Collaborative Leadership in the Context of Appraisal

Sarah Jane McWilliams

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ABSTRACT

This research project investigated whether espoused theories of collaborative leadership matched practice in the context of appraisal. The research was undertaken at a South Auckland primary school (School X).

The literature on collaboration, leadership and appraisal was drawn upon to identify common elements for effective collaborative leadership. These key elements were then used to form criteria for data gathering.

The methods employed in this research project involved documentary analysis and the administration of a questionnaire. The reason for selecting these two methods was to identify espousals in the documentation on collaborative leadership and compare these with personal perceptions in practice.

The major findings of this research were that at School X documentation clearly stipulated a collaborative leadership intent (the espoused practice). Staff also perceived there to be evidence of these espoused elements of collaborative leadership in the appraisal process. These elements consisted of informing, illustrating, inquiry, withholding assumptions, creating ownership, monitoring, evaluating, reflecting, partnership, co-operation, agreement, inclusiveness and flexibility. The findings indicated that there were varying degrees to how these elements were practised to provide transparency and ownership.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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My supervisor Eileen Piggot-Irvine, provided me with critical feedback and guided me through the research project. Her time, advice and encouragement have been invaluable.

Thank you also to family and friends who have supported me throughout this research project.
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Chapter 1
THE SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

Introduction

Since the decentralisation of schools in the late 1980’s, the Ministry of Education has devolved the governing of the school to the local body (communities). The principal, as the CEO of a school is required to maintain a curriculum that provides life-long learning, lead and manage professionals, promote and model collaboration, and engage in administration activities for the good of the school and its community (Olssen & Morris Mathews, 1997). A key implication for principals is to lead the organisation and its people through a visioning process. At School X the vision statement identifies that “our staff, students and families form a partnership” (School X Vision Statement, 2007). The vision statement is therefore collaboration because one of the underlying criteria for collaboration is partnership.

During the period of two years since inception the school has grown very quickly, both in terms of staff, children, and a rapidly increasing community of numerous ethnic groups. Being one of the ten foundation staff members, who assisted in developing, and actively engaging in the visioning process, I have become increasingly aware of a perceived gap that has started to emerge in terms of this espoused collaboration in the leadership context. This gap is particularly evident in the appraisal context. The growth of staff in a relatively short space of time has seen new leadership positions arise. Although there is value placed on inducting new staff (a retreat held at the beginning of the year) and coaching appraisers through the appraisal process, issues concerning levels of genuine collaboration in appraisal between senior leaders and teachers have arisen.

The relevance of investigating collaborative leadership in the appraisal process was worthy of investigation because the outcome was to identify any gap between espoused values and beliefs (those articulated in the visioning process and appraisal on collaboration) and the practice in terms of perceptions of staff. It was also designed to assist in identifying the structures that promote collaborative leadership.
The methodology for the research took the form of a qualitative approach, adopting the methods of documentary analysis and a questionnaire designed to identify the collaborative leadership practices within the appraisal context. It examined whether the espoused values about collaborative leadership (in documentation) in the context of appraisal matched staff perceptions of actions.

The aims of this research were:

1. To identify structures and systems that promote collaborative leadership both generally and at School X.
2. To critique collaborative leadership in the context of the appraisal process at School X.

The key research questions were:

1. What are the criteria for effective collaborative leadership?
2. How has collaborative leadership at School X developed generally?
3. What are the beliefs and values associated with collaborative leadership in the appraisal process at School X?
4. What collaborative processes are evident in the documentation for visioning statements and appraisal?
5. What are staff perceptions of the effectiveness of collaborative leadership in appraisal at School X?

**Context**

School X is a school situated in South/East Auckland and is classed as a decile 10 school and has a vast representation of cultures. School X is in its fourth year of operation and during this time has seen an extensive amount of growth in the number of students enrolled (57 – 720) and hence growth in the number of staff (10-40). The school has made it a priority to induct new members comprehensively in order to develop and maintain a shared vision and philosophy that we are a community of learners where collaboration is valued. Part of this induction for staff is based around the beliefs, systems, structure and culture of the appraisal process.
Effective appraisal is strongly embedded in the collaborative culture of the school and effective management of the system itself is crucial to its successful functioning. Appraisers at School X have been trained and mentored through a coaching process in order for appraisal to happen in a transparent, open and honest manner. The staff, at School X benefit from an appraisal process that is based on clear goal setting, provides recognition, and gives feedback and feed-forward through the collection of evidence based data and ongoing dialogue. Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) describe this as the essence of appraisal as “it involves participants in a continuous dialogue about performance data” (p.12). It is imperative that appraisal does not happen TO people, instead, it should be WITH. Colleagues should be in control of their own growth, setting appropriate goals, collecting evidence and being involved in quality discussion with their mentor/appraiser at regular intervals to monitor progress.

Since School X’s paramount value is that of quality learning and teaching, quality appraisal that involves shared understanding must be a vital element of this process. Piggot-Irvine (2003) states “teachers need to feel in control, and there needs to be stated, agreed elements of the process i.e. transparency, confidentiality, trust, an educative and well-resourced process, mutual respect, clear guidelines, development and accountability” (p.258).

The appraisal cycle is based on the openness and trust in keeping with that noted by Piggot-Irvine (2003) who says:

   Effective appraisal is underpinned by a relationship of respect and has outcomes directly linked to improving learning and teaching, that is, of an educative process. Effectiveness is also linked to appraisal processes and information that have clarity, objectivity and high integrity.

   (Piggot-Irvine. 2003, p.254)

Below are criteria for effective appraisal sourced from common themes in Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005):

   - transparent and confidential
   - independent from disciplinary aspects
   - an educative process
• based on trust
• has integrated development and accountability
• is well resourced training and time
• based on objective, informative data
• has clear guidelines
• based on mutual respect
• goes beyond the superficial – on-going and in-depth.

The criteria are linked to the collaborative approach as transparency, trust, and mutual respect are bi-lateral in nature and promote ownership in decision-making.

**Overview**
Having outlined the rationale and context for this research the first chapter will firstly expand upon the literature associated with collaborative leadership and provide the background and evidence used to develop a criteria of collaborative leadership. This chapter is then divided into three other sections, which discuss diverse perspectives of collaborative leadership, the major issues and themes presented in the literature and collaborative leadership aligned with appraisal.

The methodology chapter will identify the processes of data collection for this research i.e. the questionnaire and documentary analysis. This chapter also describes how the criteria for collaborative leadership were used to analyse the data collected from the questionnaire and documents. Ethical considerations are also referred to in this chapter.

Chapter four identifies the results from the analysis of the questionnaire and documents. The documents were analysed using the criteria of collaborative leadership and these criteria form the sub-headings to this section of the analysis. The three parts of the questionnaire (school vision, appriasal document, and collaborative leadership literature) are analysed using bar graphs and qualitative quotes collated in each section provide evidence and support for the data gathered.

The discussion of the research results final chapter compares and contrasts the findings with the literature on collaborative leadership. The research questions are used as sub-headings and there is a discussion on each based on the research data and the analysis.
A concluding chapter summarises the key findings of the research and provides recommendations for future practice. Limitations of the research are also addressed in the conclusion.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Collaboration is described by Cardno (1990) as: “the term employed to express partnership, co-operation, agreement, consent and working in combination to accomplish institutional objectives” (p.1). In an educational setting collaboration is associated with leadership styles, encompassing consultation, shared vision, participation and openness. It implies a situation of trust, whereby inclusiveness (all necessary stakeholders are involved in the decision-making process) is a feature of the organisational culture. It is often assumed that effective collaboration can be a positive method of decision-making (due to its shared ownership and bilateral nature) and that it is implicit in current school administration as defined in Tomorrows Schools (Ministry of Education, 1988). As Cardno (1990) reports this document recommended a system which:

Places decision–making as close as possible to the point of implementation and thus challenges schools, their principals and staff to accept greater responsibility for decision–making and to subscribe to participatory, collaborative styles of management. (p.30)

It is important to note however that collaborative leadership does not always lead to effective decision-making but can impede it in some cases where stakeholders do not see value in the decisions they are trying to participate in. This has placed a responsibility on principals to facilitate collaborative decision–making in their schools. Collaboration is seen as a way of involving others, both with internal (those that work within the organisation physically) and external (the wider community) partnerships. Internal collaboration involves establishing structures and processes in order for it to take place and the need to develop a unity of shared values and beliefs. External collaboration focuses on the link between schools and community systems and government influences within the educational setting.

Effective collaboration cannot exist haphazardly in an unplanned or spontaneous way in an organisation. Rather it is a carefully managed process that occurs where the climate has been built to support the process. Cardno (1990) suggests that leaders who genuinely value collaboration “will be prepared to make a commitment of time and energy to
implementing processes which facilitate the participation of staff in decision-making in a variety of ways and at every opportunity” (p.43). This encompasses both individual and group opportunities and requires effective communication at all levels.

Therefore collaboration is consistent with the value of inclusiveness, whereby people matter. A range of methods are required to be employed when engaging in collaboration, including evaluative techniques, and to ensure that the collaboration is real and not merely espoused. When engaging in real collaboration there are some key questions that need to be addressed in order for decision-making to take place. These include: Is there the availability of relevant information for the stakeholders? Is there higher motivation, morale and commitment? Has the collaborative process improved the quality of decision-making? Hoy and Miskel (2001) state, “an understanding of the decision-making process is vital to successful administration” (p.23). When effectively implemented, collaborative decision-making can:

- contribute to staff motivation and satisfaction;
- assist staff to identify more strongly with organisational goals;
- improve the quality of decisions made;
- better utilise expertise; and
- allow those affected by the decision to have a stake in it. (Cardno, 1990, p.38)

The disadvantages of collaboration however lie with the notion of being consistent. The process can be time-consuming, become complex if mis-managed and become frustrating if stakeholders do not involve themselves in the process. Consistency is an important value, Cardno (1990) identifies consistency as the value and energy placed on the below points:

- time;
- complex problems;
- the necessity of a level of skill development;
- a requirement for personal commitment; and
- the possibility that collaboration can be mistaken as being a consensus form of management. (p.39)

In order to implement collaboration effectively, leaders need to understand certain basic premises and to act accordingly. These premises include that leaders are committed to
using collaborative processes and understand why collaborative techniques and the leadership of these are necessary. This requires an in-depth knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of the process and a good understanding of the implementation process. The leadership style will reflect how decisions are made and managed and the culture of the school will in return reflect this. Leaders also need to be able to identify who will be involved in the collaborative process. A balance needs to be achieved between staff wanting to participate, and staff feeling put upon to use their time and energy discussing a matter that they feel is someone else’s responsibility. Bridges (1967) put forward a concept known as the zone of acceptance that defined boundaries for identifying those who should be involved in decision-making. He postulated two rules of thumb for school leaders to use. ‘The test of relevance’ reflects the personal stake held by an individual in the matter at hand (including those who will implement the decision) and ‘the test of expertise’ indicates the individual’s ability to contribute in a meaningful and competent manner (being selective about who you involve). Owens (2004) puts forward a third notion ‘the test of jurisdiction’ that takes into account the hierarchical structure existing in schools. This acknowledges that despite individuals’ having a personal stake and expertise in the matter, the decision may be out of reach due to management structure and responsibility (who is it that should be making the decision?). In order to lead collaboratively, the why, who, how much and how to, are key questions to consider when managing decision-making.

