 2 Interviews

Geoff Riordan
Department of Educational Policy Studies
University of Alberta
Edmonton
Alberta
T6G 2G5
ph. 430–0433 (h)
492–4913 (w)

January 28, 1996

Dear [PARTICIPANT]

I am returning the transcript of our second interview. If there is anything in the transcript that you would not like me to include in the analysis, or anything, which on reflection, misrepresents your views, please phone me. I am aware that there are some typographical errors and that where names are mentioned these are often misspelled. I am not concerned about these as all names will be changed and spelling corrected if any sections need to be quoted.

Please phone me by next Monday if you have any concerns with the transcript. If I do not hear from you I will assume that you have no objections to including the transcript in my study.

At the beginning of the study, I mentioned that there would be a meeting for all participants. In a few weeks I am hoping to send you a point–form summary of the findings of the study. At this time I will also indicate the time and place for the informal meeting. At this stage I anticipate that it would be held here at the university on Sunday February 25 at 2.00pm. I would anticipate that our discussion would take one to two hours.

I am aware that you and the others in the study are very busy and may not be able to attend. If this is the case then you could still contribute to the "discussion" by phoning me if you have any thoughts to share after you have read the point–form summary.

Thank you for your ongoing participation in this study.

Regards

Geoff Riordan

Appendix G:
Focus-group Handout 1: Nature of the Five Collaborations

Nature of the Five Collaborations

Activities by one or More Partnerships	Activities Specifically Excluded by one or More Partnerships	General Observations of Partnerships
Sharing • programs • ideas • resources • stories *Demonstrating* • use of equipment *Teaching* • team teaching – delivery – assessment • each other about – specific topics – teaching strategies *Planning and Negotiating* • workshops for other teachers • programs for special ed. Students • strategies for dealing with other teachers • team taught units, programs *Advising* • dealings with – administration – other teachers – students & parents *Evaluating* • units of work • students' work *Supporting* • social/personal • personal • political *General talk about* • philosophical issues • pedagogical issues • administrative issues • staff issues	Actual classroom teaching Observation of partner Negative talk about colleagues Preparation within areas of specific expertise Negative evaluations of colleague Personal assessments of own teaching Routine activities Socializing—friendship Relations with students Personal philosophy of teaching Marking/assessment/evaluation of students	Vary from 1 to 3 years 4/5 in same subject area Vary in terms of influence of administrative organizational factors in partnership formation Vary in frequency and focus of contact All change over time Go through a getting to know you stage Vary from subject/task commonality to philosophical/personal mutuality To varying extents all mean different things to each partner Vary in terms of openness and negotiation All partnerships are valued and important Generally not the only collaborative/sharing relationship Generally work past or around potential areas of conflict

Appendix H:
Focus-group Handout 2: Influence of Factors Associated With the Teacher on Collaborations

Influence of Factors Associated With the Teacher on Collaborations

<table>
<tr><th>Beliefs about teaching</th><th>Previous experiences</th><th>Other factors</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Shared by 3 or more
• love it
• hard work
• too much focus on exams/outcomes
• learning
• students' have greater needs
• awareness of/sensitivity to individual students

Mentioned by 2 or less
• like working with small classes
• hate the admin tasks
• good when its creative
• pervasive
• flexible/unpredictable
• method/process not content
• rewarding
• I have fun
• control/freedom from scrutiny
• like to see/know what others do</td><td>Shared by all
• have had or do have collab type relationship with others

Shared by 8 or more
• have taught in other schools

Shared by 5 or more
• have taught other subjects—collab as peer consultation very important for learning
• had someone who was either a mentor or an especially significant colleague in the early part of career (same gender)
• friendship and/or professional relationship maintained

Mentioned by all the science teachers
• resource sharing is common

Mentioned by two or less
• have surreptitiously observed others teaching</td><td rowspan="2">Age
• 4/5 close in age
• younger teachers more focussed on practical or subject specific issues
• combined with experience is and important variable in inter–department relations

Gender
• tricky
• important for some
• male/female fascinating
• same gender less energy
• related to age
• all (most) have worked with both

Efficacy
• all high (or will be soon!)

