

**Building Leadership-capacity for Sustained
School-improvement**

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by

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Abstract

Building leadership-capacity for sustained school-improvement - by Abba Mansour

The third wave of school reform in Quebec that started in 2000, emphasized developing student leadership. For a school to become successful, it became mandatory for the administration to build leadership-capacity and developing teacher-leadership in curriculum and professional-development and school governance.

Building leadership-capacity and sustaining school improvement are the focus of this thesis. It describes the basic actions that schools should take to build leadership-capacity and investigates the characteristics of a capacity-building head and the ultimate effect of building leadership-capacity on student development. It also suggests that leadership-capacity is context specific and differentiated among schools. Leadership-capacity is defined as 'broad-based skilful participation in the work of leadership' (Lambert 1998:5) and a way of understanding sustainable school improvement (Lambert 2006:239) given each school culture and context.

Following a review of literature, five key-research questions were formulated, addressed through three interpretive case-studies carried out in three private secondary schools in Montreal, Quebec. The research tried to investigate the process of building leadership-capacity and how it sustains school improvement. The study predominantly used a flexible multiple case-study design, using qualitative methods of data collection. In each school, semi-structured interviews, non-participant observations and document checking were conducted, providing method and data triangulation.

Given that this research involves multiple case-studies, data analysis was conducted in two stages: within-case and cross-case analysis (Yin 1994:112). Analysis revealed that building leadership-capacity usually starts by broadly and skilfully involving teachers in leadership activities. Sustainable improvement can be supported by transforming the school into a professional-learning-community where learning and improvement become a habit of mind, daily practiced by teachers and students. Knowing that the ultimate goal of school improvement is to enhance student learning and achievement, this can be achieved when schools develop students to become leaders of their own learning journey. Developing teacher-leadership in a school ultimately reflects on student leadership and learning. In addition to these internal leadership-capacity processes, each school has its unique contextual factors, consequently, capacity-building is "multifaceted" (Fullan 2006), based on developing strategies that are unique to each school given its context, internal leadership-capacity predispositions and culture that ensure sustainable improvement for each particular school. The suggested leadership-capacity model provides a visual display for building leadership-capacity based on the dynamic interaction between internal capacity, culture and external context.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

Building leadership-capacity and sustaining school-improvement are the focus of this thesis. It also investigates the characteristics of a capacity-building head that secures building leadership-capacity and sustaining school-improvement and the ultimate effect of building leadership-capacity on student development and achievement.

In the third wave of school reform in Quebec that started in the year 2000, there was new emphasis on developing student leadership where students were given more responsibility in their learning process and in making decisions related to their learning journey. There was a shift away from lecturing and passive listening to teachers. For a school to become successful in implementing the school reform, it became mandatory for the administration to build leadership-capacity and recognize the importance of developing the role of teachers as leaders in curriculum development, professional-development and school governance. The research took place in three private secondary schools in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. Having in mind that these schools are in the process of implementing the school reform, the researcher was trying to investigate the process of building leadership-capacity in those schools.

1.2 Importance of the study

Building leadership-capacity is regarded as a worthwhile endeavour because it is a way for an organization to achieve and maintain “a momentum for self renewal” (Lambert 1998:3).

With this type of leadership the organization can keep moving when current leaders leave and improvements are sustained. For Senge (1990b), this constitutes a “learning organization”. Sustainability is a key advantage of this approach to leadership, and “sustainability depends on many leaders – thus, the qualities of leadership must be attainable by many, not just a few” (Fullan 2002a:20). The commitment necessary for sustainable improvement must be nurtured up close in the daily organizational behaviour, and for that to happen there needs to be many leaders around and at many levels (Fullan 2002b:417). This research explores how to build leadership-capacity for school-improvement using three qualitative case-studies, with different school contexts. It also analyzes the interaction of factors (inside and outside the school) that ultimately secure building leadership-capacity and sustain school-improvement.

1.3 Nature of the research problem

There is a body of literature that discusses leadership-capacity, capacity-building, and school-improvement (Lambert 1998; Mitchell & Sackney 2000; Hadfield & Chapman 2002, Harris & Lambert 2003, Hopkins & Jackson 2003). There are various strands of literature around the notion of leadership as capacity among a wider group of people. Related terminology and concepts include notions of leadership density (Sergiovanni 1992a); distributed leadership (Harris 2003a); teacher-leadership (Harris 2003b); post-heroic leadership (Sessa 2003); shared, dispersed, collective, parallel leadership (Frost & Durrant 2003). The noteworthy idea common to these notions is that leadership is spread throughout an organization with leadership roles and functions performed by various people not holding formal leadership positions, called teacher-leaders. There is an upsurge

towards leadership as empowerment and community-building and away from the great man theory of leadership. Sugrue (2009:360) argued that this shift did not mean the end of heroic leadership. Rather, research- and policy-focused literature was increasingly exhorting principals to work collaboratively with key colleagues, building shared visions and the capacity to deliver on new departures. Leadership that fostered teacher collaboration became an important means of moving beyond more limited notions of being a professional. To borrow a term from Spillane (2006), this may be regarded as evidence of 'leadership plus' - the addition being teacher collaboration. However, there is a debate on the type of leadership that generates and sustains school-improvement and builds leadership-capacity among teachers. The most effective heads build the capacity for improvement through investing in developing others, distributing leadership and developing the systems that invite skilful participation (Harris & Lambert 2003:2-3).

Capacity-building as defined in the literature (Lambert 1998; Mitchell & Sackney 2000; Hadfield & Chapman 2002) is closely associated with school-improvement. However, the research on the topic is generally undertaken at the micro (internal) level of school functioning (Harris & Lambert 2003), with little concentration on the macro (external)-environmental factors and school contextual factors with implications for capacity-building and school-improvement. Capacity-building is "multifaceted" (Fullan 2006), involving both those internally and those supporting them externally. Stoll (2009:117) confirmed that varied contexts and capacity necessitate differentiated capacity-building. Contextual differences in schools affect improvement, providing further backing for differentiated

capacity-building. Consequently, contextual capacity-building is needed if improvement efforts are to be sustained.

1.4 Purpose and scope of the study

This study explores the meaning of and the strategies involved in building leadership-capacity in schools; it tries to investigate what kind of leadership secures building leadership-capacity for sustained school-improvement. It proposes that sustained school-improvement is more likely to happen where leaders build the capacity for change and development, where they invest in teachers and teaching and where they empower others to lead. Improving schools are ‘learning-communities’ that nurture a deep culture of teaching and learning (Harris 2003d:3). Effective leadership for school-improvement works on building the capacity and creating the conditions to build and sustain improvement over time. The study suggests that leadership-capacity is context specific and differentiated among schools. The dynamic interaction between leadership-capacity predispositions in a school, its unique culture and context tend to ensure sustained improvement. Consequently, building the capacity for school-improvement requires internal and external forces of change and development. The purpose of this study is to describe the basic actions that schools should take to build leadership-capacity, how this leadership-capacity is able to sustain school-improvement, what type of leadership ensures building this leadership-capacity, and its effect on student development and achievement. Leadership-capacity is defined as ‘broad-based skilful participation in the work of leadership’ (Lambert 1998:5) and a way of understanding sustainable school-improvement (Lambert 2006:239) given each school culture and context.

Three secondary schools, with different achievement and improvement directions, are used as case-studies to understand and analyze the major issues and dilemmas inherent in building leadership-capacity for school-improvement. The analysis of case-studies allows answering the following questions:

1. How do schools get started on building leadership-capacity?
2. What type of leadership builds leadership-capacity?
3. How does building leadership-capacity sustain school-improvement?
4. What is the effect of leadership-capacity on student development and achievement?
5. What is the role of teacher-leadership in building leadership-capacity?

A qualitative, flexible multiple case-study design is used (see further discussion in chapter 3). The qualitative inquiry and the interpretive approach offer extended possibilities for understanding leadership-capacity and school-improvement in the chosen contexts. A case-study approach was selected because of its ability to capture a time-framed picture of leadership-capacity building.

1.5 Context of the study

The ministry of education of Quebec has introduced in September 2000 the third wave of educational reform over the past thirty years. It is ‘a curriculum based on the learning considered essential for students in the 21st century’ (Minitère-de-l’Education des-Loisirs et des-Sport-au-Québec (MELS) 2007). The curriculum reform in Quebec shares the same general orientation as reforms taking place in Canada, the United States and other industrialized nations. These include: greater stress on standards, accountability and

student success, definition of essential learning expectations to be attained at different levels of the system; shift of responsibilities from school boards to the individual school; recognition of the importance of the staff role in curriculum development; rethinking of the focus and essential content of various subject areas; emphasis on cross-curricular and interdisciplinary learning; integration of information technologies; introduction of new approaches to assessment and reporting; more involvement of parents and community; and closer links among objectives, programs, teaching and assessment (Henchey 1999:228).

The Quebec-Education-program introduces new language (terminology) into the school system that describes the main elements of the program content and approach required for making students the centre of teaching and learning environment (MELS 2007). Subject, cross-curricular and life-long competencies are the main elements of this new language. It opts to enable students to find answers to questions arising out of everyday experience, to develop a personal and social value system, and to seek responsible and increasingly autonomous behaviours. According to this reform, students who leave high school will need to have mastered core competencies (well-developed skills) such as the ability to work on teams, use information and communication technologies, solve problems, and understand their own learning styles. The Quebec-Education-Reform addresses the importance of these competencies by placing them at the forefront of the curriculum, instead of an added bonus in the learning process (MELS 2007).

The new Quebec-Education-program was first implemented in September 2000 in cycle-1 (grades 1 & 2) of compulsory schooling, where a completely new program of studies and a

new way of delivering the curriculum, learning methods and time allotted for each subject in all elementary schools across Quebec. The changes were phased-in for other cycles:

- September 2001 – Elementary Cycle-2 (grades 3 & 4)
- September 2002 – Elementary Cycle-3 (grades 5 & 6)
- September 2005 – Secondary Cycle-4 (grades 7, 8 & 9)
- September 2007 – Secondary Cycle5 (grades 10 & 11)

A cycle-based program is a course of two to three years program, considered as one grade with the summer considered a giant spring-holiday. It provides teachers more time to observe students as they develop their competencies, which allows for more accurate observations and judgments about student progress and learning (MELS 2007). In this new Education program, there is new emphasis on giving more responsibility to students to take charge of their learning and to make decisions. Critical to this aspect is the need to relate their learning activities to their prior knowledge and transferring their newly acquired knowledge to new situations in their daily lives. They must also make meaningful connections between the different subject areas and see how they can use what they learn in class in their everyday lives. Instead of passively listening to teachers, students are expected to take an active part in their learning. They spend more time working on projects, doing research and solving problems based on their areas of interest. They often take part in workshops or team learning to develop different competencies (MELS 2007).

Principals, Ministry officials, teachers and staff across Quebec began the task of developing their implementation plans for the new Education Program since 1999, and

principals and teachers began developing their implementation plans for September 2000. Each school may have a different approach to deal with the implementation since there is no one model that is required but one that best suits the needs of each school. Data collection for this research started in November 2007, where the new curriculum was being implemented in the secondary schools across Quebec. During that year, secondary schools were struggling with the implementation of the new report card system based on the core competencies set by the Reform.