Diverse Perspectives of Collaboration

A competitive market place, continuous and rapid change, and a more sophisticated and highly specialised workforce are among factors that have necessitated organisations to delve to new depths in people management. For schools this is no different as they too are sited in such market places. Reactive techniques and administrative policies no longer suffice in today’s complex and demanding business and educational environments. Instead, businesses and educational environments need “a dynamic, future-looking, strategy centred, well-informed and co-ordinated approach to all aspects of the employment and deployment of their people” (Rudman, 1994, p.8). This implies that organisations need people with a proactive approach in how they manage resources and collaboratively lead people.
It is working collaboratively in seeking direction through shared responsibility for personal and organisational goals that has major implications for educational leaders. Leadership involves consulting, collaboration, empowerment and promotion while managing structures and organisational procedures. Collaborative leadership aligns itself with the values of productive reasoning. Productive reasoning involves the ability to problem solve bilaterally, with joint ownership. It is based on bilateral (two-sided) understanding, ownership and commitment to dealing with concerns or issues. Argyris (1977) terms this as the Model II approach that involves double loop learning. Double loop learning is an approach that engages collaborative leaders and their staff in rich, critical dialogue. It involves developing mutual meaning and understanding through the use of informed decision-making. Smith (2001) suggests, “… the notion of double loop learning does help us to approach some of the more taken for granted aspects of organisations and experiences” (p.13). Collaborative leaders of schools need to develop the ability to put personal beliefs and values aside in order to function within the productive reasoning model. The key questions mentioned earlier are examples of a collaborative leader functioning in the productive reasoning model. The adoption of the values and strategies of productive reasoning in collaborative leadership should encourage the sustainability and development of a culture of trust.

Collaborative leadership works with the interests of the organisation at heart. It embraces the vision and strategy formulated by management and articulates this to ensure that employees assist the organisation to reach these goals. Collaborative leadership must include the mutuality of the individual and organisational goals. Walton (1985) (cited in Rudman, 2002, p.7) speaks of such mutuality in a new human resources model that is:

Composed of policies that promote mutuality – mutual goals, mutual influence, mutual respect, mutual rewards, mutual responsibility. The theory is that policies of mutuality will elicit commitment which in turn will yield both better economic performance and greater human development.

We can therefore assume that collaborative leadership is focused on human relations, leading for and with people to gain both organisational goals and personal goals. McGraw (1997) refers to the term human relations to describe a focus on human potential and methods of harnessing this potential in a way that benefits both the organisation and
individuals, as employees. “An understanding of employees and factors that influence work, motivation and commitment are required for this” (Razik & Swanson, 1995, p.301).

Dissemination of a vision of collaborative leadership can occur in several ways. The following are distilled from the literature of Piggot-Irvine (2003) and Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005):

1. Recruitment of staff. Staff members are often selected to fit in with a culture of collaboration in the organisation. The vision and values are articulated in the recruitment package, and job descriptions and person specifications reflect these.

2. Induction of new staff. The opportunity is grasped to espouse to new staff the values, and culture of collaborative leadership in the organisation.

3. Re-induction of existing staff. All staff members are continually exposed to the values of the organisation. Opportunities for the clarification and promotions of these values are ensured. The collaborative values of the organisation can be seen in how the leaders talk and act.

4. Staff performance management and professional development. The collaborative values of the organisation are reflected in the staff appraisal system and in development opportunities. Staff are supported, affirmed, coached and rewarded. Staff development supports organisational strategy.

In strategic human resource management strategy and vision for the organisation are embraced, and the implementation of policies, practices and procedures are contained in the overall philosophy. Collaborative leadership can be defined as very much strategic in its directions while still managing the demands which currently exist, meeting timelines and taking immediate action to ensure that present needs are met.

Within the educational setting in New Zealand, as noted earlier, the 1980s reforms encouraged collaborative leadership in the decision-making process in terms of the decentralisation of schools. The responsibility for personnel management, which was once the role of the education board, now lies on the shoulders of the principal and Board of Trustees. This personnel management role is complex, as Torrington and Hall (1987) suggest when they state that:

Personnel management is directed mainly at the organisation’s employees: finding and training them, arranging for them to be paid, explaining management’s actions,
satisfying employee’s work related needs, dealing with their problems and seeking to modify management action that could produce unwelcome employee response. (Torrington & Hall, 1987, cited in Rudman, 2002, p.10)

Collaborative leaders have a huge influence on the culture of the organisation and therefore their role is one of importance. “All staff in management positions should be motivated and supported to access the body of information, theory and skills needed to work with and through others to accomplish organisational goals” (Cardno, 2005, p.301).

Collaborative leaders work closely with all stakeholders. They assume a great part of the responsibility for ensuring that the vision and strategic goals of leading and managing and that these are translated into action. The leaders and managers of collaboration are responsible for handling the issues pertaining to staffing. Senge (1992) highlights the role of collaborative leaders as “… coaches and mentors, not problem solvers, helping managers to develop their own personal skills” (p.11). He sees the role of collaborative leadership as a crucial one for organisations seeking credibility and positive long-term effects.

**Major issues/themes for Collaborative Leadership**

The major themes identified in the literature on collaboration, and leadership were leaders facilitating teamwork, productive values and strategies and understanding and fostering organisation culture. The over-arching theme to collaborative leadership was communication. Collaborative leadership can play an important role in the formulation of a school’s strategic plan. The plan needs to be developed and implemented by all stakeholders (parents, teachers, children, senior management) and should be heavily based on the values and beliefs of the school vision. This would be viewed as a step forward for the school in both teamwork and forward thinking. I believe that schools who embrace collaborative leadership can identify issues and their implications in the school environment.

Kaplan and Owings (1999) state, “… research demonstrates that effective principals develop teamwork in leading, planning, implementing and evaluating the instructional programme” (p.92). Norris (2004) supports this notion by suggesting that one of the most
important roles of a leader is “to develop and maintain the professional level of the staff which he/she supervises. It is generally agreed upon that the desired school culture is one in which the focus is on the development of a community of learners” (p.1). Southworth (2002) suggests that principal’s who function through the model of collaborative leadership knew that their schools’ successes were dependent on everyone pulling their weight:

Developing a team of teachers who were characterised by professional openness, a unity of purpose, clear and shared goals and educational values, consistency in teaching and planning, continuity in the curriculum and agreed and implemented classroom practices were both the means and the ends of teamwork. (p.83)

Collaborative leaders need to have an understanding of ever changing social issues that provide the context for educational institutions, and flexibility in adapting to needs and individual interests and social needs. Collaborative leadership includes the ability to “have a vision of the future, to see into the intentions of others, and to take effective action” (Razik & Swanson, 1995, p.563). On the job skills are essential for collaborative leaders to act effectively, and approaches open-ended so continued learning takes place about what is done.

As mentioned in the section ‘what is collaboration?’ collaborative leadership values and strategies align with those of productive reasoning. Below is a table complied using the work of Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) that summarises these values and strategies and what these may look like in practise.

**Table 1.:** Values, strategies and practise of productive reasoning.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>VALUES</th>
<th>STRATEGIES</th>
<th>PRACTISE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>1. Advocacy/ Informing</td>
<td>Stating your position, views, data information. It is the giving of information, no asking of questions.</td>
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<td>Openness</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>2. Illustrating</td>
<td>Explaining by giving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Clarity</td>
<td>examples and using evidence to show why you think this way.</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared ownership</td>
<td>Inclusiveness</td>
<td>3. Inquiry (Bilateral) Asking for information. Listening carefully – with holding assumptions. Questioning in order to encourage others to share their thoughts or views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared control</td>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>4. Mutual Understanding Agreement of perceptions. Paraphrasing views in order to clarify exactly what is meant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informed choice</td>
<td>6. Deciding</td>
<td>Mutual agreement on the solutions. Are both parties comfortable? Does it meet relevant (personal, organisational) needs?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ownership</td>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>7. Monitoring Continued communication, two-way dialogue about the concern and the change associate with it. Plans are monitored and value is placed on commitment in working with these.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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These values, strategies and practices highlight a collaborative leader who can generate a trusting, positive organisational culture. When describing this type of culture one could be using terms such as transparent, collaborative, balanced, inclusive, having a common purpose, and drawing on a shared knowledge base. However if collaborative leadership is
merely espoused these traits may not be apparent, leading to a culture of distrust and
conflict of values and beliefs between an organisation and those who function within it.
Owens (2004) discusses four interactive dimensions of an organisation and suggests that
these dimensions can be controlled directly or strongly influenced by leaders of an
organisation. The four internal dimensions Owens (2004) presents are, “... ecology
(relationships and interactions between people and their environment), milieu
(surroundings or environment), organisation and culture” (p.181). As culture is one
component of an organisation it is continually influenced by the other components and
likewise culture influences other dimensions within an organisation. It is a collaborative
leader who needs to recognise and address these influences in a balanced and meaningful
context. An ‘effective’ organisational culture provides stability for collaboration and
change. An organisation cannot engage in effective collaboration if it is not managed and
led through collaborative leadership. Collaborative leadership and culture is one of a
symbiotic relationship, they rely on each other to develop and grow. Cardno (1990)
suggests:

Those who must manage planning have to make constant leadership decisions
about the degree to which stakeholders are informed, consulted, engaged in
discussion, invited to be involved and participate either by right or because
they have a valuable contribution to make. (p.114)

A culture of trust and participation need to be valued in collaborative leadership in order
for this to take place. Collaborative leaders are portrayed as stewards or builders in terms
of how they lead, and that this affects or shapes the organisational culture and the degree
of collaboration. Dimmock and Walker (2004) use six comparative dimensions to analyse
collaborative leadership within organisational culture. These are as follows:

1. Process – and/or outcomes orientated;
2. Task – and/or person orientated;
3. Professional – and/or parochial;
4. Open and/or closed;
5. Control and linkage; and
6. Pragmatic and/or normative. (p.79-81)

Each dimension includes two views of understanding organisational culture and how
leadership can impact on its effectiveness.
In order to foster an organisational culture in which collaborative leadership and collaborative decision-making can operate effectively, the collaborative leader must role model, understand and actively support the concept. It must be shown that the collaborative leader is “… wishing to promote staff involvement, enthusiasm, satisfaction and commitment by developing processes for collaboration and participation” (Cardno, 1990, p.29). The collaborative leader needs to understand that organisational goals can be more readily met through the involvement and participation of others. The traditional belief was that there was only a certain amount of power available and this was kept under the control of the leader. Sharing power by empowering others was seen as a weakening of this power and possibly a threat to the leader. The evolution of leadership theories has brought about change to this traditional view. Owens (2004) states that a leader needs to “… understand that one gains power by sharing it with others because in collaborative efforts the power available to the group multiplies” (p.283).

A collaborative leader can have an impact upon the organisational culture through their attitudes and beliefs and underlying values. Stakeholders need to feel valued, gain trust in the collaborative leader and be respected as professionals. They need to have confidence to share their ideas and opinions and have them accepted without repercussions or ill feeling. Most clearly these notions cannot be espoused but need to be practiced through collaborative leadership. The vision of an organisation needs to be a shared one in order for ownership of it and progress towards it to exist. Barth (1990) supports this idea by stating “… clear vision offers inventive, promising, and powerful ideas for improving schools from within” (p.146). An emphasis needs to be placed on teamwork and support networks set up, to ensure teams or groups are able to operate effectively. The most important part of collaborative leadership is that it needs to be adopted by the organisation in terms of developing shared understanding of the role and values and beliefs within it. Decisions being made that effect relevant stakeholders should be analysed, evaluated and constructed in consultation. The reason for this is not just to discuss and share ideas and opinions, but also collaborative decision-making should encapture the needs and the values of the organisation.