Aspirations
• 8 classroom assignment to a subject
• continuous improvement
• school success
• introduction /promotion of special programs
• particular professional standing with colleagues/ admin
• help young teachers/student teachers</td></tr>
<tr><td>Conclusions
positive
hard
learning
students</td><td>Collaborative partnerships extend over time and across school and jurisdiction boundaries and are subject and philosophically aligned.</td></tr>
</table>

Appendix I:

Focus-group Handout 3: Influence of Factors Associated With Teaching and Other Responsibilities on Collaborations

Influence of Factors Associated With Teaching and Other Responsibilities on Collaborations

Teaching Responsibilities	Other Responsibilities
Many are new or relatively new to either the subject, grade level, or school. Closest collaborative links are within the subject specialization, whereas the other links are more consultative than collaborative (mutual). Subjects taught (TT*) English* Humanities* Physics Biology Chemistry Special Education Religion Phys. Ed. Business Studies Subjects/responsibilities lend themselves to particular types of sharing. Science—things, demos. Team teaching—negotiation first then sharing...Special Ed—people–students, teachers, parents, employers etc. Difficulty in sharing and collab across subjects.	All nominate at least one area of extra–curricula responsibility None of the participants have an official administrative role Many of the extra curricular responsibilities involve work with other teachers on committees etc.
Conclusions	Conclusions

Appendix J:

Focus–group Handout 4: Influence of Factors Associated With Teachers' Assessments of Their Teaching Partners

Influence of Factors Associated With Teachers' Assessments of Their Teaching Partners

Similarities and Differences

- Age, gender, philosophy, subjects taught, attitudes, aspirations
- These work in different combinations.
- Can not attribute differences in working relations to them, can only say that they are associated.

Strengths of Partner

- happy to share
- perfectionist
- organized
- insightful
- caring
- fun
- good to look at
- willing to listen
- complementary skills
- similar focus
- "real smart"
- will back me up
- does an awful lot of reading
- gracious
- commitment
- shared belief in collab, group work, team teaching
- relates well (and in ways I can not) to the kids
- provides specific and helpful feedback
- easy to get along with
- sets higher expectations
- gets things done
- good model

Needs of Partner

- resources

Differences/Areas That May Cause Difficulties/That Are Being Negotiated

- related to differences in the above factors
- dealings with students
- flexibility
- "we're opposites"

General Observations About the Qualities of an Ideal Teaching Partner/Colleague

- common interests
- work focussed not socially focussed
- common need
- interested in people
- teaching style not so important
- similar age, experience
- gender (for some)
- philosophical orientation, then specific pedagogical preferences, then friendship
- committed
- Chemistry
- comfort/trust
- people who love what they do
- think the same
- teach the same subject
- right attitude to "new ideas"
- not authoritarian/rigid
- be prepared to give "stupid" amounts of time
- easy to get along with
- professional

Appendix K:

Focus-group Handout 5: Influence of Factors Associated With the School on Collaborations

Influence of Factors Associated With the School on Collaborations

Organization, Procedures, and Culture

- Schedule—amount and coincidence of prep time
  - like more
  - can't observe
  - requested time off together
  - stupid amounts of time taken
- introduction of new programs
  - humanities
  - language
  - I.B.
- Observation
  - would like to
  - would not like to be
  - want feedback
  - not observing is a weakness
  - not observing is part of culture
- Small school
  - we all talk
  - little option with choice of colleagues
  - teach other subjects
  - maintaining good relations important
  - know the kids
- Large school
  - more departmentalized
  - more choice of partner
  - more prone to balkanization & politics
  - more power to dept heads
  - different needs for cooperation—same programs
- High School Teaching
  - can't be a 10

Actions of Administrators

- The key administrator in larger schools is the dept. Head. DH deals with teachers, P & AP deal with students & parents.
  - effectiveness at facilitating communication
  - tendency to avoid confrontation/conflict
  - assignment of teaching responsibilities
- Quality and frequency of feedback from P/AP related to school size. Vary in what they notice (not much)
- All tend to create a healthy environment and to support collaborative work
- Are susceptible to transactional relations
- Assumed to be aware and not to act.
- can mess it up, can't fix it up
- evaluation, observation by admin nonexistent or useless
- should do more to assist and encourage young teachers to share, attend conferences etc.
- conservative—need to be educated
- resort to a disciplinarian mode
- minimal effect