This research was originally intended to be conducted in Lebanon, in order to study the applicability of the leadership-capacity theories to other school contexts, trying to discover the impact of different cultural and contextual factors on leadership-capacity and their implications for the original theory. However, my family and I were evacuated from Lebanon in July 2006 as a result of the war. Subsequently, I conducted the field work in Montreal, and the data collection instruments (interviews and observation schedules) were developed for schools in Montreal, while I was aware of the challenges that I would face in a new and alien school environment.

1.6 Organization of the thesis

The thesis is divided into six chapters. The first is the introductory chapter that gave an overview of the background and reasons for the study. It provided the rationale of the study, followed by research aims and significance of study. It also gave a general view of the context of the school system in Quebec and the curriculum reform that is implemented.

Chapter 2, the review of literature provides the conceptual background of leadership-capacity necessary for the qualitative research described in Chapter 3. The purpose of this chapter is to provide the academic and research matter that is relevant to the topic, since any new research should be founded on previous work (Oliver 2004). Chapter 2 reviews and evaluates the literature and research, contributing to an understanding of building leadership-capacity and sustaining school-improvement. In the first section, the shift from heroic to extended forms of leadership is discussed. This is accompanied by a review of literature related to leadership, introducing concepts of capacity-building, leadership-capacity, and school-improvement. This is followed by a review of literature contributing to understanding leadership-capacity. Next, the chapter includes a review of the literature related to the role of the head, issues of power, building professional-learning-communities, and leadership theories associated with leadership-capacity and school-improvement. The chapter concludes with a conceptual framework for building a leadership-capacity model.

Chapter 3 is the research methodology. It covers both theoretical and practical matters of data collection (Oliver 2004). It describes the tools used and reveals their strengths and shortcomings. It discusses the philosophical assumptions underlying this research, the research design that identifies the boundaries of the study, trustworthiness, data collection and analysis procedures. The ethical guidelines that filed research are also addressed.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study. It offers three case-studies of three English speaking secondary schools in Montreal, Quebec. The purpose of these case-studies is to

provide insights into the way in which leadership-capacity is generated in different types of schools. The chapter starts with a description of school contexts, followed by three case-studies including one section that describes the context of each case study, then five sections that answer each research question through developing arguments based on quotations from participants and a discussion section that summarizes the main findings of each case. In this chapter, a lot of direct interviewees' quotations are revealed to stay close to interviewees' real situations and interests (Kearney 2003).

Chapter 5 presents a cross-case analysis and identifies similarities and differences in the process of building leadership-capacity. It provides further insight into issues concerning building leadership-capacity by providing a more general explanation of the case-study results. First, a cross-case analysis is conducted by comparing the major patterns and themes in the data that are common across the cases, identifying similarities and differences and comparing them to the literature. The chapter ends with a synthesis of findings highlighting emerging themes where I suggest a leadership-capacity model.

Chapter 6 summarizes the main findings of the research, and provides an account to their significance and limitations. The findings are attributed to the analysis of the research and the contributions made by this thesis to building leadership-capacity and sustaining school-improvement. The chapter also indicates implications of this study on research, policy, and practice and discusses the researcher's reflections on the entire research work.

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

2.1 Purpose and chapter outline

The aim of this chapter is to construct an understanding of building leadership-capacity for sustained school-improvement, drawing on the literature pertaining to these topics. The literature review will serve as a vehicle for developing a conceptual framework for this study that explores the meaning of and the strategies involved in building leadership-capacity in schools. The purpose of this study is to describe the basic actions that schools should take to build leadership-capacity, how leadership-capacity sustains school-improvement, and the type of leadership most helps to build leadership-capacity. This will be the guiding framework for structuring this chapter.

In the first section, the shift from heroic to extended forms of leadership is discussed. This is accompanied by a review of literature relating to leadership, introducing concepts of capacity-building, leadership-capacity, and school-improvement. This is followed by a review of literature and research contributing to understanding leadership-capacity. Next, the chapter includes a review of the literature related to the role of the head, issues of power, building professional-learning-communities, and the leadership theories associated with leadership-capacity. The chapter concludes with a conceptual framework for building a leadership-capacity model.

2.2 From heroic to extended forms of leadership

Educational researchers acknowledge that deep and persistent school-improvement depends on the leadership of the many rather than the few. Fullan (2001:2) proposes that ‘charismatic leaders inadvertently do more harm than good because they provide episodic improvement followed by frustrated dependency’. Gronn (2009:17) argued that notions of ‘heroic’ leadership were a ‘Trojan Horse’, an aberration that delayed the arrival and recognition of distributed-leadership” and held back the tide of new thinking in conceptions of leadership. There is a strong argument for looking for competing theories of leadership and challenging the orthodoxy that equates leadership with the efforts of one person. Effective leaders in schools are those who are able to build collaborative cultures through generating positive relationships; who build the capacity for school-improvement through working collaboratively and through building professional-learning-communities within and between schools. They have a shared vision for their school which can only be realised if teachers work together as a learning-community (Harris 2003d:1- 2).

Sugrue (2009: 353) argued that some valuable aspects of traditional conceptualizations of leadership have been marginalized by a tendency towards celebrity in academic discourses that values more notions of teacher and distributed-leadership where claims to authenticity outstrip available evidentiary warrants, and silence more enduring aspects of leadership literature. This is not a denial of incremental contributions to contemporary leadership by recent emphases on participative or distributed-leadership. It is a call for a recapitulation of the field whereby ordinary people doing extraordinary work are recognized for their contributions with potential to render school leadership more attractive to teachers.

Nevertheless, there is an upsurge towards leadership as empowerment, transformation and community building, away from the ‘great man’ theory (Harris 2003d:1-2). Studies of effective leadership reveal that authority to lead need not be located in the leader but can be dispersed within the school (MacBeath 1998; Harris 2002a). Leadership is separated from person, roles and status and is primarily concerned with the relationships and connections among individuals within a school (Mitchell & Sackney 2000:78). Teachers participate in decision-making, have a shared sense of purpose, engage in collaborative work and accept joint responsibility for their work outcomes (Lambert 1998:11).

The concept of capacity-building derives its meaning from the literature regarding school-improvement and professional-learning-communities, and their relation to student achievement. Leadership is understood as reciprocal, purposeful learning in community settings (Lambert 2006:239). It involves providing opportunities for people to work together collaboratively. An improving school includes teachers who are active in constructing meaning and collaborating in mutual enquiry and learning. It is also a learning-community where teachers’ and students’ learning are equally valuable (Harris & Lambert 2003:4). Sustained school-improvement requires a school to build its own leadership-capacity if it is to assume internal responsibility for reform, and maintain a momentum for self-renewal. Leadership-capacity means broad-based, skilful participation in the work of leadership (Lambert 1998:5) and a way of understanding sustainable school-improvement (Lambert 2006:239).

Leadership-capacity is an institutional and not a personal concept. Any promising framework addresses learning for school-improvement on multiple levels - individuals and groups, adults and students, schools and districts, and its promises of sustainable results (Lambert 2003b:425-6). This study suggests that sustained school-improvement occurs where leaders build the capacity for change and development, where they invest in teachers and teaching and where they empower others to lead. Improving schools are 'learning-communities' that nurture a culture of teaching and learning. Effective leadership for school-improvement works on building the capacity and creating the conditions to build and sustain improvement over time (Harris 2003d:3).

2.3 Leadership-capacity

2.3.1 Capacity-building

Capacity-building includes creating the conditions, opportunities and experiences for development, collaboration and mutual learning (Harris 2002a:2). It involves tapping into the reservoir of 'underutilized talent within an organization' (Barth 2003:62) and thereby providing others with the opportunity to share their talent and contribute to school work. Leaders who intentionally strive to build capacity promote leadership in others (Slater 2008:58). This perspective embraces the notion of professional-community where 'teachers participate in decision-making, have a shared sense of purpose, engage in collaborative work and accept joint responsibility for their work outcomes' (Lambert 1998:11). Internal capacity is the power to engage in and sustain continuous learning of teachers for the purpose of enhancing student learning (Stoll 1999). Building school capacity implies that schools promote collaboration, empowerment and inclusion. It is

concerned with maximizing teacher-leadership and teacher learning. It implies that ‘individuals feel confident in their own capacity, in the capacity of their colleagues and in the capacity of the school to promote professional-development’ (Mitchell & Sackney 2000:78) school-improvement is achieved. Building the capacity for school-improvement necessitates paying careful attention to how collaborative processes in schools are fostered and developed. Capacity needs to take place within and between three interconnected areas: the personal, interpersonal, and organizational. This allows synergy to develop as each capacity builds from and extends the other (Ibid).

Capacity-building involves providing opportunities for people to work together in a collaborative way (Stoll 1999). Improving schools are characterized by a climate of collaboration and a collective commitment to work together, that result directly from discussion, development and dialogue in mutual enquiry and learning among those working in a school (Harris & Lambert 2003:4). In such communities, leadership is distributed and improvement ‘occurs from an internal search of meaning, relevance and connection’ (Mitchell & Sackney 2000:139). Barth (2000) talks about ‘creating a community of learners’ where the prime purpose of the organization is to increase the capacity to bring about collective growth and development (Harris & Muijs 2005:38).

Building-capacity for improvement implies a profound change in schools as organizations. It entails building relationships, trust and community (Harris & Lambert 2003:4). But capacity-building is not only about developing individuals, it is about ensuring that the school is a ‘self-developing force’ (Senge 1990a) through investing in those school and

classroom conditions that promote development and change (Hopkins & Harris 2001). Unless the internal conditions in a school are inclined to change irrespective of how good the new change initiative is, it will falter. As long as school-improvement is dependent on a single person or outside forces, it will fail (Harris & Lambert 2003:13).

The two key components of a capacity-building model are professional-learning-community and leadership-capacity (Hopkins & Jackson 2003:89). In this sense, capacity-building is concerned with developing the conditions, skills and abilities to manage and facilitate productive change. It also necessitates a particular form of leadership to generate and sustain school-improvement. One that focuses on learning, both organizational and individual, that invests in a community of learners - parents, teachers, students and heads. This implies a leadership that is distributed and shared (Harris & Lambert 2003:5-7).

Capacity-building as defined in the literature is closely associated with school-improvement (Stoll 1999; 2009; Mitchell & Sackney 2000; Lambert 2007). The research on the topic is generally undertaken at the micro (internal) level of school functioning, with little concentration on the macro (external)-environmental factors (such as political, economic trends) and school contextual factors with implications for capacity-building and school-improvement (Stringer 2009:164). This had led to claims that the concept lacks clarity and articulation (Hadfield et al. 2004; Hopkins et al. 1998). As such separating out internal capacities from the external school context does not sufficiently capture the complexity, interconnectedness and potential of different facets of the change process. Fullan (2006) argued that capacity-building is “multifaceted”, involving both those

internally and those supporting them externally -including policymakers - in generating and sustaining the necessary conditions, culture and structures; facilitating learning and skill-oriented experiences and opportunities, ensuring interconnectedness and synergy between all the constituent parts (Stoll & Bolam 2005).

Stoll (2009) concluded that improvement is a series of simultaneous and recurring processes through which different partners collaborate to enhance students' experiences and outcomes, while creating the capacity to take charge of change and sustain learning. Stoll (2009: 125) expanded the notion of capacity to power - a 'habit of mind' focused on engaging in and sustaining the learning of people at all levels of the educational system for the collective purpose of enhancing student learning in its broadest sense. It's a quality that allows people, individually and collectively, regularly to learn from the world around them and apply this learning to new situations so that they can continue their path toward achieving their goals in an ever-changing context.