Communication is the key focus for collaborative leadership as others need to know and understand what various individual roles are, supporting, encouraging each other to
generate new ideas, giving a clear purpose for discussions and facilitating collaboration for constructive feedback. “Successful organisations and individuals that create a culture of feedback see it as something to be valued and an opportunity to learn” (Laughlin, 2000, p.30). Being a reflective practitioner is an integral part of the collaborative leadership role, initiating change and predicting the path others are taking on certain aspects, to allow required development to take place. This also means that value is placed on the individual’s ability to reflect. Collaborative leadership can therefore be viewed as a give and take process, whereby individuals make meaning through practice to achieve a common purpose.

**Collaborative leadership and appraisal**

“Performance appraisal is the way in which teachers in New Zealand schools can reflect on and improve the quality of teaching and learning” (Fitzgerald, 2001, p.113). The underlying purpose espoused in an appraisal process is that of quality learning and teaching. Through collaborative leadership teachers can feel in control in appraisal, and this includes agreed elements of the process being associated with transparency, confidentiality, trust, mutual respect, clear guidelines, and a development and accountability balance). Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) indicate that appraisal is “... a powerful management tool that can be aligned to putting organisational values into practice” (p.22). Therefore we can understand that appraisal provides the vehicle that links the goals of the organisation and the employees’ contributions towards this.


> Principals are now required to more systematically define, support and assess staff performance, and to link staff efforts to the overall direction of the school. Individual staff will know what is expected of them, the support available to them to meet those expectations, how their performance will be monitored and assessed and how they can further develop their skills. (p.4)

In this statement we can identify some of the key values inherent in collaborative leadership that is transparency, support, and communication.
Collaborative leadership in a school can exist within an appraisal process. Although the process is a mandatory one, it can very strongly reflect the way the school operates and how it is managed. Effective school appraisal systems assist the organisation to meet its goals. An appraisal system that reflects the school’s strategic plan and vision, in terms of review, feed forward, and a ‘where to next’ philosophy begins to acknowledge the bilateral nature of collaborative leadership. An appraisal process that is driven through collaborative leadership should link with the other aspects of performance management.

The appraisal process should incorporate collaborative leadership whereby there is a high degree of ownership with the appraisers subscribing fully to open communication and honest feedback. “Staff appraisal is an evaluative activity. It is intended to benefit both the individual and the organisation by leading to affirmation that performance expectations are being met and to the identification of areas for improvement” (Piggot-Irvine & Cardno, 2005, p. 12). In short this means that appraisal is not something that is done ‘to’ people, but rather ‘with’ people.

Potential conflict exists in any appraisal situation. This has been well documented by Cardno (2006) who has written prolifically on dilemmas and dilemma management. Tensions that arise need to be handled and managed effectively to enable resolution to occur, thus enabling the real benefits of the process to happen. In collaborative leadership this involves functioning through a productive reasoning model. Staff receiving professional development in the area of appraisal can enlighten them to potential problems. If these issues have been discussed and addressed as a staff, there exists a climate of understanding of the process. This enables appraisers to fulfil their role using open communication skills and honesty. The threatening nature of the process and the possible tensions and conflicts of roles that can exist are greatly reduced through engaging in productive reasoning strategies and collaborative leadership. Staff may in such an environment look forward to their opportunity for professional guidance, especially the planning of their future development and direction of the school. The challenges, however, for collaborative leadership in dealing with potential problems are those where the values of the organisation are not matched with individual values or beliefs. Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) suggest, that roles and responsibilities need to be clearly communicated as well as the ability to “... translate vision into effective practice and then utilise performance to achieve strategic goals” (p.22). In support of this, Middlewood and Cardno
(2001) summarise that effective management of appraisal systems is crucial to their success, and emphasises the importance of a clear focus on individual and organisational performance, the necessity for appraisal to be embedded in the culture of the organisation and the translation of goals into practical objectives. These authors assert that for employees this means, “… knowing what is required to be done, receiving guidance, support and challenge when required and receiving regular feedback about progress and achievement” (p.4).

One of the potential pitfalls of collaborative leadership in appraisal is that associated with many employees seeing appraisal in a threatening manner. Structures and process may not have been put in place to allow these employees to understand their role within the organisation or what value they bring to the organisation or the importance of appraisal. Respecting and drawing upon personal professional knowledge is a key feature of any organisation led through collaborative leadership, and in such an organisation appraisal is embraced as a means of demonstrating to staff high levels of expectation and support. The findings by Fitzgerald, Youngs and Grootenboer (2003) indicate, “… an integrated and managed approach to performance appraisal that necessarily involved and fully engaged all teachers … is critical to its success and longevity” (p.103).

Collaborative leadership in the appraisal context is an holistic approach and it is imperative that interactions are bilateral in nature and function within the productive reasoning model. Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) describe this type of productive reasoning as mutuality whereby the “… principles of shared control, shared thinking, shared evidence, shared planning for improvement and joint responsibility for monitoring of improvement are predominant” (p.54). Collaborative leadership is the philosophy of the organisation which pervades the whole atmosphere and all the activities that take place should reflect this. Fullan (2002) identifies that, “… leaders need to help cause improvement in working conditions and development of the teaching profession because this is how great leadership is ensured for the future” (p.6). The guiding values and strategies of collaborative leadership prove to be an essential part of constructing effective structures, policies, relationships and guidelines in an organisation. My own organisation is working towards such an environment. The appraisal and development of the school’s learners provides an example of how successfully these components of collaborative leadership can operate in such an environment.
The following chapter identifies the methodology for this research and the data collection methods of documentary analysis and questionnaires are explored. This chapter will also include the questionnaire response rate and considerations given to ethical issues.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This research was based on the interpretive paradigm. A set of collaborative leadership criteria was developed from common elements in the literature. The criteria were used to analyse aspects of collaborative leadership in the documentary analysis and questions developed for the questionnaire. Permission from the school’s principal was granted for the research and ethics approval given by Unitec Institute of Technology. Each of these aspects of the methodology is discussed in this chapter.

Predictable data patterns that give detail to situations and outcomes do not fit neatly into many educational circumstances and educational management contexts. The degree of human interaction that exists in education often makes simplified data and research difficult. Davidson and Tolich (1999) discuss these points in terms of the social reality of educational research and suggest the methodology that has some impact on the human dynamic aspect of education, is the interpretive paradigm.

It is the understanding of human interaction that underpins the interpretive research philosophy. Interpretive research sees the world in its social sense, and permits the researcher to be an important part of the observations. The research is based on constructing the meaning that underpins social activity in whatever situational context the research is being carried out, using a range of methods for interpretation. The main concern according to Cohen and Manion (1997) is with “… an understanding of the way in which the individual creates, modifies and interprets the world in which he or she finds himself or herself” (p.8). The relationship between theory and practice in interpretive research is one of informing people about how to translate and comprehend their interactions and those of others. For the interpretive researcher disclosing these understandings is generally the reason for the research. They set out to provide understanding in order to generate theories to inform their decision-making with increased clarity. There are quite clear differences between the positivist and interpretive tradition, the former disclosing natural laws for explanation and control of events and disregarding value, while the latter explains and interprets human interaction incorporating values and
belief systems. There is an obvious connection between the gathering of quantitative data and the positive approach and qualitative data and the interpretive approach.

This research was based on a qualitative methodology, as the collection of rich, deep descriptive data was needed (Morrison, 2002). Thomas (2003) suggests that a ‘general inductive approach’ as a research design will provide this research with a wealth of data that is reduced by identifying common themes or categories. As I was working with human subjects, the research is focused on “… subjectivity of personal and interpersonal meanings and understandings, values and feelings, that it observes, records, interprets and reports” (Cardno, 2003, p.12). Such subjectivity is qualitative in nature and requires a close partnership between researcher and subject in order to obtain deeper understanding and shared meaning. Mills (2003) describes qualitative research as using “… narrative, descriptive approaches to data collection to understand the way things are, and what it means from the perspectives of the research participants” (p.4). In qualitative research the researcher collaborates with participants, as opposed to using them as subjects for research. Although qualitative research is innately subjective it is understood that quantitative methods of data gathering can be customised and used if appropriate in the research. In this project the qualitative data that was collected, is interpreted, examined and reflected on jointly by the researcher and the participants.

**Methods of data collection and analysis**

One school was invited to participate in this research. School X was four years old and was actively involved in the ‘The Teacher Designed Schools’ project, an international network that promoted teachers’ designing a school culture through an indepth visioning process. The visioning process and the philosophy that all teachers are learners was imperative to the success and implementation of developing systems and structures, such as the appraisal process.

The main focus of this research was to source information about aspects of collaborative leadership in the appraisal context and to determine whether the espoused values of collaboration were practised. The data was collected through the means of analysing documents (appraisal documents and the vision statement) and a staff questionnaire.
**Documentary Analysis**

Documentary analysis can be a useful technique for allowing us to discover and describe the focus of individual, group, institutional, or social attention (Weber, 1990).

To identify the espoused values of collaborative leadership within the context of the appraisal process I analysed the appraisal documentation and vision statement at School X. This served the purpose of identifying espousals of collaborative leadership. The espoused values revealed in the documentary analysis informed the questions for the staff questionnaire. Burns (2000) states that this type of documentary analysis “… is conducted in detective like fashion, whereby information is traced to a source, those knowledgeable about the event or situation contacted and used as informants, and documents located” (p.486).

Documents were analysed against criteria of effective collaboration (including productive reasoning) derived from the literature review. Once the criteria for effective collaborative leadership had been developed from the literature (see appendix 2.), it was then necessary to identify these elements in the school vision and appraisal documents. The statements identified in these documents were then used in the questionnaire to identify staff perceptions on these statements.

**Questionnaire**

I administered a questionnaire to the staff at School X (see appendix 1.) to gain their perceptions about whether the espousals of collaborative leadership in the appraisal context and vision statement were practised. I chose a questionnaire as it allowed for the gathering of data from a larger number of respondents throughout the school. There are written responses to a set of specific questions relating to espousals about collaborative leadership. The questionnaire aimed to identify perceived gaps or alignments between espousals and practise.

A questionnaire permits the collection of reliable and reasonably valid data in a simple, cheap, and timely manner. It is a form of coding that allows researchers’ to try to find patterns and meaning in data collected. In developing and implementing a questionnaire there are six steps which need to be followed, with the first determining questions by identifying general information needs and writing broad research questions and sub-
questions. The second step is, beginning to draft the questionnaire items (formats), the third is to sequence the items (group the questions or statements in the same topic or in the same form and progress form descriptive information to more involved attitudes and opinions). The fourth step is to design the questionnaire, making it as short as possible to achieve its purpose, ensuring the layout is clear and easy to use, also highlighting the confidentiality. Fifth is to pilot test and revise the instrument, as this will identify any ambiguity in the instructions and help clarify the working of questions. Finally, a strategy is developed for data collection and analysis, a cover letter written outlining with the purpose and how the results will be shared, as well as consideration given to monitoring of returns. These steps lead on to the data entry and analysis (Anderson, 1998).

The questionnaire was divided into three key parts. The three key parts were divided into statements from the school vision, statements from appraisal documentation and common elements of collaborative leadership taken from professional literature. Participants were asked to rate the statements on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=don’t know, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree) and to make a comment supporting their rating. The initial question in the questionnaire asked participants to identify how many years/months experience they had been in the current appraisal process at School X (see appendix 1.). It was important to identify this, as there was a significant influx of new teachers in the school throughout the year, and some would have only just been introduced to the appraisal process at the time of administering the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was analysed thematically to determine gaps between espousals and practice. Because each question contained a statement pertinent to the school vision, appraisal documents and literature, tally charts were first used to calculate the number of ratings for each statement. Links were then made across the three parts of the questionnaire to identify the common themes in the school’s documents and literature and to determine gaps, if any, between espousals and practice.