Other Factors

- Exams
- Curriculum demands
- Larger financial constraints
  - fewer consultants
- District initiatives
  - families
  - resource sharing
- ATA
- Contract status
- Support by family and friends
- **Feedback from students central**
- Its about kids

Actions of other teachers

- many are disinterested in sharing, collab, etc
- age differences
- other teachers couldn't stop us
- not a lot of feedback from colleagues
- teaching is private
- political ramifications to choice of partner
- impatience with the lazy and/or incompetent/uncaring
- not an important reference group for the older participants
- don't help them unless they ask
- they take suggestions as criticisms
- staff described as close, friendly, professional, etc
- some tension within and between t's in departments
- frustration at those who prefer to accommodate rather than integrate (Flex—inflex)

Physical Resources

- Arrangement & composition of staff work areas.
- privacy/openness of teaching areas
- proximity of partner's teaching area
- renovations and/or availability of large teaching space

Appendix L:
Focus–group Handout 6: Outcomes of Collaboration

Outcomes of Collaboration

Teaching

- marvellous to get another perspective (others miss out)
- better for assessments
- cuts down on work
- learned a lot from others
- fast–track knowledge and experience
- double thinking (reflection)
- synergy
- derive satisfaction from seeing kids learn
- higher quality of instruction
- learn from observing colleague teach
- learn new skills teaching 60
- better organized
- different strengths
- couldn't get through with out the assistance, materials
- easier to plan—more ideas, input
- my teaching has changed
- keeps me on track

Disadvantages

- loss of spontaneity
- structured
- time consuming

Self

- learning
- stronger position in the school
- friendship and support
- honest feedback
- everything I do comes from someone else
- learn how to deal with different people
- the discovery of ideas
- reciprocal learning
- respect from a respected colleague
- fun
- how to think about experiences
- how to deal with problems
- appreciate how much I can learn from people around me
- sharing learning=collaboration
- learn that classroom has to be more open
- can articulate own p.d. goals
- helps with relationship with students and parents
- has made teaching great

Students

- good feedback
- model team work
- students perceive when there is cooperation among the teachers
- kids think I'm innovative
- collab about kids—meet their needs

School

- Good for the principal to be able to say it happens
- Important for the younger teachers—learn the tricks
- Better instruction, better organized
- Good feedback from parents

Other

- Less constrained in relations with other teachers
- Friendship
- Enjoy their company
- Enjoy respect of others as a result
- Acceptance by association
- Political
- Point at which there is more to learn
- Very threatening to teach in front of others
- Trust is important

Appendix M:

Letter to Participants Regarding Final Veto Rights

Friday April 26, 1996

Dear Participant,

Enclosed with this letter is a copy of the four chapters of my dissertation that report the information you provided during the interviews. My supervisor has recommended that I return these chapters to you so that you may read them and advise me if there is anything that you are uncomfortable with. Although I have provided you with copies of the interview transcripts, I agree with my supervisor that it is best to err on the side of caution and give you another opportunity to veto any quotes or general comments that you are concerned about.

You will notice that you and your school have been given a pseudonym and also that, as far as possible, information about you and your school has been presented in a general manner to reduce the likelihood that you can be identified. This is standard practice in research of this kind.

While you are reading this please keep in mind that even though you know who you are, other readers will not. While dissertations have a reputation of not being widely read, a copy of the dissertation will be provided to your school district for its library. Thus it is possible that at some point in the future, a person who may know you or your school may read this document and guess at your identity. I would also like to publish one or more articles based on the study, although in these I will report the findings in a more general form.

Please read these chapters carefully and phone me before Monday May 6 to let me know if you had any concerns. If I do not hear from you by that date I will phone you. It is important that I get approval from each participant. You may phone me at the university on 492-3690 or at home on 431-0433.

Please dispose of the document when you have read it as it is possible that a participant would like to have certain changes made. I will send you a summary of the document when it is complete. If any of you are interested I could also provide you with a complete copy of the dissertation at the end of June. If you would like a copy, please let me know during our phone conversation on or before May 6.

Thank you for your ongoing cooperation.

Regards

Geoff Riordan