2.3.2 Building leadership-capacity

There are various strands of literature around the notion of leadership as capacity among a wider group of people. Related concepts include leadership density through expansion of leadership capital (Sergiovanni 1992a); distributed-leadership (Harris 2003a); teacher-leadership (Harris 2003b); post-heroic leadership (Sessa 2003); shared or dispersed leadership (Frost & Durrant 2003). The common idea is that leadership is no longer an individual matter, but is spread throughout an organization with leadership roles and functions performed by various people not holding formal leadership positions.

Lambert (1998:12) noted: “Viewing leadership as a collective learning process leads to the recognition that the dispositions, knowledge, and skills of capacity-building are the same of those of leadership.” Sustained school-improvement requires a school to build its own leadership-capacity if it is to assume internal responsibility for reform and maintain a momentum for self-renewal. Building leadership-capacity is defined as ‘broad-based, skilful participation in the work of leadership’ (Lambert 1998:12) and a way of understanding sustainable school-improvement (Lambert 2006:239).

In order for leadership involvement to be broad-based, there must be many parties involved in leading: A significant number of teacher-leaders and leadership among students. This view of leading as a shared endeavour aligns capacity-building with democratic ideals, involving shared purpose, action and responsibility, and a realignment of power and authority (Apple & Beane 1999; Frost & Durrant 2003). In Senge’s (1997:30) terms “leadership in the future will be distributed among diverse individuals and teams who share responsibility for creating the organization’s future”. Harris (2002b:22) agrees that “school leadership is a function that needs to be distributed throughout the school”.

Building leadership-capacity is regarded as a worthwhile endeavour because it is a way for an organization to achieve and maintain “a momentum for self renewal” (Lambert 1998:3). The organization can keep moving when current leaders leave and improvements are sustained. To Senge (1990b), this constitutes an organization in which continuous learning occurs. Sustainability is a key advantage of this approach to leadership, and “sustainability depends on many leaders – thus, the qualities of leadership must be attainable by many, not

just a few” (Fullan 2002a:20). The commitment necessary for sustainable improvement must be nurtured in the daily organizational behaviour, and for that to happen there needs to be many leaders at many levels (Fullan 2002b:417).

Teachers work most effectively when they work collaboratively (Hargreaves 1995). Collaborative relations and practice are at the core of building-capacity for school-improvement. It is the nature of communication between those working together on a daily basis that offers the best indicator of organizational health. Hopkins et al. (1996:177) note that ‘successful schools encourage co-ordination by creating collaborative environments which encourages involvement, professional-development, mutual support and assistance in problem solving’. If sustained improvement is to be achieved, teacher collaboration should be encouraged. This implies a form of professional-development and learning that is premised upon collaboration, cooperation and networking. It implies a view of the school as a learning-community where teachers and students learn together. Teachers develop through enquiry into and reflection upon their own practice (Harris 2002a:55-6).

Building the capacity for school-improvement implies a profound change in schools as organizations. Building-capacity differs among schools and contexts. However, without a focus upon building the capacity for change, the chances of sustained improvement are lessened. The possibility of raising student achievement becomes remote. Of central importance in building-capacity within organizations is the human perspective. By placing people at the centre of development there is greater opportunity for organizational growth.

Building-capacity means extending the potential and capabilities of individuals and investing in professional-development (Harris 2002a:57).

Two conditions must be present in order to establish lasting leadership-capacity: A significant number of skilful teacher-leaders who know the shared vision in their school, the scope of the work underway and are able to carry it out, and a commitment to the central work of self-renewing schools which involves reflections, enquiry, conversations and focused action (Harris & Lambert 2003:13-4). These conditions address two critical dimensions of participation:

- Breadth of involvement: broad-based participation involving many people – teachers, parents, students – in the work of leadership.
- Skilfulness of those involved; an understanding and proficiency by participants of leadership knowledge and skills, involving more than the knowledge of new teaching approaches or materials. Skilfulness refers to leadership skills that allow teachers negotiate real changes and deal with the conflicts that inevitably arise (Harris & Lambert 2003:25).

Based on these two dimensions Lambert (1998:14; 2006:240) developed a leadership-capacity matrix (Figure 2.1) that allows researchers to describe conditions in schools with different levels of leadership-capacity. Each characteristic is evidenced in its desired form - the form described by identified research studies in school-improvement – Quadrant(4). These characteristics include the role of the principal and others in leadership positions in collaboration, problem solving, decision-making, professional learning, conversations,

vision/purpose, information and inquiry, relationships, and student performance. Glickman (1993), Fullan (1993), Heifetz (1995), Schmoker (1996), Garmston & Wellman (1997), Lambert (1998; 2003a), and Newmann et al. (2000) provide useful resources in understanding Quadrant(4) features.

Figure 2.1: Leadership-capacity matrix

<p style="text-align: center;">LOW INVOLVEMENT</p> <p>Quadrant(1) – Stuck school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Head is autocratic manager ○ Limited (one-way) flow of information; no shared vision ○ Co-dependent relationships; rigidly defined roles ○ Norms of compliance, blame ○ Lack of innovation in teaching and learning ○ Student achievement is poor, or showing short-term improvements on standardized measures <p style="text-align: center;">LOW SKILLS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">HIGH INVOLVEMENT</p> <p>Quadrant(2) – fragmented school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Head is laissez-faire manager; many teachers developing unrelated programs ○ Fragmentation and lack of coherence of information, and programs' lack of shared purpose ○ Undefined roles and responsibilities ○ Norms of individualism, lack of collective responsibility ○ Erratic innovation with both excellent and poor classrooms ○ Student achievement static overall <p style="text-align: center;">LOW SKILLS</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">LOW INVOLVEMENT</p> <p>Quadrant(3) – Moving school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Head and key teachers as purposeful leadership team ○ Limited uses of school-wide data, information flow within designated leadership groups ○ Polarized staff – pockets of strong resistance ○ Designated leaders act efficiently; others serve in traditional roles ○ Norms of reflection, innovation and teaching excellence among selected teachers; program coherence still weak ○ Student achievement static or showing slight improvement <p style="text-align: center;">HIGH SKILLS</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">HIGH INVOLVEMENT</p> <p>Quadrant(4) – Improving school</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Head, teachers, parents and students are skilful leaders ○ Shared vision results produces program coherence ○ Inquiry-based use of information to inform decisions and practice ○ Roles and actions reflect broad involvement, collaboration, and collective responsibility ○ Reflective practice consistently leads to innovation ○ Student achievement is high or improving steadily <p style="text-align: center;">HIGH SKILLS</p>

Source: Lambert (1998:14; 2006:240); Harris & Lambert (2003:25)

Quadrant1: 'Stuck School' – low involvement, low skilfulness

Quadrant(1) schools are failing schools, poor at the day-to-day management tasks and are reactive to problem solving. The head is autocratic. Information is downward without inviting responsiveness. There is considerable delegation and blaming. The lack of a shared vision abdicates purpose of the goals to the head. Relationships are co-dependent where head and teachers informally, agree not to change. There is little innovation in teaching and learning among teachers, since it is not encouraged. Proposals for new practices come from top and compliance is expected. Student achievement is generally poor (Lambert 1998:14; 2007:313-4; Harris & Lambert 2003:26-7).

Quadrant(2): 'Fragmented school' – high involvement, low skilfulness

These schools are less tightly managed and controlled. The principal operates in a laissez-faire and unpredictable fashion. Distracted by routine management tasks (discipline, budget), the principal gives little attention to improvement approaches. Norms of individualism enables a lack of collective responsibility. Innovation is spotty so there are both poor and terrific classrooms. Their reluctance to develop new ideas means that schools will either remain unchanged or will gradually deteriorate. While overall student achievement is static, few students are doing well while others are doing poorly (Lambert 1998:15; 2007:314; Harris & Lambert 2003:28).

Quadrant(3): 'Moving school' – high skilfulness, low involvement

Quadrant(3) schools may make progress. They approach innovation with great enthusiasm at the expense of involvement. The principal and key teachers are skilful leadership team.

They use available data to make school decisions. Staff members are polarized with pockets of strong leadership and strong resistance. Teachers in the middle, lack the skills to negotiate their ideas. Roles and responsibilities are unclear. Student achievement shows slight improvement in classes with teacher-leaders and those who participate in professional-development (Lambert 1998:15; 2007:314; Harris & Lambert 2003:29).

Quadrant(4): 'Improving school' – high skilfulness, high involvement

In Quadrant(4) schools, leaders' participation is shared, equitable and purposeful. Skills learned through effective teaching and learning include: facilitating group processes, reflecting on practice, communicating, collaborating, and managing conflict and change. A shared vision provides a guide toward which school members direct their energies. Inquiry is a generative learning process that is self-renewing and serves as the bases of reflective practice and innovation (Lambert 2007:313). Heads provide opportunities for teachers to work together. There is a feeling of energy and enthusiasm within these schools. Teachers possess the leadership skills necessary to affect the norms, roles and responsibilities of the school. The school-wide focus is on student and adult learning, and decision-making is shared (Lambert 1998:16; Harris & Lambert 2003:29-30). Student leadership is considered vital to student performance. Teachers explicitly teach and model leadership understandings and skills, and provide extensive opportunities for participation (Lambert 2006:241). Schools either have achieved or are in the process of achieving remarkable student achievement. Student achievement includes—test scores, self-knowledge and social maturity, problem-solving and goal-setting skills, and the development of a sense of being in charge of one's future (Lambert 2007:313).

The problem with this leadership-capacity matrix is that it isolates the school from its external environment, its context and unique cultural characteristics. It considers that any school can be placed in one quadrant overlooking the particular cultural, structural and contextual characteristics of every school. However, varied contexts and capacity necessitate differentiated capacity-building (Hopkins et al. 1997; Stoll 2009:117) because schools have different capacities for change and development. Consequently, capacity-building strategies cannot be generic or systemic across schools because no two schools are identical and capacity-building needs to take this into account. For some schools implementing change is like “trying to build a structure out of sand” whereas in others “the soil is fertile and the seed ... only needs time, nurturing and protection” (Slavin 1998:1303). Improvement means something different to struggling schools in deprived areas than to cruising schools in luxuriant suburbs (Stoll & Fink 1996) because struggling schools have different types of students and challenges, improvement needs and aspirations than affluent schools. Hopkins et al. (1997:403) confirmed that strategies for school improvement need to fit the culture of the particular school. The readiness to be able to initiate change or even take on external change and harness it for their own purposes just isn’t there in some schools. Contextual differences in schools affect improvement, providing further backing for differentiated capacity-building. Skills required for leadership or teaching in a multicultural inner city environment aren’t exactly the same as those in an affluent suburb or an isolated rural community (McLaughlin & Talbert 2007; Stoll 2009:118). Consequently, contextual capacity-building is needed if improvement efforts are to be sustained.

2.3.3 Critical features of leadership-capacity

Developing a Quadrant(4) school needs to be guided by skilled professionals who hold a firm vision of how to develop a high leadership-capacity school (Lambert 2003b: 425).

This work can be refined to five critical features of successful school-improvement:

1. Broad-based, skilful involvement in the work of leadership is to Lambert (1998:18) the essence of leadership-capacity and requires attention to two areas: structures and processes for involvement (participation), and opportunities to become skilful participants (skilfulness). To Harris & Lambert (2003:31-2), a school needs several working groups such as governance groups charged with the authority to facilitate decision-making processes, and subject level and interdisciplinary teams. This to Penlington et al. (2008:73) constitutes part of building capacities of staff within a school and is an important means of achieving school-improvement.