**Questionnaire response rate**

The questionnaire was administered to 38 participants and 32 responses were collected, a return rate of 84%. This was a pleasing result considering the time of year (November) that the questionnaire was administered. The eight non-returns could have resulted from some participants exercising their right to not participate in completing the questionnaire.
Ethical Considerations

When administering a questionnaire it is important to take into account the ethical considerations. The participants were told the purpose of the questionnaire, how the results would be used, how participants were selected, who would be conducting the research, and how confidentiality was assured. In this research the questions in the questionnaire were based on the elements of effective collaboration and productive reasoning and those elements identified from espousals in the appraisal documentation and vision statements.

The staff invited to take part in the questionnaire were primary school teachers at School X, who had varying degrees of experience in the appraisal and visioning process. There was a total of 38 staff members of which included the principal, two associate principals, beginning teachers, registered teachers and experienced teachers. Because all staff were involved, there was no sampling for this questionnaire. The Board of the school were informed of the process and all staff completing the questionnaire were provided with a covering information sheet, explaining the purpose of the questionnaire where, how and when to return it, whom to contact if there were any further questions and how the results will be shared. The questionnaire was administered at a staff meeting by the school secretary, to ensure a greater return rate and respondents returned the completed questionnaire to the school secretary on completion.

The following chapter analyses the data collected from the documentary analysis and questionnaire on collaborative leadership in the context of appraisal for School X. It contains the espousals from the School Vision statement and apprasial documentation and the number of response ratings for each part of the questionnaire.
Chapter 4

RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter will present the research results from the documentary analysis and questionnaire.

Documentary Analysis

Using as a guideline a rubric that identified the criteria for collaborative leadership, I analysed School X’s appraisal and vision documentation. The criteria subheadings of informing, illustrating, inquiry, ownership, monitoring, evaluating, reflecting, partnership, co-operation, agreement inclusiveness and flexibility are used to report on the findings. Prior to each comment on the documentary analysis a brief definition of the criteria is provided based on the descriptors in this rubric (see appendix 2.)

The documents analysed include:

• Appraisal delegations at School X;
• Professional standards appraisal document for an experienced teacher;
• Professional standards appraisal document for a registered teacher;
• Professional standards appraisal document for a beginning teacher;
• Professional standards appraisal document for whanau leaders;
• School X shared vision.

Informing

Informing is providing clear information to an appraisee about issues, purposes and roles of appraisal. The documentation at School X espouses that staff are informed about the appraisal process at the beginning of each year. The purpose for appraisal, as expressed in the documentation, is presented at a staff retreat as a big picture concept and opportunities are offered at staff meetings to unpack the specific nature of the process. The documentation expresses that observations and discussions are opportunities to inform feedback and feed forward to the appraisee.
The School Vision (2007) document states “… staff know what they are doing, why they are doing it and where to next” (p.1). In terms of appraisal, this translates to an espousal that the staff are informed about the cycle of appraisal.

Illustrating
Illustrating is the ability to explain by giving evidence in feedback and examples to inform decisions made. As stated above, documentation for appraisal suggests that appraisal observations inform and provide evidence for feedback and feed forward. The latter allow the appraiser and appraisee to illustrate reasons for decisions made within the appraisal process, can assist in developing future goals, and support the identification of strengths using gathered evidence. The school appraisal document (2008) specifically states that “… there is collection of data” (p.1.).

Inquiry
Inquiry is driven by the appraiser asking the appraisee questions to explain their thoughts and pedagogy and the appraiser being able to with-hold assumptions in this questioning. The appraisal documentation acknowledges that appraisers need to be coached prior to engaging in the appraisal process. This coaching should focus on practising productive reasoning where the appraiser and appraisee engage in dialogue, using evidence in a manner where assumptions are withheld. The dialogue process includes inquiry for co-constructing a shared understanding. The appraisal documentation espouses that inquiry for co-constructing is important to the appraisal process as it allows ownership to be developed by the appraisee without the feeling of being assessed. The documentation states that “Performance management does not happen to people, instead, it should be with” (School X Appraisal Document 2008, p.1.). This implies that the appraisal process is bilateral in nature.

Ownership
Ownership is where the appraisee identifies what has been communicated and their understanding of it. The appraisal documentation suggest that future learning goals and key decisions are co-constructed with both the appraiser and appraisee, future learning goals are set and professional development towards these goals is identified. It is stated that clear timelines, requirements and purposes are managed in a collaborative manner between appraisers and appraisees. It states the importance that “Staff value shared
understanding about what communication is” (School X Appraisal Document 2008, p.1.). Additionally, the document states that appraisees should identify what has been communicated and their understanding of it when feedback is given throughout the year. The appraisal document states “teachers feel in control of the process” (p.1.).

**Monitoring**

Monitoring is where continued communication occurs about the goals, next steps, and future learning. Value is placed on gaining commitment in working towards these and evidence is also collected on progress. The appraisal documentation notes that all staff are required to develop and maintain a personal professional portfolio which shows a learning journey where evidence collected is reflected upon. The documentation records that continued communication about the goals and future learning are a key point to the appraisal process and value is placed on the commitment in working towards these.

**Evaluating**

Evaluating is said to be an ongoing process in the appraisal system and it involves revisiting the above steps and reviewing the productiveness of the monitoring. Through engaging collaboratively in this, the evaluating informs decision-making about personal goal setting and professional development and helps identify key areas of learning needs to be addressed as a staff. The latter assists with the future planning of the school and personal goals. As the school vision document states, via evaluation staff are “learning to take responsibility for their own learning, be self-reflective, resilient, self evaluating and focussed on clear future goals” (p.1). In terms of evaluation, the appraisal document states that “ … effective work performance involves monitoring and evaluating” (School X Appraisal Document 2008, p.1).

**Reflecting**

Reflecting involves considering impacts on personal practice and learning. There is a desire for a culture of reflection at School X. The School Vision statement, for example, states “There is evidence of a strong reflective culture” (School Vision, 2007, p.1). The intention is that the reflective culture filters from the school vision down to classroom programmes. The appraisal documentation notes that reflection is encouraged on a weekly basis to provide evidence and allow staff to identify how reflection has impacted on personal practice and learning. All staff are required to develop personal visions, personal
goals and develop a reflective journal that contains personal thoughts, feelings and future developments. In the appraisial process it is stated that appraiser and appraisee should reflect on the effectiveness of the process and how each has fulfilled their role.

**Partnership**

Partnership is a genuine sharing and feeling of mutuality in the appraisal process. The appraisal documentation states that the process should be a partnership, where appraising is ‘done with’ not ‘to’. The above concepts allow for collaboration and ownership to take place. The School Vision (2007) states that a school value as having “… a sense of family and learning partnerships” (p.1). This implies that there should be inclusiveness and balance within learning relationships and a shared responsibility and understanding of the roles of individuals within the appraisal process.

**Co-operation/ Agreement**

Co-operation implies that there is an establishment of roles for goal setting and goal achievement. Agreement suggests that there is an agreed action plan and understanding of the appraisal process. The appraisal document espouses that “… there is mutual respect, clear guidelines, development and accountability” (p.1). This implies that in any learning partnership there needs to be co-operation. Understanding roles, communicating feedback and feed forward and collaboratively undertaking decision-making are all part of mutual respect and co-operation. The document suggests also that both appraisee and appraiser need to know and understand what part they play in order to maintain co-operation throughout the appraisal process. Agreement on professional goals and evaluation of professional standards are also imperative to co-operation.

**Inclusiveness / Flexibility**

Inclusiveness and flexibility involve there being adaptability in goals, needs, and individual interests. Staff are seen as individuals and adapting to needs and individual interests are imperative in maintaining an appraisal process that is effective and collaborative. It is also imperative that staff are inclusively involved in development of goals. The School Vision statement alludes to that in the statement “… staff identify future learning goals” (School X Vision Statement, 2007, p.1).
**Questionnaire**

I will begin the analysis of the questionnaire by identifying the number of months/years experience participants had in the current appraisal process at School X. The relevance of this question to the research was to identify the amount of experience staff had in the current appraisal process. It was felt that length of experience might influence responses.

**Graph 1.:** Months/Years Experience of Appraisal at School X.

Graph 1. shows that of the 32 respondents, 17 had one to four years experience of the appraisal process and 12 had less than one year experience. Three participants gave no response to this question. This result reveals that the majority of staff had experience with the appraisal process.

**School Vision**

This part of the questionnaire consisted of eight statements from the School Vision document that had relevance to collaborative leadership in appraisal (see appendices 1 & 8). Participants were asked to rate the extent to which the statements were evident in practice.
Graph 2.: Overall ratings for the School Vision statements

Graph 2. shows the overall responses to all eight statements in Part 1 of the questionnaire. It is clear that the majority of participants agreed that the School Vision statement espousals of collaborative leadership were evident in practice. For the eight questions combined, 30 responses indicated that they ‘strongly agreed’, 142 ‘agreed’, 50 ‘did not know’, 32 ‘disagreed’ and one ‘strongly disagreed’. Graph 3 below shows a breakdown of each question and ratings given to them by participants.
Question one stated “**Staff know what they are doing, why they are doing it and where to next**”.

21 respondents report that they ‘agreed’ with the statement, eight comments were provided to support this rating:

- **There is more than documentation to support the system and why. Teachers’ all have a personal professional portfolio to collect evidence towards their goals.**
- **Expectations of appraisal are give, feed forward discussed afterwards.**
- **I agree in most areas of school life, but not all.**
- **Intentions are shared and a shared understanding is worked towards.**
- **At the appraisal we are reminded of what we did, talk about learning intention and given feed forward.**
- **Some decisions are made at leadership team level but are generally discussed with staff as to why we are doing it.**

Two respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’, and the following single comment was presented to support the rating:

- **I would like to think so but it depends on the staff member. I certainly do.**

Five respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’, four reported that they ‘did not know’.

There were two comments provided to support this latter rating:
The purpose appears clear on some actions carried out but not all – further discussion and staff input is needed to determine school wide goals.

Seems as if there is initial effort to do things collaboratively but then everyone is on their own/not aware of what others are doing.

The key finding from this question was that a majority (23 respondents) agreed that the espousal ‘staff know what they are doing, why they are doing it and where to next’ was evident in practice.

Question two stated “**Teaching staff model goal setting and reflection**”.

18 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ with the statement and four comments were provided to support the rating:

- Lots of PMIS. (Plus, Minus, Interesting, Solutions)
- Each term this is part of the process.
- Apparent across the school but reflection may be lost due to time and work schedule.
- Teachers’ set own goals at the start of the year. We reflect each term on our goals.

Six respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’ and three comments were provided to support this:

- Goal setting and reflection is a huge part of this school’s culture and occurs regularly.
- Term end reflections, goal setting at the beginning of year and throughout.
- All the time for me, and I model and expect if for kids.

Three respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’ with this statement and one comment was given to support this rating:

- If this refers to leadership modeling goals and reflection, then no, I have not seen much evidence of this.

Five respondents reported that they ‘did not know’, and again one comment was provided to support the rating:

- Sometimes the goal posts change as emphasis within the school is added to, goals increase in numbers.

Overall (24 respondents) agreed that this espousal was evident in practice. The comments provided insight into the types of reflection processes and the continuity of reflection and goal setting throughout the year.
Question three stated “Staff identify future learning goals”.

22 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ with the statement and seven comments were provided to support the ratings:

- We are given goals to take away and work on.
- School also sets general future learning goals.
- This is done in collaboration with their appraiser.
- At beginning and end of terms – may get lost in workload.
- Our goals are discussed at our appraisals as well as with the Principal. Future goals decided upon a staff appraisals as well as on our wish lists.
- Set own goals at beginning for year. Appraisal discussions might set new goals.
- For myself, my students, and other teachers.