Collaborative work is directly linked to school-improvement and student learning. Yet the work must be spread and shared, so that teachers are not overwhelmed with tasks. The work involves: taking on different roles and tasks, and communicating differently in individual and group conversations (asking questions, listening, giving feedback) (Harris & Lambert 2003:31-32). Effective communication is instrumental in establishing collaborative relationships and is a key aspect of building leadership-capacity (Slater 2008:55). Lambert (1998) includes inquiry, reflection, skilful dialogue, and problem solving actions as important strategies for communication. Slater (2008:62) identified listening, verbal and non-verbal behaviour, openness and empathy

and other competencies related to emotional intelligence as essential to communication strategies. Leaders may use several communication strategies and skills such as listening, verbal and nonverbal behaviour, openness, and empathy to encourage shared leadership and build trusting relationships that promote leadership opportunities and build capacity in others (Slater 2008:67).

Purposeful collaboration among teachers that is not skilfully done can be non-productive by focusing on complaints and telling tales of students. The leadership skills needed for collaborative work involve the ability to: develop a shared sense of purpose; facilitate group processes; communicate; understand change and its effects; mediate conflict; and develop positive relationships. Such perspective enables teachers to create mutual trust, listen, pose questions, and look for answers together. Individuals can learn these skills through professional-development: observation and guided practice, coaching, and training (Lambert 1998:18).

2. Enquiry-based use of information to inform shared decisions and practice: A community of enquiry is defined by Christie et al. (2007:264) as a group of people working together with a shared purpose which entails a collaborative attempt to explore issues or answer questions and potentially creating new knowledge.

Collaborative enquiry is regarded in many models of teacher professional-development as an important means for enhancing teacher professional growth (Putnam & Borko 2000; Cobb et al. 2003). It is expected to result in meaningful shifts in teacher practice and in other positive outcomes such as knowledge construction by teachers (Woods et al. 1997; Hamilton 1998; Day 1999). In collaborative learning-communities (Cobb et

al. 2003; Wenger 2003) professionals discuss, study and construct conceptual principles and ideas, generate and enact new strategies for their work environment and share insights about what they have learned. Such collaborative enquiry may result in a dynamic co-construction of knowledge (Huberman 1995; Bereiter 2002).

Collaborative enquiry includes reflection, dialogue, question-posing, enquiry, construction of new meaning and knowledge. Enquiry requires time and rethinking. Teachers are very busy and time is precious; hence the creation of common time for dialogue and reflection needs to be planned. Informed conversations must take place about things happening in the school, how people feel about them, and what meanings are emerging. Performed on a regular basis, the reciprocal learning process can become a regular practice. Opportunities to discuss and reflect are crucial if progress is to be made (Harris & Lambert 2003:32-3).

3. *Roles and responsibilities that reflect broad involvement and collaboration:* Growth in individual teacher capacity brings about change in self-perception and roles. As roles change, new behaviours emerge: teachers can analyze data and ask critical questions. Teachers see themselves responsible beyond their classroom. This change in roles leads to a change in relationships. Teachers start to recognise new skills in colleagues they've known for years. Relationships start to cut across former hierarchal boundaries (Lambert 1998:20-2). According to Slater (2008:56), when principals, teachers and parents are engaged in collaboration within the context of school-improvement initiatives such as school councils, site-based management and teacher professionalism,

it opens up leadership opportunity to more people. Collaborative activities in which individuals lead, learn and influence others by building on their personal strengths and passions may tap higher levels of personal motivation and capacity.

4. Reflective practice: Teachers assume responsibility for their professional growth and learning through reflective practice and schoolwide critical inquiry (Lieberman 1995; Sparks & Hirsh 1997). Reflection is a process in which teachers conceive their work as subject to self-examination and continuous learning (Van Manen 1997). Through reflection teachers better understand and extend their professional activity. The benefit of reflection enriches and constructs professional knowledge (Elliot 1991; Cochran-Smith & Zeichner 2005). Teacher inquiry conducted in a collaborative community is effective in helping teachers examine issues and tensions authentic to their practice and provide opportunity to effect positive change (Allard et al. 2007:310).

Forms of reflection include: reflection on beliefs, assumptions and past practices, collective reflection during dialogue. Capacity-building in schools is strengthened by groups of teachers sharing and analysing their work (Little 2002). To create a norm of such habits of mind requires that time be available for reflection. Reflection leads to the opportunity to ‘run with’ an idea, to see it through. If ideas are continuously blocked by the head, they are not likely to blossom on a regular basis. If a school community feels that an idea deserves a trial, many doors need to be opened to enable those teacher-leaders transform ideas into reality (Harris & Lambert 2003:34).

5. High and improving student achievement: Penlington et al. (2008:73) consider that heads deem the development of teaching and leadership capacities of teachers as a central part of their role in two respects: to be effective in sustained improvement of student outcomes; and to help staff members develop their leadership skills, careers and sense of efficacy and commitment. To Penlington et al. (2008:75), the development of the capacities (knowledge, responsibilities and skills) of teachers within schools is key to improving the performance of teachers in raising student outcomes. This focus on developing capacities is three-pronged: working to develop the leadership-capacities of teachers, building and sustaining commitment and self-confidence, and focusing upon improving the teaching capacity of teachers. Building staff capacities to learn, lead and teach well is an important leadership strategy in schools. Developing the teaching capacities of teachers, through strategically focused professional-development aligned to teaching and learning goals, has a more direct effect on student outcomes, because it effects improvement in teaching approaches in classrooms. Developing the skills and knowledge of emerging teacher-leaders is important because developing this capacity involves more people in making decisions about the direction of the school/a feature of schools that are more effective in raising students' outcomes (Harris & Chapman 2002; Gurr et al. 2005; Moller et al. 2005).

The research of Stoll (2009) broadly confirms these five critical features and identifies three others: Developing the school into a professional-learning-community, developing teacher-leadership and teacher professional-development, which holds considerable promise for capacity-building for sustainable improvement. Although the literature

suggests that many of the principles governing school-improvement and leadership-capacity are universal (Stringer 2009), some are context specific and unique to each school given its distinct cultural, structural and contextual circumstances, and needs to be adapted to the individual circumstances of each school. Furthermore in an increasingly interdependent world, school-to-school learning networks enlarge individual schools' repertoire of choices, moving ideas and good practice around the system (Stoll 2009:123). This lateral capacity-building (Fullan 2006) is collective responsibility and moral purpose writ large in cases where members learn with one another, from one another on behalf of one another, and learn more about their learning (NCSL 2006).

2.3.4 Capacity-building for sustainable school-improvement

The ultimate aim of school-improvement is to make a difference for students, more than adding value and 'doing the right things' (Stoll 2009:115). School-improvement is viewed as 'an approach to educational change that aims to enhance student learning outcomes and strengthening the school's capacity for managing change' (Hopkins 2001a:13), particularly emphasizing the teaching and learning process and conditions that support this. While school-improvement is outcomes-oriented, it is a process: a journey with many subtleties (Stoll 2009:115). If the ultimate goal of school-improvement is to enhance student progress and achievement, research shows that this is best achieved when schools extend their own capacity for development. Within the context of school-improvement, capacity is the ability of teachers to enable all students reach higher standards (Harris 2002a:50). Stoll (2009:117) argued that while changing learning and teaching is absolutely fundamental to improvement, separating out (learning and teaching) capacities does not sufficiently

capture the complexity, interconnectedness and potential of different facets of the change process. Rather, Stoll (1999:506) considers that internal capacity is a more generic and holistic concept: the power to engage in and sustain continuous learning of teachers and the school itself for the purpose of enhancing student learning; the school's social and structural learning context; and the external context. To Stoll (2009:117), a school with internal capacity can take charge of change because it is adaptive.

Building-capacity requires the principal to share leadership with others, which engages stakeholders more fully in school-improvement. School reform is achieved and sustained more effectively when improvement is a shared responsibility amongst teachers, students and parents (Slater 2008:58). There needs to be a focus upon school culture as the main way of understanding the potential for school growth and development. School-improvement essentially involves a transformation of attitudes, beliefs and values that operate within a school. At the core of school-improvement is the transformation of a school culture so that it empowers and energises both staff and students. A school culture that advocates trust, collaborative working relationships and that focuses on teaching and learning is self-renewing and responsive to improvement efforts (Harris & Lambert 2003:14-15; Harris 2002a:61). The types of school cultures most supportive of school-improvement efforts are those that are collaborative, have high expectations for both students and staff, that exhibit a consensus on values, and those which encourage all teachers to assume leadership roles appropriate to their experience (West et al. 2000: 33).

The elements of school-improvement described by the concept of leadership-capacity involve team structures, such as communities of staff members, parents, and students, in activities that enhance relationships, participation, and skilfulness. Everyone is on a team, whether it a leadership, grade, or action-research team. Everyone participates by engaging in conversations about student performance and questions of practice. Teams discuss assumptions and beliefs, inquire into practice, and frame new or improved actions. There is collective responsibility to problem solving (Lambert 2006:242).

Ensuring sustainable improvement depends on a capacity-building habit of mind. Initial urgency for improvement may be stimulated by mandating improvement strategies imposed by external agency such as the third wave of school reform initiated by the Ministry of Education of Quebec, but quick fix solutions rarely lead to lasting change. Consequently attention is shifted to the pursuit of sustainability - something deeper, broader and lasting (Hargreaves & Fink 2006). Capacity for change is all about learning, in which people engage individually and collectively in continuous and purposeful consideration of their professional responsibilities, beliefs, skills, and practices. This kind of learning has inherent benefits for teachers, but its real value is connected to sustainability: sustainability of inquiry and reflection; of conversations inside and outside the school; and of continuous learning that enhances students' success (Stoll & Earl 2003). Sustainability is the goal; capacity is the engine that will ultimately power the sustainability journey (Stoll 2009:121). Capacity-building needs to become a 'habit of mind' (Hill 1997), a way of being and thinking. As any new improvement strategy is considered, the response should be 'what do we need to put in place to ensure we have the

capacity for this to be sustainable?’ The responses address the conditions, culture and new structures that support sustainability, and changing conceptions of leadership (Stoll 2009:121). Lasting Leadership embodies the intention that leadership is not only reciprocal and purposeful, but that learning is a lasting, continuing facet of sustainability. When learning is continuous and participation in that learning is broad-based and skilful, we find the potential and the reality of sustainable school-improvement (Lambert 2007:322).

Leading school-improvement cannot be done only one person: the principal. In this context, distributed-leadership, broad-based involvement in leadership practices (Harris 2008a) offer leadership-plus (Spillane et al. 2001). To maintain the link with school-improvement, capacity-building needs to keep its focus on leadership that benefits student learning, and influences and supports the learning of other stakeholders playing a role in improving students’ learning. It means spotting leadership potential and providing a range of opportunities for people to develop leadership practices and interactions. Developing leadership-capacity is necessary if improvement is to be more than a temporary phenomenon. To ensure sustainability, leadership has to be distributed within the school and embedded within its culture. The most fundamental shift in developing leadership-capacity is promoting student leadership. Developing the capacity for students to be leaders of their own learning and play a role in evaluating the quality of their learning experiences (Stoll 2009:122).

Varied school contexts add another dimension to leadership-capacity and necessitate differentiated capacity-building. Hopkins et al. (1997) recognize that different schools

require different capacity-building strategies. No two schools are identical and capacity-building has to take this into account. There is a need to outline the school's capacity for improvement and to provide a framework for thinking about differential strategies for school development. Consequently, contextual capacity-building strategies provide the answer to successful improvement strategies. Similarly, Quebec schools operate within external and internal contexts influenced by society and the Quebec Education System.

2.4 The role of the head

Even though teacher-leadership is at the heart of building leadership-capacity, the leadership of the head is still the most vital form of intervention. Heads set the climate for improvement empower others to lead and provide the needed energy for change. Heads are the catalyst for change, they may not implement changes but stimulate others to change and develop. They engage others in the emotional work of building collaborative, trusting relationships (Harris & Lambert 2003:38). As Goleman (2002:3) suggests 'great leadership works through emotions'. The capacity-building head creates a climate of enthusiasm and flexibility, where teachers feel invited to be at their most innovative, work together and give their best. This head is 'value-driven', has a clear moral purpose that earns trust among stakeholders (Day et al. 2000), and believes that every stakeholder has the right, responsibility and capability to work as a leader (Harris & Lambert 2003:38).

The power and authority of the head can be used to maintain dependent relationships or establish processes that improve the leadership-capacity of the school. To do the latter, a head can use formal authority to: involve teachers in developing a shared vision; organize

and maintain momentum in learning dialogue; protect school values; work with teachers to arrive at and implement school decisions (Harris & Lambert 2003:41).

Where decision-making is shared, the possibility for improvement is enhanced. The question is how heads distribute leadership and equip teachers to be leaders (Harris & Lambert 2003:42). For Slater (2008:56-8), principals may use simple communication strategies such as listening, empathy, openness to know people and develop relationships that pave the way to building-capacity in others and sustaining leadership-capacity. Working collaboratively entails a changing leadership role for the head. As leaders move away from being the sole decision-makers to involving others in the process, new leadership roles and responsibilities emerge for parents, teachers and students.

Shared leadership is dependent upon collaboration that rely on trust, respect for the expertise of others and mutual interdependence for success. When leaders recognize and nurture capacity in others they provide the opportunity for staff to develop leadership skills by learning from each other in supportive and collaborative environments (Slater 2008:59). When leaders focus on developing human potential, the door is open for people to experience fulfilment and satisfaction. Teachers describe their great satisfaction derived from being given the opportunity to ‘make happen something that you believe in’ (Barth 2003:62). As Lambert (2003a:32) suggests, ‘teachers become fully alive’, in environments that foster leadership. Creativity is unleashed within people when they are given leadership opportunities to pursue issues related to their personal passions and concerns. In such situations, individuals are capable of ‘profound learning’ (Barth 2003:64).

Principals employ various communication skills and strategies to build trusting relationships that promote leadership opportunities and build capacity in others (Slater 2008:67). Because principals spend more than three-quarters of their time communicating (Johnson 1994), communication systems, skills and strategies are an integral part of building leadership-capacity within a school. Trust develops when an administrator uses effective communication to engage others in personal interaction. Trust decreases organizational fear and encourages the risk-taking that provides the opportunities for others to be leaders (Slater 2008:61). Essential communication strategies include inquiry, reflection, skilful dialogue, problem solving (Lambert 1998), listening, verbal and non-verbal behaviour, openness and empathy (Slater 2008:62).

Day (2009:725) stressed that principals have a particular responsibility for promoting trust among school members. Trust is a key component of capacity-building and decisions about the extent to which leadership is distributed. Having high levels of organizational trust allows leaders to ask for change without resistance. It may even enhance the willingness of people to participate more actively in the change process because it increases the norms of reciprocity and responsibility that enhance ownership (Sullivan & Transue 1999). If teachers cannot trust each other, they cannot work together effectively to create systemic change (Louis Seashore 2007:19).

Heads play an important role in internally generating change and sustaining improvement instead of waiting for externally mandated changes. This is done through broadly and skillfully involving teachers in leadership activities, i.e. developing leadership-capacity at

their school. To ensure sustainability, leadership has to be distributed within the school and embedded within its culture (Harris & Lambert 2003). Leadership-capacity is developed in schools in which the head pays attention to developing team leadership instead of working in isolation. Capacity-building here means focusing on helping leadership teams collectively brainstorm and do things differently to improve all students' life chances, and find ways they can stimulate their colleagues to be creative through providing the necessary conditions, environment and opportunities.

2.4.1 School leadership and student achievement

The evidence from school-improvement literature consistently highlights that effective leaders exercise an indirect influence on schools' capacity to improve student achievement, though this influence does not necessarily derive from senior managers, but can at least partly lie in the strengths of middle-level leaders and teachers (Leithwood et al. 1999; Harris 2004). While the quality of teaching most strongly influences levels of student motivation and achievement, the quality of leadership matters in determining the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching in the classroom (Sergiovanni 1999; Fullan 2001). The effects of successful leadership on student learning demonstrates that leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to student learning (Sammons 2008; Leithwood et al. 2009). There is ample evidence in the body of research and in educational practice to confirm that the school principal is regarded as critical to school success and student achievement. Research on the topic has revealed positive relationships between the practice of school principals and student academic achievement (Cotton 2003). Leithwood et al. (2006:15) argue that one

probable way in which leadership impacts on student achievement is that it acts as a ‘catalyst for unleashing the potential capacities that already exist in the organization’. However, the causal relationship between principal behaviours and student achievement remains unclear (Hallinger et al. 1996; Witziers et al. 2003). The most robust impact that a principal can hope to have is via the mediated relationships within a school (Nettles & Harrington 2007:733). In fact, heads place particular emphasis on building both the teaching and leadership capacities of teachers to ensure the continued effectiveness of the school in raising student outcomes (Penlington et al. 2008:73). ‘School leaders improve teaching and learning indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on staff motivation, commitment and working conditions’ (Sammons 2008:28). Building leadership-capacity or eliciting effort in others requires effort, insight, and explicit skills on the part of leaders. Leaders’ success is measured not by the number of followers they have, but by the number of individuals they have inspired to become leaders (Slater 2008:67).

2.5 Building capacity – issues of power

Teachers, students and parents in schools have access to some sources of power (Hoyle 1981). Power is the means by which people assert their preferred values and choices over those of other people, and the means by which they prevent other people making choices such as controlling the agenda for discussion (Lukes 1974). Power has two main forms: authority arising from formal positions which people hold, and influence which comes from people’s personal and professional skills and knowledge (Bacharach & Lawler 1980). Busher (1992) considers that power arises for teachers in various ways from and through: (a) personal qualities (c) professional knowledge (d) and institutional hierarchy. Bennett

(2001) considers that there are five sources of power: physical, economic, administrative and technical knowledge, and normative definition of acceptable actions.

Power arises through the quality of interpersonal interactions in an organisation (Busher 2006). Foucault (1986) perceives power ‘as something which circulates ... in the form of a chain’ (p.234). Power cannot be accessed unless people engage in dialogue and action with other people and with their social and organisational systems (Busher 2006). Beside interactions of individuals, power also resides in the norms and values projected by collectivities of people in an organisation, such as work-groups or departments in the formal school organisation, or in informal factions. Leaders have to be aware of and negotiate with the expectations held of them by their colleagues and students, if they are to gain and retain the consent of the people with whom they are working (Busher 2006).

The notions of power, authority and influence, often used interchangeably, offer different understandings of which sources of power are closely linked to formal institutional systems. Bachrach & Lawler (1980) distinguish authority from influence by describing the former as legitimate power. Influence arises from people’s personal and professional qualities and the nature of the interpersonal relationships they construct (Busher 2006). Equally important are the opportunities school leadership provides for teachers to influence decisions; teachers may choose not to exercise that influence. In organizational models that structure opportunities for teacher empowerment through school-wide decision-making, teachers are given significant access to power (Hallinger & Richardson 1988).

The implications of leadership-capacity for school members, in relation to issues of power are numerous. Building-capacity requires the principal to share leadership with others. Slater (2008:60) warns that involving any stakeholder group in school leadership poses several challenges. In particular, renegotiating the roles of stakeholders creates issues for participants in terms of authority and control. Leadership requires not only a redefinition of roles and relationships but also a redistribution of power (Bauch & Goldring 1998). Tensions can be created within the context of shifting power and relationships between teachers and administrators in deciding the extent of teacher participation and the delineation of who makes what decision (Schlechty 1991; Hallinger & Hausman 1993). Leadership as a collaborative effort challenges principals to give up some of the power of position while it invites others to become empowered. For principals, letting go of power may be as difficult as it is for others to assume power. Slater (2008:60) suggests that principals as leaders of increasingly complex organizations not only require a new set of skills such as those related to communication in order to build capacity in others, but also they need to adopt new mindsets related to self-identity and empowerment of others. Principals need to let go of their own ego in valuing and honouring others. A principal's inability to move beyond self-interest may be a barrier to developing capacity in others.

When identity is not tied to position, leaders are able to build capacity within others by providing them with the opportunity and support to pursue complex tasks related directly to their personal aspirations. People in turn become empowered as they take initiative and risks; accept responsibility, and feel satisfied in their daily work. Staff and parents need to move beyond their tendency to look to and depend on the principal for decision-making

and direction (Slater 2008:61). According to Lambert (1998:25) such co-dependent behaviour may be a barrier to building leadership-capacity. In order to break through the bonds of dependency staff need to develop 'adult-to-adult' relationships with each other.

As schooling increase in complexity it has become more important for every school member, including students, to raise to the leadership challenges that are compatible with and expand their personal strengths, skills and knowledge. When evaluating the performance of principals, the ability to launch the energy hidden inside people by capitalizing on the varied leadership attributes of school members may become a key attribute of future leaders' success. Some principals have a need to be noticed for their decision. They feel that they have to have their name recognized, and their ego is wrapped up with who they are and how they feel about themselves. Principals who get their ego wrapped up, it is about position. They consider that their position is who they are. This constitutes a major challenge to school leaders who are required to change their definition of school headship and separate their identity from position. Their success depends on their ability to draw on the resources of others, in order to sustain breakthroughs and change in complex school systems and build human capacity and self-knowledge.

2.6 Professional-learning-communities (PLCs)

Developing PLCs holds considerable promise for capacity-building for sustainable improvement. To be successful in a changing and increasingly complex world, school communities need to work and learn together to take charge of change and find the best ways to enhance student learning (Stoll et al. 2006:221). The argument for building PLC is compelling because of its impact on school and classroom improvement. As Hargreaves

(2003:185) suggests ‘PLCs lead to strong and measurable improvements in students’ learning... They create and support sustainable improvements ... because they build professional skill and the capacity to keep the school progressing’. According to Senge (1990a:14), a learning organization is ‘a place where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together’. Mitchell & Sackney (2000:93) added that a PLC is a group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning oriented, growth-promoting way. In a learning-community, individuals feel a deep sense of empowerment and autonomy and a personal commitment to the work of the school. People form not just a community of learners but also a community of leaders. Leadership is distributed throughout the system and improvement occurs from an internal search for meaning and relevance.