Five respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’ and there were four comments to support this rating:

- Our personal professional portfolios identify this.
- In personal visions, goal setting in personal professional portfolio.
- Term 4 appraisal.
- Future learning goals are discussed with appraiser and Principal.

One respondent reported that they ‘disagreed’ with this statement. Four respondents reported that they ‘did not know’, and one comment was provided to support this rating:

- In focus area (writing) but all areas?

27 respondents agreed that future learning goals were identified. This is in alignment with practice, as the comments provide the evidence of how future learning goals are developed. However it would be beneficial to develop a shared language around how future learning goals may be developed, rather than goals being ‘given to take away and work on’. Acknowledgement is also needed that goals are not just identified at the beginning of the year or term, but rather monitored and adapted throughout the year.

Question four stated “There is evidence of a strong reflective culture”.

21 reported that they ‘agreed’ and eight respondents provided supporting comments:

- Although there is a strong reflective culture in place, the reflections need to be fed into future decisions more clearly.
- End of term reflections, event PMIS.
Depends on who you are and more importantly who you are reflecting for. Strong reflective culture but a true reflective culture? Depends on purpose.
This is encouraged with all learners.
Some subjects and staff find it easier to reflect upon.
We are encouraged to reflect on our teaching, planning and goals regularly.
Literacy project, general term reflections etc.
Term and goal reflections.

Four respondents reported that they ‘did not know’.
Three respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’, three comments were provided to support the rating:

Absolutely. Everywhere I have been fortunate to work in.
Year reflections, beginning teacher and tutor teacher PMI, block PMI.
The children reflect each term and also regularly in classrooms. Staff complete term reflections and goal reflections. Blocks and whanaus reflect at the end of each term.

One participant did not respond to this question. Three respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’ with the statement and two provided a supporting comment which stated:

We don’t always get time to reflect, before something else is give to us to consider.
Reflection is forced and tokenistic.

It is evident from these comments and response rate that value is placed on reflection. The ability to reflect in and on action is an expectation to improve practice and an essential part of the learning process.

Question five stated “Our expectations of each other are realistic and achievable”.
One respondent reported that they ‘strongly disagreed’ with the statement. 12 respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’ and the following four comments were provided to support the rating:

In general expectations are quite high. This can be good but when many expectations are on one or a few people, something has got to give. Not everything will be done well.
Teacher’s need more time to practise what has been discussed.
Stretched too thin and unable to focus on and improve in certain areas.
There is a very high expectation of us for numerous tasks. Although it is possible to achieve this high expectation in one or two areas, it is impossible to do this for all.
Six respondents reported that they ‘did not know’, three of which provided a supporting comment:

Not sure, we don’t all walk the talk equally and often others carry the load for others, not through choice but because of inexperience of others.

Sometimes there is so much going on it is difficult to achieve the depth of thinking we would like.

Sometimes workload can get too much, some staff find it unrealistic or they feel the school expects too much.

These comments highlight that there are high expectations at School X, but suggest that these expectations could be unrealistic. These comments might also allude to high work loads and the expectations of fulfilling various roles within the school. Nine respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ with the statement. The three comments provided for this rating stated:

During the appraisal process, yes goals are manageable and achievable.

Some would agree and others disagree with this.

High expectations are set ad built on – these however are made realistic and achievable as teachers’ are supported.

Four respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’, and one comment was provided to support the rating:

Yes. I wouldn’t expect someone to do things I wouldn’t.

Question six stated “We seek feedback and feed forward”.

23 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ with the statement and there were five supporting comments:

Feedback is sought but how it impacts on school wide decisions is unclear.

It is important to get constructive feedback to inform us of our shortfalls, as well as feed forward on how to improve ourselves.

Self directed.

Staff are given feedback through many different areas.

This is agreed to. At times of stress it can be tested.
It is evident from these responses that there has been frequent dialogue and engagement in feedback and feed forward. It also implies that this feedback and feed forward is used to identify future goals and professional development opportunities.

Five respondents reported that they ‘did not know’, two of which provided a supporting comment:

*During appraisals only.*

*Once again this appears tokenistic rather tha meaningful and ongoing feedback/feed forward.*

Three respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’, two of whom provided comments:

*From students and teachers. Very much a part of our culture here.*

*Yes, all the time otherwise how do we know how we’ve done or where we are going?*

One respondent indicated that they ‘disagreed’ and commented:

*“We actually need more time – especially time before and after school to organise, plan and consider how the day, week has been. Currently we have lots of PD (Professional Development)– loading more ideas and not really reflecting on the last ‘great’ idea.”*

Question seven stated “Staff are learning to take responsibility for own learning, be self-reflective, resilient, self-evaluating and focussed on clear future goals”.

18 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ with the statement and five respondents provided a supporting comment:

*We are all working towards this.*

*Don’t have much choice, as there is a lot of support given to achieve these goals unless sought diligently by the appraisee.*

*We are encouraged to better ourselves using PD to meet our goals.*

*This is an area staff are learning or working towards.*

*Some are having difficulty learning but most are growing positively.*

Eight respondents reported that they ‘did not know’ and the one comment provided stated:

*Goals can change.*

Five respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement. One comment was offered to support this rating:

*Most staff are. You are always encouraged to be this way.*

One respondent ‘disagreed’ with the statement and commented:
When do staff choose what they would like to learn more about?

These responses indicate that although there is an expectation to develop professionally and personally and have ownership over this process, it is an area that is still under development. The comments indicate that there needs to be some level of personal responsibility and accountability for learning.

Question eight stated “Staff value shared understanding about what communication is”.

14 respondents reported that they ‘did not know’ if there was a shared understanding, four respondents provided supporting comments:

- Shared understanding, but it doesn’t always happen.
- We value the ideal of a shared understanding of communication, I just don’t think there is one.
- Not everyone has the same idea of what communication is. There has been a lot of mis-communication.
- Some staff have different ideas about how they want to communicate or be communicated with.

10 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ with the statement and there were four comments provided to support the rating:

- Honest and open but professional is what come to mind.
- Communication is professional and respectful amongst teachers.
- Most of the time, but it is not always a two way system.
- This is agreed to. At time of stress it can be tested.

Six respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’ with this statement, three of which provided a supporting comment:

- Some communication seems one way. We are told.
- The large school and frequent changes in staff mean lots of things (messages) sent don’t apply to your level – and poor newbies don’t know where they are.
- Agree with shared understanding but it is assumed far too often that it is happening.

Two respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’ and one provided a supporting comment:

- Yes, we worked on this earlier this year.
These responses indicate that there is uncertainty around a shared language of communication. Although 12 respondents agreed with the espousal, the number (14) who do not know, and six who disagreed with the statement indicates that this could be an aspect of collaborative leadership to develop.

**Appraisal Document**

In this part of the questionnaire participants were asked to rate the extent to which they agree whether the 12 statements espoused in the appraisal documentation of School X were evident in practice. The statements are only those that have relevance to collaborative leadership.

**Graph 4.:** Overall ratings for the School X appraisal document.

Graph 4, above shows the overall response to 12 statements in the appraisal documentation relevant to collaborative leadership. A majority 158 of participant responses ‘agreed’ that the appraisal espousals on collaborative leadership were evident in practice. 56 responses to the 12 statements ‘strongly agreed’, 43 ‘disagreed’, nine ‘strongly disagreed’ and three gave no response to three different statements. There were 104 responses that indicated participants ‘did not know’. In summary the key findings of the appraisal documentation is that of agreement. However there are a large number (104) of responses that are uncertain
whether the espousals of collaborative leadership in the appraisal documents are evident in practice. Graph 5 shows a breakdown of each question and ratings given to them by participants.

**Graph 5:** School appraisal document responses breakdown

Question one stated “Effective work performance involves monitoring and evaluating.”
20 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ with the statement and four indicated that they ‘strongly agreed’. This indicates that a majority of respondents believe that monitoring and evaluating are evident in appraisal practice. Five respondents reported that they ‘did not know’ whether performance involved monitoring and evaluating. Three respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’ with the statement.

Question two stated “Appraisal is a process that integrates both accountability and development functions.”
15 respondents indicated that they ‘did not know’, and the following single comment was given to support this rating:

*Not sure what you mean by ...*
12 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ with the statement and two respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement. I can only assume here the ‘did not know’ response was evident due to the fact that the terminology used was unfamiliar or unknown to 15 of the participants. The above comment states this quite clearly. One respondent gave no response and one respondent ‘disagreed’ with the statement.

Question three stated **“Appraisal does not happen TO people. Instead it should be WITH.”**

18 respondents overall agreed that the appraisal process was bilateral in nature, the above comments indicate practice which relies on mutuality and shared decision making. 12 respondents reported that they ‘did not know’. One comment was provided to support this rating:

_Hopefully changing this next year._

11 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ with the statement and seven indicated that they ‘strongly agreed’. Comments gathered to support this rating include:

_Very much so. It is not threatening but rather helpful and constructive._

_I hope all people see it this way._

_Strongly agree._

_Communication together._

_Beforehand teachers set areas they would like feedback on and discussion before and after involves teachers._

_It is completed in a supportive way, with good feedback/feed forward._

Two respondents reported that they ‘strongly disagreed’ with the implementation of appraisal being bilateral in practice. One comment was provided to support this rating:

_Seems the same group make most of decisions._

Question four stated **“Teachers feel in control of the process.”**

10 indicated that they ‘disagreed’ with the statement. One comment was provided to support this rating:

_Not really. I do not think I have any input or power to change this process._

11 respondents reported that they ‘did not know’ if teachers felt in control of the appraisal process. Comments included:

_I don’t always feel in control – but rather a part of the process._

_Depends on ones experience and self belief._
Eight respondents indicated they ‘agreed’ with the statement and one respondent reported that they ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement. One comment was included to support the rating:

*Standards and accountability checklist is known beforehand.*

Two respondents reported that they ‘strongly disagreed’ with this statement.

The key finding for this question was that of disagreement or uncertainty. 12 respondents disagreed and the comment provided indicates that appraisal is seen as a set process, rather than a personal learning cycle. 11 respondents did not know if they felt in control of the process which may indicate varying levels of understanding of the purpose of appraisal. These varying levels of understanding could be a result of staff turnover, or appraiser experience.

Question five stated “**There are agreed elements of the process.**”

Of the respondents eight ‘did not know’, and eight respondents also reported that they ‘agreed’ and ‘strongly agreed’. Comments include:

- *Building trust takes time and people all buying in.*
- *This did happen.*
- *Clear appraisal steps outlined at the beginning of the year.*
- *In an ideal situation I agree, but still worry about being told I am doing it all wrong.*

Three respondents reported that they ‘strongly disagreed’ with the statement. Five respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’. One comment was provided to support this rating:

*Not sure about that!*

There is a balance of responses for this question, and the comments show the different levels of opinion. We can assume that from these responses agreed elements of the process depend on the experience and induction of the appraisal process.

Question six stated “**Appraisal is an educative and well resourced process.**”

14 respondents reported that they ‘did not know’ two comments were given to support this rating:

- *Have not been in the appraisal process long enough to know.*
- *I have heard from many – no support.*

12 respondents ‘agreed’ with the statement, three comments were provided to support this rating:
As long as it provides honest, non-personal, constructive feedback/feed forward.
Perhaps more time needs to be given to appraisers to observe more often and more informally i.e., walk throughs/pop ins.

Agree, but for well resourced?

Four respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’ with the statement.

Due to the fact that there has been an influx of new staff at School X throughout the appraisal cycle, 14 of the participants may not have been exposed to the process (as the first comment indicates). It would be interesting to investigate this further as to whether it is the resourcing or support that the staff are unclear about. There would be limitations around investigating this further as it would mean identifying those who indicated the do not know response and asking them to clarify what exactly they are unsure of regarding resourcing or support.