If schools were to become PLCs they would develop structures and processes that enable them to learn and respond quickly and flexibly to their unpredictable and changing environments. They would operate as genuine communities which draw on the collective power of a shared vision and value relationships that focus on the continuing care for and development of their human resources in pursuit of continuous improvement (Stoll et al. 2006). The literature on PLC shares five characteristics intertwined and operating together (DuFour & Eaker 1998:25; Harris & Muijs 2005: 51, Stoll et al. 2006:226-7):

1. Supportive and shared leadership: Mulford & Silins (2003) consider that it is difficult to see how a PLC could develop in a school without the active support of leadership at all levels. Leadership is therefore an important resource for PLCs, in terms of head's support and shared leadership. To McLaughlin & Talbert (2001:98) 'principals set conditions for teacher community by the ways in which they manage school resources, relate to teachers and students, support or inhibit social interaction and leadership in the faculty, respond to the broader policy context, and bring resources into the school'.

2. Shared mission, vision and values: While mission establishes an organization's purpose for existence, vision instils an organization with a sense of direction (DuFour & Eaker 1998:62). Sharing vision is a particular mental image of what is important to teachers and the school (Andrews & Lewis 2007). There is "an undeviating focus" on all students' learning in which each student's potential achievement is carefully considered (Hord 2004) because individual autonomy is seen as potentially reducing teacher efficacy when teachers cannot count on colleagues to reinforce objectives (Newmann & Wehlage 1995). Louis et al. (1995) suggest that a shared value base provides a framework for shared, collective, ethical decision-making. Such shared values and vision lead to binding norms of behavior that the staff supports. Each staff member is responsible for his/her own actions, but the common good is placed on par with personal ambition. The relationships between individuals are based on open communication and trust (Fawcett 1996).

3. Collective-reflective inquiry includes reflective dialogue, conversations about educational issues or problems involving the sustained application of new knowledge (Louis et al. 1995); frequent examining of teachers' practice, through mutual observation

and case analysis, joint planning and curriculum development (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995); seeking new knowledge (Hord 2004); and applying new ideas and information to problem solving and solutions addressing pupils' needs (Hord 1997). DuFour & Eaker (1998:25) consider that collective reflective inquiry is the engine of improvement, growth and renewal in a PLC. Teachers continuously collectively question the status-quo, seek and test new methods and then reflect on the results. Ross et al. (1994) consider the collective inquiry process as "the team learning wheel". Team members benefit from what Senge et al. (1994) called "the deep learning cycle ... the essence of learning organization" (p.18).

4. Collaborative learning teams: the basic structure of a PLC is a group of collaborative teams that share a common purpose. All teachers are learners with their colleagues (Louis et al. 1995). For Rosenholtz (1989), learning enriched schools, professional self renewal is a communal rather than solitary happening. Collective learning is also evident, through collective knowledge creation (Louis 1994), whereby the school learning community interacts, engages in serious dialogue and deliberates about information and data, interpreting it communally and distributing it among them (Stoll et al. 2006:227). People who engage in collaborative team learning are able to learn from one another, thus creating momentum to fuel continued improvement. Collaborative team learning focuses on organizational renewal and a willingness to work together in continuous improvement processes (DuFour & Eaker 1998:27).

5. Continuous improvement: A PLC is characterized by a persistent discomfort with the status quo and a constant search for improving the current situation. A commitment to

continuous improvement is evident in an environment in which innovation and experimentation are viewed as part of the daily professional practice of teachers (Du Four & Eaker 1998:28).

Collectively these characteristics create the internal capacity for change and improvement (Harris & Muijs 2005:51). Stoll et al. (2006:227) identified three other characteristics: (1) mutual trust, respect and support among staff members; (2) inclusive membership - the community extending beyond teachers and principals to support staff, and it being a school-wide community rather than consisting of smaller groups of staff; and (3) openness, networks and partnerships - looking beyond the school for sources of learning and ideas (Bolam et al. 2005). Little (2000) argues that there is no simple checklist that will ever guide the formation of PLC. The last two characteristics suggested by Stoll et al. (2006) extend the scope of a learning community beyond teachers to the whole school community and even to teachers at other schools. In an increasingly interdependent world, school-to-school learning networks enlarge individual schools' repertoire of choices, moving ideas and good practice around the system (Stoll 2009:123). In learning networks external expertise is fed-in and used as a stimulus for dialogue that challenges people's assumptions. Capacity enhancement occurs through learning conversations that force people to reexamine their practice and explore ways to enhance it (Earl & Katz 2006).

What follows is a synthesis of the leadership-capacity matrix and PLC characteristics. Harris & Lambert (2003:4&29) consider that a Quadrant(4) school is an improving school that is initially a 'professional-learning-community' involved in self-regulated change and

has high leadership-capacity. Consequently, schools that belong to quadrants 1, 2, and 3 of the leadership-capacity matrix, possess some but not all the characteristics of a PLC. To be a Quadrant (4) school, investment needs to be made in building leadership skills and capability among teachers. However, a PLC goes beyond a Quadrant(4) school in the last two characteristics that Stoll et al. (2006) identified namely, inclusive membership and openness, networks and partnership. While a Quadrant(4) school concentrates on improving the internal processes and isolates the school from its external environment, a PLC extends the scope of learning and improvement to include the whole education community, as discussed above. Moreover, while teacher collaboration might be highly desirable, it is not easy to achieve in reality. The design and organizations of schools presents the biggest challenge to teacher collaboration and to building a learning community. Given the fact that every school has its own contextual and cultural characteristics, it is difficult to frame any school in any quadrant on the leadership-capacity matrix. School leaders and teachers are invited to deeply and analysis their school's strengths and weaknesses and see what elements of PLC and of Quadrant(4) are present and develop a strategic plan for their school that addresses what their school needs to do to approach being a PLC given their school's cultural and contextual conditions.

In a school context that is mostly alien to collaborative work practices, facing a long, historical legacy of 'top down' administration, departmentalization, and fragmentation of teachers' subject community (Bezzina 2002; Giles & Hargreaves 2002) establishing a PLC is a challenge. In PLCs, members must recognise their interdependence and view the community as a whole. This drive for wholeness creates a major tension in schools,

because school community members often feel that their work is fragmented and incongruent (Lambert et al. 1996:65). Learning-communities are difficult to create. They require complex, authentic and ethical relationships that involve the whole person (emotional, social, and cognitive). They demand qualities of leadership and levels of teacher-capacity that are not always available in schools (Hargreaves 2003:192). They require trust, infusion of new ideas, time to honour reflection and learning, and respect for individual differences. Regardless of these obstacles, teachers as leaders are in a prime position to interrupt this process of sustaining practices, routines, behaviours and attitudes that block the flow of learning in the community (Lambert et al. 1996:68-9).

Authentic leadership stands for professionally effective, ethically sound and consciously reflective practices in educational administration. A leadership that is knowledge-based, values informed and skilfully executed. This represents an integrated image of leadership and management that acknowledges and accommodates the legitimate needs of individuals, groups, communities and cultures - not just the organizational perspectives that are the usual focus of most leadership literature (Begley 2007:163-4). Starrat (2007:165) explored the involvement of school leaders in leading a learning-community that is explicitly involved in learning as a moral activity. He suggested that educational leaders should be leading a community and an institution that is committed to authentic learning, a learning that enables learners to encounter the meanings embedded in the curriculum about the natural, social and cultural worlds they inhabit, and, at the same time, find themselves in and through those very encounters. That kind of authentic learning, he argued, is intrinsically ethical. School learning is a moral and intellectual activity. Leaders

who lead a community of learners are engaged in an intellectual and moral understanding of who they are and what their relationships and responsibilities to the natural, social and cultural worlds are. Then the research, theory and discourse about distributed and sustainable leadership, about restructuring and re-culturing, about capacity-building and professional-development come into play as describing an authentic, indeed, a noble agenda for educational leaders (Ibid:182).

2.6.1 School culture

There have been various attempts to define organisational cultures (Wallace et al. 1997). Sparkes (1991) considers that culture is a contested concept while Prosser (1999) comments that culture is a useful but intricate and elusive notion. Hoy & Miskel (2001) suggest that culture consists of shared assumptions, values and norms. However, even in this definition there is an acceptance that the concept is less precise than it might be. For example, whose values and norms make up the culture of the school? (Bell & Kent 2010:8). Phillips (1993:1) defines school culture as ‘the beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours which characterize a school’, arguing that it pervades and influences everything that happens within a school. However, Schein’s (1985:6) comprehensive analysis of school culture penetrates further, considering it to be a deep level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organization, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic ‘taken-for-granted’ fashion an organization’s view itself and its environment”. Cultures in organisations are constructed by their members and manifested in their symbolic, practical, linguistic and interpersonal interactions and in the social structures that are constructed, upheld and modified by them. Sub-groups in an organisation, such as

school departments, have their own sub-cultures that, although reflecting many of the facets of the whole school culture, have their own particular perspectives (Busher 2006).

Sometimes the term climate is used interchangeably with culture (Busher 2006). Although the conceptual distance between culture (shared norms) and climate (shared perceptions) is small, it is real (Hoy & Feldman 1999:85). While climate is seen as shared perceptions, culture is seen as shared assumptions, meanings and beliefs (Cooke & Rousseau 1988; Rentsch 1990; Denison 1996). Climate researchers measure how organization members perceive the organizational climate, while culture researchers look for what members think and believe themselves (Van Houtte 2005:75). Culture is a property of the social system (the norms, beliefs, and assumptions that drive behaviour), as compared with climate, which is a property of the individuals (their perceptions) within that system. If climate and culture are pictured like that, the two are distinct (Glisson 2000; Van Houtte 2005:77).

Developing cultures in schools that foster positive interpersonal relationships based on shared values between people working together, helps constructing a sense of community (Sergiovanni 1992b 2001). This is most likely to sustain a critical dialogue about the practices of teaching and learning and the development of those to better meet the needs of all students (Smyth et al. 2000). Hopkins (2001b) suggests that collaborative cultures most likely promote improvements in teaching and learning. Such cultures are likely to have the characteristics of those of improving schools claimed by Stoll & Fink (1998) which also reflects the characteristics of effective schools (Sammons et al. 1997). This points to synergies between successful learning-communities and high achievement, not to a conflict

between the two (Busher 2006). At the core of both lies the nurturing of others to promote learning that is considered as one of the main purposes of schooling (Cooper et al. 2000).

The work of professional-communities in combination with an evidence-based culture (Corcoran et al. 2001) and collaborative school leadership (Darling-Hammond 1988; Marks & Printy 2003) has emerged as a more desirable set of conditions for change because these conditions have demonstrated the promotion of high-performing schools (Elmore & Burney 1998). The argument for PLCs holds that, given the demands on schools and teachers to produce better results, PLCs provide settings in which teacher professionalism is able to flourish. The culture of professionalism that is fostered in professional-communities is what builds capacity and drives high expectations for better performance (Eilers & Camacho 2007: 617).

In high performing schools, “a nurturing professional-community seems to be the container that holds the culture. Teachers feel invigorated, challenged, professionally engaged, and empowered, just because they teach there” (Senge et al. 2000:326). A school culture in which teachers work collaboratively is a necessary component of school success. Culture can be observed in the relationships among colleagues and the norms that govern school activities. Productive and positive school cultures can make a significant contribution to creating PLCs through norms, values, and relationships that sustain momentum for school-improvement over time. As schools transform into PLCs, the conceptualization of the PLC becomes rooted within the school culture and a structure emerges providing both a foundation and a guide for learning goals, strategies and

outcomes. This infrastructure is evident as the critical attributes and dimensions of the PLC process become embedded into a transformed culture. Cultures that sustain this work over time are characterized by increased teacher collaboration and learning, and increased students' success (Hipp et al. 2008:176-7).

Each school is unique and its culture develops organically, thus affecting the entire school community. Margaret Wheatley (personal communication 2001) declared, "there is no objective reality out there waiting to reveal its secrets. There are no recipes or formulae, no checklists or advice that describes reality. There is only what we create through our engagement with others and with events. Nothing really transfers; everything is always new and different and unique to each of us" (Hipp et al. 2008:192). A school's culture is not static, but is a continual interaction in which attitudes, values, and skills continually influence each other. The school's culture is influenced by macro and micro cultural norms, school practices, history, and people associated with the school.

2.6.2 Meaningful professional-development

The principle of teacher-leadership is at the core of building PLCs in schools because it is premised upon teachers working in collaboration to learn with and from each other (Harris 2003b:321). These do not occur naturally. There must be a fit between the developmental needs of teachers and the selected professional-development activity to have a positive learning impact at classroom and school level. Research has shown that in order to achieve improvements in teaching and learning outcomes for students, teachers need to be engaged in meaningful professional-development that promotes enquiry, creativity and innovation

(Harris & Lambert 2003:112). Bubb & Early (2009:25) identified ten factors that ensure that the staff development journey leads from self-evaluation to improvement. Among those factors: The school needs to develop a learning-centred culture where adult learning is highly valued as student learning; staff development that involves discussing, coaching, mentoring, and developing others is highly effective; and learning and development should be shared, acknowledged and celebrated for sustained improvement.

Professional-development is important to the enhancement of PLCs in two ways: First, effective professional-development contributes to the professional skills of participating teachers, thus increasing the pool of human resources at a school (Guskey & Sparks 1996). Consequently, teachers may improve their teaching practices, leading ultimately to an improvement in student learning. Second, under some circumstances professional-development strengthens the social ties among educators, contributing to the school's social resources (Grodsky & Gamoran 2003:7). Professional-development is continuous and inclusive of all stakeholders. It facilitates the development of a community of learners and leaders, and helps build individual, collective and systemic learning capabilities especially when there is collaborative interchange of information, reflective practice, and knowledge creation and utilisation among staff, which enhances the capacity-building for school-improvement.

2.7 Leadership

The search for a unique theory of leadership has been useless (Bush 2003:5). Yukl (2002:4-5) argues there is no “correct” definition’. Despite a groundswell towards

leadership as empowerment, transformation and community building, the research literature reveals that leadership is premised upon individual impetus rather than collective action and offers a heroic view of leadership equivalent to headship (Harris 2003b:318). Possibly this is because schools as organizational structures remain largely unchanged, equating leadership with status, authority and position (Day et al. 2000; Harris 2002a).

Conversely, one of the most congruent findings from recent studies of effective leadership is that authority to lead need not be located in the person of the leader but can be dispersed within the school (Dimmock 2003:7; Day et al. 2000). School leadership is a general concept that is separated from person, role and is concerned with relationships among individuals (Harris 2003b:318) and needs to be rooted in the school community (Lambert 1998:5; Harris 2003e:16-7; Dimmock 2003:7). This implies a reconfiguration of power relationships within the school as the distinctions between followers and leaders begin to fog. It also opens up the possibility for teachers to become leaders and be the creators of change, not merely recipients (Harris & Muijs 2005:7). The key concept in this definition is that leadership is about learning together, constructing meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively (Harris 2003e:16-7). Sugrue (2009:360) argued that this shift did not mean the end of heroic leadership. Research-and policy-focused literature was increasingly exhorting principals to work collaboratively with key colleagues, building shared visions and the capacity to deliver on new departures. Leadership that promoted and fostered teacher collaboration became an important means of moving beyond more limited notions of being a professional. So, to borrow a term from Spillane (2006), this may be regarded as evidence of 'leadership plus' - the addition being teacher collaboration.

Improving schools have leaders who make considerable contributions to the development of the school and teachers. However, there is a debate on the type of leadership that generates and sustains school-improvement. The most effective heads build the capacity for improvement through investing in developing others, distributing leadership within the organization and developing the systems that invite skilful participation (Harris & Lambert 2003:2-3). They build the capacity for school-improvement by empowering others to lead and develop the school (Hadfield & Chapman 2002). A high leadership-capacity school involves broad-based, skilful participation in the work of leadership of school members. Such work involves a shared vision, inquiry, dialogue, reflection and focus on learning. Skilful participation in leadership results in a learning community, for educators who learn from each other and are more likely to lead (Little 1990; Lambert 1998). Hence a learning-community is at the heart of a high leadership-capacity school (Lambert 2003b:426). But not all learning processes constitute leadership. Leadership processes must allow participants to engage in a shared sense of purpose that is made real by the collaboration of committed adults. It is this type of leadership that this research seeks to build the capacity of, to collectively generate purposeful action that allows a school community to keep moving in the face of external demands, imposed change or when a charismatic head leaves (Harris & Lambert 2003:18).

2.7.1 Distributed-leadership

Distributed-leadership is growing in popularity (Harris & Spillane 2008:31) and the literature supporting the concept is diverse and broad-based (Bennet et al., 2003b:506).

Distributed-leadership recognises that there are multiple leaders (Spillane et al. 2004) and focuses upon interactions, rather than actions, of those in formal and informal leadership roles. It is concerned with leadership practice and how leadership influences organisational and instructional improvement (Spillane 2006). Distributed-leadership theory recognises that many people have the potential to exercise leadership but the key to success is the way that leadership is facilitated and supported (Harris 2008b:173).

At the core of distributed-leadership is the idea that leadership is not the preserve of an individual but is a fluid or emergent property rather than a fixed phenomenon (Spillane 2006:742; Harris 2005:762). This conception of leadership moves beyond trying to understand leadership through the actions and beliefs of single leaders to understanding leadership as a dynamic organizational entity. As Spillane et al. (2004) suggest distributed-leadership is constituted through the interaction of leaders, teachers, and the situation as they influence instructional practice. It is a form of lateral leadership that is shared amongst organisational members (Harris 2008b: 173).

At the core of capacity-building is ‘distributed-leadership along with social cohesion and trust’ (Hopkins & Jackson 2003: 95). This model of leadership involves a redistribution of power; a realignment of authority within the organization; and creating the conditions where people work and learn together, construct and refine meaning, leading to shared purpose (Harris & Muijs 2005:15) and “equates with maximizing the human capacity within the organization” (Harris 2004:14) . It is what Gronn (2000:318) terms “an emergent property of a group or network of individuals in which group members pool their

expertise''. Leadership is not a role assigned to those only with leadership responsibility but a dynamic between individuals within the organization. It is separated from person, role or status but reflects the dynamic created out of shared purpose and being part of a school community (Harris 2003c:75). Where such conditions are in place, there is greater potential for building internal capacity for improvement. Distributed-leadership means giving teachers opportunities to lead and be responsible for areas of change of most importance to the school (Harris & Muijs 2005:14).

According to Leithwood et al. (2006), there are two conditions necessary for successful leadership distribution. First, leadership needs to be distributed to those who have the knowledge or expertise required to carry out the leadership tasks expected of them. Second, effective distributed-leadership needs to be coordinated, preferably in some planned way. Gronn (2002) distinguishes between two forms of distributed-leadership: (a) *additive* represents the aggregated effect of a number of individuals contributing their expertise to an organization; and (b) *holistic* or person-plus leadership (Spillane 2006), in which there is an added dynamic from the process of individuals working together where they pool their expertise, and the leadership collectively generated is more than the sum of its parts. This is the most significant for Gronn (2000:28): distributed-leadership is not the agency of individuals, but 'structurally constrained conjoint agency, or the concertive labour performed by pluralities of interdependent organization members'. It may be given long-term institutional form through team structures and committees or can operate through ad hoc arrangements, such as temporary teams (Gronn 2002). Fluid leadership resting on expertise rather than position, can be exercised through changing ad hoc groups

created on the basis of relevant expertise. Such leadership is only possible within a climate of trust and mutual support as an integral part of the internal organizational social and cultural context. This climate blurs the distinction between ‘leaders’ and ‘followers’, which has to coexist within an organization’s formal structure (Woods et al. 2004:447).

The overwhelming disposition of the contemporary literature on distributed-leadership is that of enthusiastic optimism about its anticipated benefits. Distributed-leadership is thought to enhance opportunities for the organization to benefit from the capacities of more of its members. Through increased participation in decision-making, greater commitment to organizational goals may develop. It has the potential to increase on-the-job leadership development experiences and reduce the workload for those in formal administrative roles. It allows members to better anticipate and respond to the demands of the organization’s environment (Leithwood & Macall 2008:530). This is an impressive list of potential positive consequences of distributed-leadership. However, there is little empirical evidence to justify any of these consequences (Leithwood & Jantzi 2000:61; Timperley 2005).

Nevertheless, it is not simply assumed that distributed-leadership is automatically a good thing. Hargreaves & Fink (2006:102) point out “distributed patterns of leadership don’t always serve the greater good”. They note that patterns of distributed-leadership and its effects in large scale samples may hide significant discrepancies in which distributed-leadership is less useful. Storey (2004:257-9) points that distributed-leadership can result in conflicting priorities, targets and timescales as part of the dynamic competition between leaders. Boundary management issues (boundaries of responsibilities) and competing and

conflicting leadership styles can emerge between the head-teacher and the school leadership teams. In practical terms, implementing distributed-leadership implies crossing structural and cultural boundaries (Timperley 2005:412). The major structural, cultural, and micro-political barriers in schools make the implementation of distributed-leadership a difficult task and this is why teachers' leadership is acceptable in principle but largely inconceivable in practice (Harris 2003b:319). Furthermore, empirical studies of distributed-leadership are still in relatively short supply (Harris 2008b:173; Bennett et al. 2003b:4). Many studies are required before firm conclusions are drawn about the forms of distributed-leadership that contribute to school-improvement (Harris & Muijs 2005: 28).

Nonetheless, the appeal of distributed-leadership is self evident. Distributed-leadership result in positive effects on pedagogy, school culture, and educational quality, but it is important to allocate time for teachers to work together and generate developmental activity that benefit the school (Harris 2004: 21). Implicit are the leadership practices of teachers, either as formal or informal leaders (Harris & Muijs 2003). Research suggests that teacher-leaders can help other teachers embrace goals, understand the changes that are needed, strengthen teaching and learning, and work towards improvement (Leithwood & Reil 2003:3). The implication is that distributed-leadership contributes to school-improvement and builds the internal capacity for development (Harris & Muijs 2005: 27). Harris (2008b:184) concluded that if we are serious about distributing leadership in schools there are a number of implications. First, it requires those in formal leadership roles to create the cultural conditions and structural opportunities where distributed-leadership can operate and flourish. Second, distributed-leadership necessitates that those

in formal leadership positions consider how they can best maximise leadership-capacity and harness untapped leadership potential. Third, schools need to move away from a “leader-follower” relationship. Finally, distributed-leadership is not a panacea or a “one size fits” all forms of leadership practice (Fletcher & Kaufer 2003). It really depends on the growth state of the school, its inclination towards change and improvement, its developmental needs, the pattern and purpose of distribution, the relationships, trust and culture of the organisation, and on the school context that can help or hinder the development of distributed leadership.