Question seven asked participants to rate the statement “There is mutual respect, clear guidelines, development and accountability”.

17 reported they ‘agreed’, eight reported that they ‘did not know’, three respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’, and three reported they ‘strongly agreed’. There was one respondent who did not rate this question. There were no comments to support any of the above ratings. These responses indicate that there is agreement, however the lack of comments implies that this statement had too many aspects. Therefore it would have been beneficial to break each of aspects down as a separate question, to add clarity and enrich the data with qualitative comments.

Question eight stated “There is a collection of data”.
20 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ with the statement. Two comments were provided for the rating:

*Collection of planning, assessment data/records etc. This is regular.*
*A large amount of data collected. Maybe too much.*

Six respondents reported that they ‘did not know’. One comment was provided for this rating:

*Don’t know what happens to this data.*

Three respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’ with the statement. One comment was provided to support this rating:

*Not if only one or two blocks are spent in the classroom.*
Three respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’ that data collection was evident in practice. One comment was provided to support this rating:

*Data collected on a regular basis.*

We can assume that there is ongoing collection of data by individuals and appraisers. These comments enlighten us to the fact that there could be an expectation to collect a high quantity of data, which in effect means more administration.

Question nine stated “There is timetabled feedback and feed forward”.
11 respondents also indicated that they ‘agreed’ with the statement. Five respondents indicated that they ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement. Two comments provided support for this rating:

*Time give to this is good, i.e., it down during lunchtime or scheduled time. Nice not to be rushed."

*Always happens.*

11 respondents indicated that they ‘did not know’. Comments included:

*Outside of classroom hours seem to be limited.
I have not seen this ‘timetabled’ regularly – more of a personal thing.*

Four respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’ with the statement. One comment was provided:

*On the spot – I’m coming in today I can’t make tomorrow.*

One respondent reported that they ‘strongly disagreed’ with the statement, and they also commented:

*As long as your are staying at....*

Feedback and feed forward are apparent in practice, the above comments highlight how this happens. However there are varying degrees as to the frequency and the value placed on feedback and feed forward, as the two comments provided for the ‘do not know’ rating highlight.

Question 10 stated “There are timetabled reflections”.
14 respondents indicated that they ‘agree’ with the statement. One comment was written to support this:

*Term reflections, goal reflections each term.*

Seven respondents report that they ‘did not know”. One comment was provided to support this rating:
I have not seen this timetabled regularly – more of a personal thing.

Six respondents felt that they ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement. There were two comments to provide support for the rating:

*Have to do every term.*
*Yes at block meetings.*

Five respondents reported they ‘disagreed’ with the statement. One comment was provided to support this rating:

*Very seldom have we done if in own time, whenever, however.*

We can assume that reflection is on the whole timetabled within the appraisal process, as 20 respondents agree. The supporting comments indicate the times when reflection is timetabled. However it is interesting to note that none of the comments discuss personal reflection, and personal responsibility for this and their own development.

Question 11 stated “**Goal modifications are identified.**”
16 respondents reported that they ‘did not know’. Again there was only one comment written for this statement:

*I have not seen this.*

This statement showed that perhaps there needs to be knowledge of what goal modification looks like since the participants need to know whether they personally are modifying goals for future growth, or attempting to watch it happening with others.

11 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ with the statement. The one comment provided stated:

*When people take the time.*

Three respondents indicated that they ‘disagreed’ with the statement.

*Never had this situation.*

Two respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement. Again one comment was provided to support the rating:

*In personal professional portfolio.*

The element of goal modification is unknown to the participants due to the number of ‘don’t know’ responses. However the comment provided for an ‘agree’ response indicates that time could be factor in appraisee’s and appraiser’s identifying and discussing goal modifications.
Question 12 stated “There is ongoing profession development”.

12 respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement and commented:

- Plenty of opportunities for PD and to learn from each other.
- Great.
- Literacy contract and weekly PD meetings.
- Maybe discuss with teaching staff as to what we want/need?
- Lots of opportunity for PD especially in house PD.
- Absolutely.

Two ‘no responses’ were given for this statement. One respondent indicated that they ‘strongly disagreed’ and provided the comment:

- Needs to be on things that will help the teaching process – practical.

Two respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’ with the statement. One comment was recorded to support the rating:

- In the school, but specific to individual goals?

Two respondents reported that they ‘did not know’ if the statement was practised in the appraisal process. Eight responses indicated ‘agree’. Comments to support this rating included:

- Only one is consistent – writing. Are others based on need?
- School and individualised.

The ratings provided for the espousal of ‘there is ongoing professional development’ indicate agreement in practice. The above comments highlight the opportunities available to staff. However several comments make reference to whether the professional development is specific to individual goals and needs.

**Collaborative Leadership Literature**

The final part of the questionnaire contained statements pertaining to the professional literature on collaborative leadership and elements of effectiveness. Participants were once again asked to rate the statements according to how well these were implemented at School X. The overall results are shown in Graph 6.
**Graph 6.** Overall ratings for literature on collaborative leadership.

The overall ratings for the 12 statements derived from the literature on collaborative leadership showed that 34 responses indicated were associated with ‘strongly agreed’, 133 ‘agreed’, 45 ‘disagreed’, 8 ‘strongly disagreed’, 34 ‘no response’ to various statements and 130 responses indicated that ‘did not know’ whether effective elements of collaborative leadership were practised at School X. Graph 7. shows a breakdown of each question and ratings given to them by participants.
Graph 7.: Collaborative literature responses breakdown.

The question breakdown represented in Graph 7. indicated strong responses in ‘agree’ and ‘do not know’.

Question one presented the element of ‘Informing’.
14 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ informing was evident in practice. Comments included:

*Class visits, document collection.*

*Review based on data.*

11 respondents reported that they ‘did not know’ if evidence based data was used to give information to an appraisee.

Four respondents reported to ‘strongly agree’ that informing was evident. One comment was provided to support this rating:

*Very thorough during literacy appraisal.*

There were two ‘no responses’ for this question. One respondent reported that they ‘disagreed’ with the statement.

Question two posed the element of ‘Illustrating – explaining by giving evidence in feedback and examples to inform decisions made’.
18 ‘agreed’, nine ‘did not know’ and two respondents gave ‘no response’, two ‘disagreed’, and one respondent ‘strongly agreed’. There were no comments indicated to support these responses. This supports the previous responses indicated in Graph 5, question eight where there was an agreement in the the collection of data for evidence.

Question three asked respondents to rate how well ‘Inquiry’ was practised in the appraisal process.
11 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’, 10 respondents indicated that they ‘did not know’ and four reported that they ‘strongly agreed’. There were no supporting comments for these ratings.
Four respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’, two respondents gave ‘no response’, one respondent reported that they ‘strongly disagreed’. One comment was provided to support this rating:

   It’s not spoken about, it’s typed and given.

Question four approached the collaborative leadership element of ‘Assumptions – assumptions are with-held when appraisers are asking questions.’
20 respondents reported ‘do not know’ as their response. The one comment provided stated:

   This is virtually impossible to do, but attempts are made.

We can assume that participants only have knowledge of their own experience of whether their appraisers with-hold assumptions. It may also indicate that participants were unsure of what this meant.
Four respondents report that they ‘agreed’ that assumptions were with-held in the appraisal process. The comment provided to support this rating stated:

   This is always something we try to do. For me personally it feels assumptions are with-held.

Three no responses were given. Three respondents indicated that they ‘disagreed’. One comment was made for this statement:

   We didn’t discuss.

Two respondents indicated they they ‘strongly agreed’.

The responses provided for questions one through four indicate that the ‘do not know’ and ‘agree’ ratings were the strongest. The terminology used from the literature may have been
an implication for the high responses in participants being unclear about what is meant by particular terms (informing, illustrating, inquiry and assumptions). Although a brief definition was provided it may have been this uncertainty that resulted in participants not providing supporting comments for the ‘agree’ ratings.

Question five presented the element of ‘Ownership’ where future goals are co-constructed.
13 responses agreed that ownership was evident in practice. It is interesting to note that 10 participants do not know if they had ownership over their future goals.
12 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ and three reported that they ‘strongly agreed’.
One comment was provided to support the ‘strongly agree’ rating:

* I take full ownership of what I do and communicate this to whanau leaders.*
10 respondents indicated that they ‘did not know’ if ownership was practised.
Four respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’, the comment provided stated:

* We didn’t discuss.*
Three participants gave no rating, but one comment was recorded:

* Yes with writing but not in whanau.*

Question six explored the element of ‘Monitoring’.
11 respondents also reported that they ‘agreed’ there was evidence of monitoring in practice. The three comments provided include:

* This happens mainly at the appraisal meeting.*

* Although monitoring is also something that teachers’ need to take responsibility for – leaders can only monitor at certain time of the year.*
11 respondents reported that they ‘did not know’ if ‘monitoring’ was evident in practice.
One comment was provided to support the rating:

* I have not been a part of this.*
Four participants ‘disagreed’ and three of these participants provided a comment to support their rating:

* When? How? Only by the appraisee but no communication between appraisee and appraiser.*

* Needs to be more time spent in classrooms.*

* Only at next appraisal.*
Three participants gave ‘no response’.
Two respondents indicated that they ‘strongly agreed’, one comment was provided:

*Personal professional portfolio revisiting.*

One participant ‘strongly disagreed’,

It is highlighted in one of the above comments that monitoring needs to have an element of personal responsibility this differs from the comments provided for the ‘disagree ratings’ whereby it is assumed that it is the appraiser’s role to monitor performance and development.

Question seven asked participants to rate how well ‘Evaluating’ was practised in the appraisal process.

11 respondents reported that they ‘did not know’ and one comment was provided to support the rating:

*Have not been part of this.*

*Only at next appraisal.*

Nine respondents indicated that they ‘agreed’ and two ‘strongly agreed’.

six reported to ‘disagree’. One comment was provided support for this rating:

*By whom?*

There were three no responses to this question and One ‘strongly disagreed’,

There was a balance of ratings for ‘do not know’ and ‘agree’ to this question. The one comment for ‘do not know’ may indicate that there is no emphasis on personal evaluation.

Question eight approached the element of ‘Reflecting’ and how the appraisal process had impacted on personal practice and learning.

11 respondents reported that they ‘did not know’ if they reflected on the appraisal process, Two participants gave no response, but one comment was made:

*Not been a part of this.*

10 respondents reported that they ‘agreed’ and one comment was provided for this rating:

*This is the teacher’s responsibility and should be reflected on.*

Six respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’. Three comments were provided to support this rating:

*Almost too many areas covered – not necessarily appropriate for individual’s needs.*

*By whom?*

*Not asked to reflect.*
Two participants also indicated the rating ‘strongly disagree’. The one comment provided for this rating stated:

*It would if I had one. I have reflected and acted upon from previous appraisals.*

One respondent reported that they ‘strongly agreed’.

Previous sections of the questionnaire analysis identified reflection as being evident in practice, however within this section it indicates that there is a balance between the ‘do not know’ rating and the ‘agree’ rating. Again the one comment of support emphasises the personal responsibility of reflecting.

Question nine explored the element of ‘Partnership’ and whether there was a feeling of mutuality in the appraisal process.

10 respondents ‘agreed’, there were eight participants who did not rate this question. Five respondents ‘did not know’, four respondents ‘disagreed’, and four respondents ‘strongly agreed’. One comment was recorded for the latter rating:

*Yes, strongly agree.*

One respondent indicated to ‘strongly disagree’.

Although 14 respondents agreed that there was mutuality in the appraisal process it is important to note that of the 32 participants 18 respondents did not rate the element, disagreed or did not know if mutuality was evident in practice.

Question 10 asked participants to rate how well ‘Co-operation’ was implemented in the appraisal process.

11 reported ‘agree’, eight indicated that they ‘did not know’, two participants did not rate this question and one comment which stated:

*Not seen this personally.*

One respondent reported ‘strongly disagree’, three ‘disagreed’, and one respondent reported to ‘strongly agree’. The comment provided for the ‘strongly agree’ rating stated:

*Yes, done at whanau level and whanau leader to team leader.*

There were no other comments to support the other ratings.

Throughout the literature co-operation is a key element for appraisal. Overall there is agreement that co-operation is evident in the appraisal process.

Question 11 explored the element of ‘Agreement’ participants were asked to rate how well agreed action plans and understanding of the appraisal process were practised.
15 reported that they ‘agreed’ and one comment was provided to support this rating:

*Appraisal process discussed and explained in the beginning.*

Nine respondents reported that they ‘did not know’, three respondents reported that they ‘disagreed’, one of which provided the comment:

*Would like to learn how be the appraiser.*

Three respondents reported that they ‘strongly agreed’ and there were two no responses to this question.

It is evident from the responses to question 11 that agreement of action plans and understanding of the appraisal process is evident in practice, these responses are in conflict to that of question nine which explored the element of partnership. The reason for this conflict is that in order for agreement we assume that there is the element of partnership in the forming of action plans and understanding the appraisal process.

Question 12 asked participants to rate how well ‘inclusiveness and flexibility’ were implemented in the appraisal process.

15 reported that they ‘did not know’ of which there were three comments:

*Not everyone is appraised.*

*Uniform appraisal guidelines for all staff.*

*No flexibility in the process.*

Eight reported to ‘agree’ two of which provided supporting comments:

*Yes we have adapted to focus on whanau leadership as well as aiming it towards student achievement this year.*

*This is the intention at present.*

Five respondents ‘disagreed’, two participants did not rate this question, one ‘strongly disagreed’ and one participant reported that they ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement.

The responses given for question 12 indicated that there is uncertainty as to whether the appraisal process incorporates inclusiveness and flexiblity. The comments provided that support this uncertainty are clearly indicated above.

The next chapter will discuss the summary of the results of the research and relate these findings to the relevant literature. It will use the research questions as sub headings.
Chapter 5

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter provides a summary of the discussion based on the analysis of the graphs 1-7 and comments provided in the previous results chapter, this section will draw together findings and compare those with the literature. The implications for practice at School X in terms of collaborative leadership in the appraisal context will also be identified. The key research questions that are linked to data collection are used as subheadings for discussion of the findings.

Overall 120 responses in the questionnaire rated ‘strongly agree’ and 433 responses indicated ‘agreed’ that collaborative leadership was evident in the appraisal process at School X. 284 responses in total indicated ‘do not know’, 120 disagreed, and 18 ‘strongly disagreed’. Although there was a majority of agreement that collaborative leadership was occurring, in order for staff to identify collaborative leadership in practice it would be of benefit to the school to unpack terminology and review underlying values and beliefs given the 284 ‘do not know’ responses. Induction of new staff to the appraisal process is also imperative as Graph 1 indicates that of the 32 participants responding 12 had only had less than one year experience of the appraisal process at School X, a percentage of 37%. The research questions are used as subheadings for discussion of the findings.

How has collaborative leadership at School X developed generally?
Collaborative leadership has been developed through the visioning process by identifying the culture, values, and beliefs around collaboration and leadership. The visioning process had informed the appraisal process where collaborative decision-making and ongoing feedback and feed forward are both modelled and communicated. Inkson, Henshall, Marsh and Ellis (1986) describe vision as an essential strategic managerial element providing idea, direction and purpose for the organisation.

What are the beliefs and values associated with collaborative leadership in the appraisal process at School X?
The beliefs and values associated with collaborative leadership in the appraisal process at School X have been analysed via the School Vision statement and the appraisal
documentation. Overall, the documents indicate that the beliefs and values are centered on growing staff through opportunity and personal responsibility and providing support for the roles of the appraiser and appraisee through resourcing the appraisal process. It is a process therefore that integrates both accountability and development functions. Both Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) and Middlewood (2002) support this notion, with the latter stating “… if accountability is a key purpose of appraisal of performance, then equally the need to recognise the opportunity for the performer to develop is crucial” (p.121).

The analysis of the appraisal document at School X identified espousals around monitoring and evaluating performance, encouraging development and recognising achievement. The documents reveal that appraisal is valued as being a vital element of the process of ‘quality learning’ and ‘quality teaching’ where staff feel in control and joint ownership of the process is valued. Appraisers knowing their appraisees is key here as Briggs (2002) states “… we must move towards creating an appropriate learning environment: concentrate on understanding better how people learn so that they can be better helped to learn” (p.171).

What collaborative processes are evident in the documentation for visioning statements and appraisal?

The documentary analysis identified that there were espousals of collaborative leadership in both the vision statement and appraisal documentation. These were identified using the criteria on collaborative leadership (appendix.2). The espousals of collaborative leadership in School X Vision Statement (2007) include: “… staff know what they are doing, why they are doing it and where to next”, “… teaching staff model goal setting and reflection”, “staff identify future learning goals”, “… there is evidence of a strong reflective culture”, “our expectations of each other are realistic and achieveable”, “… we seek feedback and feed forward”, “… staff are learning to take responsibility for own learning, be self reflective, resilient, self evaluating and focussed on clear future goals”, and “… staff value shared understanding about what communication is”. The questionnaire results identified that overall there was an agreement that these espousals were evident in practice. It was identified that reflection, feedback and feed forward were the most evident espousals in practice.
The espousals of collaborative leadership in School X appraisal documentation comprised of 12 key statements. These are, “effective work performance involves monitoring and evaluating”, “appraisal is a process that integrates both accountability and development functions”, “appraisal does not happen ‘to’ people, instead, it should be ‘with’”, “teachers feel in control of the process”, “agreed elements of the process include transparency, confidentiality, trust”, “appraisal is a educative and well resourced process”, “there is mutual respect, clear guidelines, development and accountability”, “there is a collection of data”, “there is timetabled feedback and feed forward”, “there are timetabled reflections”, “goal modifications are identified” and “there is ongoing professional development”. The questionnaire results indicate that these espousals overall are practised within the appraisal process at School X, especially the elements of informing, illustrating, and monitoring. However there were a number of areas where participants did not know whether the espousals were evident in practice, including inquiry, inclusiveness and flexibility. This indicates that communication needs to be clearer and a shared language developed around the appraisal process. Communication is a key criterion for collaborative leadership and is crucial in the appraisal process as it is based on the notion mutuality in the productive reasoning model. Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) support this by stating “… mutuality in appraisal is therefore linked to deep commitment to equality and openness; to genuinely understanding the appraisee’s perspective; to improve outcomes in appraisal” (p.54).

What are staff perceptions of the effectiveness of collaborative leadership in appraisal at School X?
Overall, themes presented in the analysis of the questionnaire findings indicated that feedback and feed forward and the collection of data for evidence were embedded in the appraisal process. There is a need however to refine what data is collected if collaborative leadership is to be practised and development is needed in how goal modifications take place, and the role of the appraiser and appraisee in this process.

Participants overall agreed that informing was evident in practice. It was identified that evidence based data was used to give information to an appraisee and that feedback was related to the evidence gathered. Informing reviews of the appraisal was also based on data.
The participants’ response to the criterion of illustrating affirmed the espousals in the vision and appraisal documents. There was evidence of collection of data which provided evidence for goals and professional development. There was however reference made to the amount of data required to be collected and whether ‘it was all necessary’.

Respondents mostly agreed that attempts were made to with-hold assumptions when questioning in appraisal. This element is a controversial one as it is impossible to know exactly what others are thinking while questioning is taking place. Participants were only able to comment on their personal experience within the appraisal process. Robertson (2005) supports the importance of with-holding assumptions when suggesting the use of “… non-judgemental wording” (p.120) when engaging in reflective questioning.

Ownership in appraisal is seen to be linked to partnership where there is balance in the roles of the appraiser and appraisee. The questionnaire identified that this included individuals taking personal responsibility for communication, goal setting, monitoring and inquiry. Although 12 respondents agreed that ownership was evident in the appraisal process, 10 respondents indicated uncertainty about ownership. This is a mediocre response given the importance of ownership. Cardno (1990) for example, implies that ownership of the process occurs when it is “… open, reciprocal and positive” (p.125-126). This can be achieved through on-going monitoring and discussion around evidence based data.

The majority (13) of participants acknowledged there was use of monitoring in appraisal, however there were questions around how much monitoring should take place and what this monitoring would look like. Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) identify that “monitoring can be used during the evaluation process to make formative judgements, and approaches such as review meetings or appraisal interviews” (p.14).

Although 20 of the 32 responses indicated agreement that ongoing evaluation was practised in appraisal, it was interesting to note that goal modifications were not evident. If regular evaluating and feedback was evident, it was not clear whether this was related directly to the learning needs or opportunities of the individual. Briggs (2002) identifies that the focus of evaluation “… will depend upon the values and aspirations of the institution, and the process will be undertaken with a sense of purpose” (p.182).
Reflection on practice is a key component of collaboration between appraiser and appraisee. Although this is espoused in the documentation it was not found to be common in practice based on the questionnaire results (overall eight participants disagreed, and 11 did not know). However there was report of reflection on personal practice and goal setting on a regular basis by the appraisee. Robertson (2005) suggests that “… reflecting on experiences and actions related to them helps leaders become more receptive to trying out new strategies and behaviours” (p.53).

The element of partnership in collaborative leadership aligned with the ownership element. There was evidence (14 respondents) of the appraisal process being bilateral in nature and and professional development centred around the individual and the organisation. There was a balance of organisational and individual needs, a notion that (Middlewood, 2002) believes to be important.

Respondents agreed that co-operation and agreement at School X were part of the culture and that these elements were identified at the beginning of the year at a staff retreat. However questionnaire respondents identified that there needed to be explicit communication around what staff strengths are and how best to utilise these strengths in leadership opportunities (14 participants). This would allow an opportunity to reinforce and shape staff attitudes while also enabling a furthering of the organisations own goals.

The evidence of inclusiveness and flexibility showed that staff were unsure whether these elements were practised in the appraisal process. The findings (21 respondents) identified that appraisal was a set process and they were unsure as to whether this process met individual needs. Middlewood (2002) suggests “… effective managers will always be aware the changing environment within their institutions exist and, therefore, be conscious that any performance appraisal approach will need to be flexible accordingly” (p.131).

The findings identified that at School X there was an appreciation of an appraisal system that was frank and honest. The ownership of co-constructing future learning and practice was valued according to the feedback (16 respondents). The findings (19 respondents) however also showed that there needed to be responsibility by both the appraiser and appraisee to engage in goal modification and increase formal and informal discussions.
The overall findings from the questionnaire and documentary analysis identified that the espousals of collaborative leadership in the School Vision statement and school appraisal documentation were evident in the practice of appraisal. The data indicated however, that there were varying degrees to how collaborative leadership was practised in the appraisal process, and areas for development were identified. These recommendations are made in the following chapter.
Chapter 6
CONCLUSION

This chapter provides conclusions for the research questions and identifies recommendations for future practice and presents the limitations of the research.

What are the criteria for effective collaborative leadership?

The criteria for effective collaborative leadership were established from common themes and elements evident in the literature. 12 elements were identified and used to form the basis of the questionnaire. These elements were identified as they worked within the productive reasoning model and are commonly espoused throughout appraisal processes. The aim was to identify whether these espousals were evident in practice at School X.

How has collaborative leadership at School X developed generally?

The espousals in the School Vision and appraisal documentation were aligned with the identified criteria of collaborative leadership in the context of appraisal. These espousals could be assumed to sit within the productive reasoning model, as there was emphasis on the elements of mutuality in the written documents. The data collected through the questionnaire identified that overall there was an alignment of collaborative leadership espousals with practice in the appraisal process at School X. These espousals were indicated on rating the collaborative leadership criteria in the School Vision document and appraisal documentation. The overall ratings (172 responses for the School Vision and 214 responses for the appraisal documentation) espousals and current practice were in alignment with the statements presented in the questionnaire. By no means does this imply that there are no areas for development of practice in the appraisal process, but rather there is a sound basis to improve and develop upon.
**What are the beliefs and values associated with collaborative leadership in the appraisal process at School X?**

There were varying degrees of agreement or uncertainty of the espousals associated with collaborative leadership and the evidence of these criteria in practice. The criteria that were evident in the data collected show that informing, illustrating and agreement were the strongest elements believed to be evident in practice. The criteria where the responses indicated the ‘don’t know’ rating included assumptions being with-held when appraisal conversations were taking place. Flexibility and inclusiveness also showed strong ratings in uncertainty and as one comment indicated “uniform appraisal guidelines for all staff”. We can assume that these ‘don’t know’ responses indicate that participants value these criteria but are unsure how or what this might look like in practice and feel that there could be a one size fits all appraisal process.

**What collaborative processes are evident in the documentation for visioning statements and appraisal?**

The criteria of collaborative leadership that were strongly evident in practice included illustrating by giving examples and using evidence for decision making and action plans. Monitoring, ownership and agreement focused on continued communication and the ability to engage in two-way dialogue about the decision making and appraisal process which indicated that the appraisal process was bilateral in nature. The process is monitored jointly and there is commitment place on working towards identified and agreed goals. It can be assumed that the criteria evident in the espousals and alignment of practice at School X are based on the productive reasoning model, whereby there is a focus on mutuality and shared understanding of the process. However the evidence of practice functioning within the productive reasoning model is not clearly proven by the data collected.
What are staff perceptions of the effectiveness of collaborative leadership in appraisal at School X?

Although there was overall agreement that the espousals of collaborative leadership identified in the School Vision and appraisal documentation were in alignment with practice the data did not rate the effectiveness of the criteria. The data to rate the effectiveness of collaborative leadership would be better collected through observations and discussions through focus groups, as there would need to be observable evidence of the interactions between appraisers and appraisees. This would identify language used, how evidence collected allows growth and shared understanding of the process that allows true mutuality to occur.

Recommendations

There is a commitment to continuing professional development within School X to assist in developing enhanced collaborative leadership. The findings suggest several recommendations for areas to be covered in this development so that further improvements can occur. These are:

1. Unpacking the process regularly would be beneficial. This could be done throughout the year at the initial, middle, and end stages of the appraisal cycle. It would be particularly beneficial for appraisers to discuss their role, and for appraisees to know their role within the appraisal process. Illustrating the cycle of the appraisal process and emphasising the notion of mutuality through the elements of productive reasoning would allow enhanced ownership for personal, professional and organisational growth. Ongoing explanation of the appraisal process and the roles of the appraiser and appraisee could develop a shared language around collaborative leadership and mutuality, therefore increasing the quality of understanding and communication. Development of skills such as listening and giving feedback would also be of benefit.

2. Enhancing the use of evidence based data at School X could help development of agreement on decisions made through ‘illustration’ (data collection) and ‘inquiry’ probes (understanding values and beliefs). Although data is collected at School X as part of the
appraisal process it is how this data is used to inform future learning and growth that needs to explored and strengthened. Creating, developing and maintaining relationships between appraiser and appraisee in order for questioning and understanding the evidence collected would be necessary. Professional development on using and exploring data to inform future growth would be beneficial as it is through questioning data that we can begin to understand values and beliefs of individuals.

3. School X, in their next review of the appraisal process, might like to look at flexibility and how this is incorporated into the appraisal process in terms of making decisions about personal professional development and needs. Creating an appraisal process that is flexible could include regular communication between appraiser and appraisee around the personal and professional goals of the individual and appraisers’ having the belief that all staff are professionals and can identify their own areas for development or interest. This could be facilitated through conferencing whereby the appraiser is skilled in questioning the appraisee using evidence based data and allowing the appraisee to identify the support needed from the appraiser.

**Limitations of the research**

There were a number of limitations that may have influenced the quality of findings within this research. Having only conducted the documentary analysis and questionnaire in one school, it limits the findings and implications to only being pertinent to that school. The results are therefore not generalisable.

The time of year that the questionnaire was administered may also have played a role in the quality of responses collected. Being the middle of term four, the wind down to the school year and many other roles and responsibilities to complete, could have had an impact on the limited number of qualitative comment responses.

The extent to which respondents were expected to have commented on each item may have also been a limitation. It could have been beneficial to add a comment box at the end of each section of the questionnaire, rather than after every statement. It is possible that respondents became weary of answering with qualitative comments.
The turnover and growth of staff may have influenced responses as a majority of participants had one year or less experience in the appraisal process. This may have influenced the number of uncertainty responses. Participants new to the school may have been unfamiliar with terminology or had not yet experienced the appraisal process personally.

My role in the school as a whanau leader may also have been a limitation in that I am an appraiser and this may have influenced the responses to the questionniare. Respondents may have seen the questionniare as a method of collecting data on performance although at the time of administration the purpose of the research was clearly communicated.
REFERENCE LIST


APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire
Appendix 2: Criteria for collaborative leadership in the appraisal context
Appendix 3: Research information form
Appendix 1.

This questionnaire is designed to gain your perceptions of the extent of collaborative leadership in the appraisal context. Please do not insert your name on this questionnaire.

How many years/months experience do you have in the current appraisal process at this school? (please write in numerals)

_____________________

The following section consists of a rating scale and written responses. For rating scale statements please place a number in the box that best represents your response to how well the aspects are implemented in the appraisal process.

Number representations:
1 = Strongly disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Don't know
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly agree

PART 1.
The school vision document makes several statements that have relevance to collaborative leadership in appraisal. Please rate the extent to which you agree that the statements are evident in practice:

1. “Staff know what they are doing, why they are doing it and where to next.”

Comment

2. “Teaching staff model goal setting and reflection.”

Comment
3. “Staff identify future learning goals.”

Comment

4. “There is evidence of a strong reflective culture.”

Comment

5. “Our expectations of each other are realistic and achievable.”

Comment

6. “We seek feedback and feed forward.”

Comment

7. “Staff are learning to take responsibility for own learning, be self reflective, resilient, self evaluating and focussed on clear future goals.”

Comment

8. “Staff value shared understanding about what communication is.”

Comment
PART 2.
The school appraisal document makes several statements that have relevance to collaborative leadership. Please rate the extent to which you agree that the statements are evident in practice:

1. “Effective work performance involves monitoring and evaluating”  
Comment

2. “Appraisal is a process that integrates both accountability and development functions”  
Comment

3. “Appraisal does not happen TO people, instead, it should be WITH”  
Comment

4. “Teachers feel in control of the process”  
Comment

5. “There are agreed elements of the process”  
Comment
6. “Appraisal is an educative and well resourced process”
Comment

7. “There is mutual respect, clear guidelines, development and accountability”
Comment

8. “There is a collection of data”
Comment

9. “There is timetabled feedback and feed forward”
Comment

10. “There are timetabled reflections”
Comment

11. “Goal modifications are identified”
Comment
12. “There is ongoing professional development”

Comment

PART 3.
The professional literature on collaborative leadership states that there are many elements of effectiveness, as listed in the following questions. *(Please rate according to how well we do these at our school)*

1. Informing

*Using evidence based data collected from observations, and or interviews, to give information to an appraisee.*

Comment

2. Illustrating

*Explaining by giving evidence in feedback and examples to inform decisions made.*

Comment

3. Inquiry

*Ask the appraisee to explain their thoughts by asking questions*

Comment

4. Assumptions

*Assumptions are with-held when appraisers are asking questions*
5. Ownership

Appraisee identifies what has been communicated and their understanding of it. Future learning goals are co-constructed with both the appraiser and appraisee. 

Comment

6. Monitoring

Continued communication about the goals and future learning occurs. Value is placed on the commitment in working towards these. Evidence is also collected.

Comment

7. Evaluating

Revisiting the above steps and reviewing the productiveness of the monitoring.

Comment

8. Reflecting

Reflection occurs on how appraisal has impacted on personal practice and learning?

Comment

9. Partnership

There is a feeling of mutuality (genuine sharing) in the appraisal process.

Comment
10. Co-operation
There is an establishment of roles for goal setting and goal achievement.
Comment

11. Agreement
There is an agreed action plan and understanding of the appraisal process
Comment

12. Inclusiveness / Flexibility
Adapting the appraisal process to needs and individual interests
Comment

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Sarah McWilliams
Appendix 2.

Criteria for Collaborative Leadership in the Appraisal Context

1. Informing
   *Providing clear information to an appraisee about issues, purposes and roles of appraisal.*

2. Illustrating
   *Explaining by giving evidence in feedback and examples to inform decisions made.*

3. Inquiry
   *Asking the appraisee to explain their thoughts, pedagogy by asking questions and withholding assumptions.*

4. Ownership
   *Appraisee identifies what has been communicated and their understanding of it. Future learning goals and key decisions are co-constructed with both the appraiser and appraisee.*

5. Monitoring
   *Continued communication occurs about the goals, next steps, and future learning. Value is placed on gaining commitment in working towards these. Evidence is also collected on progress.*

6. Evaluating
   *Revisiting the above steps and reviewing the productiveness of the monitoring.*

7. Reflecting
   *Considering impacts on personal practice and learning*

8. Partnership
   *A genuine sharing and feeling of mutuality in the appraisal process.*

9. Co-operation
   *There is an establishment of roles for goal setting and goal achievement.*
10. Agreement

*There is an agreed action plan and understanding of the appraisal process.*

11. Inclusiveness / Flexibility

*There is adaptation and flexibility goals, needs, individual interests and social needs.*
Dear Participant,

The following information is designed to provide you with some further detail about the research project and enable you to make an informed choice about your participation in the questionnaire. This is an academic research conducted for the purposes of study at Unitec.

Research Questions:
The research project aims to explore the following questions:
1. What are the criteria for effective collaborative leadership?
2. How has collaborative leadership at our school developed generally?
3. What are the espoused beliefs and values associated with collaborative leadership in the appraisal process at our School?
4. What are staff perceptions of the effectiveness of collaborative leadership in appraisal at our School?
5. Do staff perceptions differ from the espoused beliefs and values stated about collaborative leadership in appraisal?

Participant Involvement:
Your participation in the research will mean that you would be involved in completing a voluntary questionnaire.

• Questionnaire – The questionnaire is to be issued to all staff at our school and investigates the beliefs and values about collaborative leadership in the context of appraisal. The questionnaire has closed, rating – scale and open ended questions with opportunity for comment. The questionnaire should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The administration of the questionnaire will be at a staff meeting where any questions can be clarified. The questionnaires will be handed out and collected by the school secretary to ensure anonymity. Completion of the questionnaires is voluntary.

Use and storage of data:
I believe that it is important that you are made aware of the purposes of this research and the subsequent use of information gathered. Neither the participants’ names nor the name of our school will be used in any public reports or resulting publications. All of the data from this project will be stored in a locked filing cabinet for five years, after which time the data will be destroyed.

Sarah McWilliams (Researcher)