2.7.2 Teacher-leadership

It is a model of leadership where teachers have the opportunity to lead people work and learn together, construct and refine meaning, leading to shared purpose and goals (Harris & Muijs 2005:17). It is not about teachers sharing administrative responsibility and taking on formal leadership roles; it is about the right of teachers to fulfil their human potential that entails having influence over their surroundings. It is assumed that all teachers are leaders in their own classrooms but the term ‘teacher-leadership’ as used here implies influence beyond this (Frost 2009:340). Teacher-leadership is based upon power redistribution within the school, moving from hierarchal control to peer control (Harris 2003c:77). There are two dimensions of teacher-leadership: A focus on improved learning outcomes through development work and an emphasis on collaborative professional activity (Harris & Lambert 2003:43-4). Collaboration is at the heart of teacher-leadership, as it is premised upon change enacted collectively. For teachers’ leadership to be most effective it has to include mutual trust, support and inquiry. Where teachers share good practice and learn

together the possibility of securing better quality teaching is increased (Harris 2003c:77). Principals who build leadership-capacity establish a culture of trust and professionalism; and facilitate opportunities for teacher-leadership (Mullen & Jones 2008:330).

A number of different roles have been suggested for teacher-leaders by researchers that provide a clear understanding of the term. Katznmeyer & Moller (2001) considers that teacher-leadership incorporates: (a) Leadership of students or other teachers through coaching, mentoring, leading work groups; (b) Leadership of operational tasks: keeping the school moving towards its goals through roles such as department-head; and (c) Leadership through decision-making: membership of school-improvement teams or committees. Other researchers have identified further dimensions of teacher-leader's role such as undertaking action research (Ash & Persall 2000), initiating peer classroom observation (Little 2000), and participating in establishing a collaborative culture (Lieberman et al 2000). Of these roles, those of mentoring and continual professional-development of colleagues are crucial, as is developing collaborative relationships that allow new ideas and leadership to spread in the school (Little 2000). The important point stemming from literature is that teacher-leaders are primarily expert teachers who spend the bulk of their times in the classroom, but take on different leadership roles at different times when development and innovation is needed (Ash & Persall 2000). Their role is mainly assisting colleagues to explore and try new ideas, then offering critical constructive feedback to ensure improvements in teaching and learning (Harris & Lambert 2003:44).

The extent to which power relations have to be truly transformed in schools before it is possible to speak of teacher-leadership is disputed (Muijs & Harris 2003). Muijs & Harris (2007:113) consider that teacher-leadership can operate within traditional structures rather than requiring whole school restructuring, and have operationalized teacher-leadership as increased teacher participation in decision-making, and opportunities for teachers to take initiative and lead school-improvement. The literature also affirms that the principal reason for teacher-leadership is to transform schools into PLCs (Katzenmeyer & Moller 2001) and to empower teachers to become involved in school decision-making (Gehrke 1991).

Teacher-leadership opens up the possibility for all teachers becoming leaders at various times, which has potential for school-improvement because it is premised upon collaborative work among teachers (Harris & Muijs 2005:17). There are four dimensions of the teacher-leader role within school-improvement: (a) supervising the way teachers translate principles of school-improvement into classroom practices; (b) empowering teachers and giving them ownership of a particular development; (c) playing a mediating role since teacher-leaders are important sources of expertise and information; and (d) building close relationships with teachers where mutual learning takes place. The nurturing of teachers as leaders is fundamental to effective school-improvement. However, it is vital to ensure that, when expanding funding, time and energy on development work, attention is given to maximizing impact on students' learning (Frost & Durrant 2002:157).

Teacher-leadership may be formal or informal. Lead teachers, department head, union representative are among *formal leadership roles*. Teachers assuming these roles represent the school in district-level decision-making (Fullan 1993); stimulate the professional

growth of colleagues (Wasley 1991). Formal teacher-leaders positively influence the willingness and capacity of teachers to implement change (Fullan & Hargreaves 1991; Whitaker 1995). *Informal teacher-leadership* refers to the exercise of leadership by teachers regardless of position (Harris & Muijs 2005:20). It constitutes classroom-related functions such as planning, communicating goals, creating a pleasant workplace environment, supervising, and evaluating the performance of those supervised (Ash & Persall 2000). Teachers exercise informal leadership by sharing their expertise, volunteering for projects, bringing new ideas and assisting their colleagues in improving classroom practices (Bennett et al. 2003a:187). The focus is more on the learning and improvement of school and student performance than on leading (Birky et al. 2006:87).

The exercise of teacher-leadership is inhibited by: (a) Organizational barriers: the ‘top-down’ leadership models are still dominant in many schools. The chance to foster teacher-leadership is dependent on whether the heads are willing to delegate power and the extent to which teachers accept the influence of colleagues designated as leaders (Harris & Lambert 2003:44). (b) Professional barriers: The ability of teacher-leaders to influence colleagues and develop productive relations with school management, who may sometimes feel threatened by teachers taking on leadership roles, is important (Lieberman 1988). Relations amongst teacher-leaders and colleagues can be tenuous due to an “egalitarian ethic” amongst teachers where many teachers do not like being told what to do (Lieberman & Miller 2004). There may also be conflicts between groups of teachers, such as those who do and do not take on leadership roles, which lead to estrangement among teachers (Clemson-Ingram & Fessler 1997). Teacher-leaders experience conflict between their

leadership responsibilities and their need for affiliation and belonging to their peer group (LeBlanc & Skelton 1997). Overcoming these difficulties require a combination of strong teacher-leaders' interpersonal skills, school culture that encourages change, and teacher-leadership (Harris & Lambert 2003:45). Despite these barriers, Muijs & Harris (2007:111) consider that school culture, structure and purposive action by the head are key factors that support the development of teacher-leadership:

Shared norms, beliefs, values and of collaborative practice among teachers support the development of teacher-leadership in schools (Muijs & Harris 2007:113). Teacher-leadership flourishes most in collaborative settings, thus creating a culture of trust that allows collaboration to grow is crucial to the development of teacher-leadership (Lonquist & King 1993; Caine & Caine 2000). Also developing a shared vision of where the school needs to go and embedding teacher-leadership in the culture and practices of the school (Muijs & Harris 2007:112). Teacher-leadership operates best where there are high degrees of trust, where communication plays an important role. Trust most likely develops in schools where relationships are strong (Bryk & Schneider 2002). Involving teachers in leadership, especially where this takes the form of collaborative teams can help develop trust, and teacher-leadership (Muijs & Harris 2007:129).

Time needs to be set aside for teachers' leadership work, such as to meet, plan and discuss issues such as curriculum matters, developing school-wide plans, leading study groups, organizing visits to other schools, and collaborating with colleagues. Also providing diverse opportunities for continuous professional-development that focuses not just on the

development of teachers' skills and knowledge but on aspects specific to their leadership role (leading groups and workshops, collaborative work, mentoring, teaching adults) to help teachers adapt to the new roles involved (Muijs & Harris 2007:113). Finally, heads empower, motivate, and encourage teachers to become leaders and provide opportunities for teachers to develop their leadership skills (Harris & Muijs 2005:128).

There is a strong resonance between the empirical terrain provided in teacher-leadership literature and the theoretical perspectives of distributed-leadership (Gronn 2000; Spillane et al. 2001) for three reasons: (1) distributed-leadership incorporates the activities of multiple groups who work at guiding staff in the instructional change process. (2) It implies a social distribution of leadership where the leadership task is stretched over the work of several individuals. (3) It implies interdependency rather than dependency embracing how leaders share responsibility (Spillane et al. 2001:20). Teacher-leadership refers to the exercise of leadership by teachers, regardless of position. The teacher's leadership emphasis upon collective action, empowerment and shared agency are reflected in the distributed-leadership theory. Teacher-leadership is centrally concerned with the idea that all organizational members can lead and that leadership is a form of agency that can be distributed (Muijs & Harris 2003:440). It is connected to Gronn's (2000:334) view of leadership 'as a flow of influence in organizations which disentangles it from any presumed connection with headship'. The literature and associated empirical work on teacher-leadership provides a starting point in understanding how distributed-leadership works in schools and how it can be developed and improved to contribute to school-improvement (Muijs & Harris 2003:440).

Developing teacher-leadership is related to re-culturing as it means a fundamental shift in the purposes and practices of the school. A study conducted by Muijs & Harris (2007:132) concluded that teacher-leadership can only flourish where both school culture and associated structures allow it to develop. Common beliefs pervade the school culture and define it. Structures can counteract or support a culture of collaboration. And, trust between teachers is mandatory for positive collaboration and mutual development.

2.8 Conceptual framework

The leadership-capacity matrix, especially Quadrant(4) highlight the internal leadership-capacity processes inside the school that ensure sustainable improvement. Capacity-building in schools is strengthened by communities of groups of teachers sharing and analyzing their work (Little 2002) and developing PLCs (Stoll et al. 2006). Schools that build leadership-capacity can make a real difference to the achievement of students. They ensure that irrespective of context, circumstance or political imperatives they are able to affect the lives of all young people, for the better. However, a learning-community does not operate in a vacuum and needs to interact with its external environment looking for sources of learning and new ideas. Schools differ in size, culture and context. Successful and sustained improvement is enhanced through a combination of internal and external agency, taking into accounts the school's unique internal leadership-capacity dispositions, culture and external contextual factors. Contextual or differentiated capacity-building is needed if improvement efforts are to be sustained. Building leadership-capacity for sustained school-improvement requires several interrelated factors sketched into a coherent triangular model made of three apexes: internal capacity, culture, and external context.

Five key research questions emerged from the literature review (ch.1 p.5 & ch.3 p.67). The answers to those questions constitute the building blocks of a leadership-capacity model. Leadership-capacity is defined as broad-based, skilful participation in the work of leadership (Lambert 1998:5) and a way of understanding sustainable school-improvement (Lambert 2006:239), given each school culture and context. The end result of this research is to be able to suggest a set of factors that need to be present that school leaders and teachers need to consider if leadership-capacity is to be built in their school, given their school's peculiar cultural, structural and contextual characteristics.

Ensuring sustainable improvement depends on a capacity-building 'habit of mind'. Sustainable schools are those with high leadership-capacity (Lambert 2007:312). Successful school-improvement involves building leadership-capacity for change by creating high levels of involvement and leadership skilfulness. In order to build leadership-capacity there needs to be continued emphasis on the leadership capabilities of all those within the school community. In judging a school's ability to build leadership-capacity for improvement, one key question is how near this school to being a PLC or how close is it to being an improving school? Schools differ considerably in size, culture, type and context. Professional-learning-communities hold the key for transformation. Teachers constitute a focal point in achieving school-improvement. Teacher-leadership and professional teacher development are key to building the capacity for sustained school-improvement. Leadership obligations in a school tend to focus on learning and creating opportunities for others to learn; to emphasize inquiry and research, in terms of continuous improvement and continuous collaboration among school members.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This research tries to explore how to build leadership-capacity to develop and sustain improvement in three schools in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. It tries to identify what type of leadership most helps building leadership-capacity. A qualitative, flexible multiple case-study design is used. Three school case-studies set forth the major issues and dilemmas inherent in building leadership-capacity for school-improvement. The approaches and strategies are tailored to those specific situations, although most of them hold value for all schools. The analysis of case-studies allows answering the following questions:

1. How do schools get started on building leadership-capacity?
2. What type of leadership builds leadership-capacity?
3. How does building leadership-capacity sustain school-improvement?
4. What is the effect of leadership-capacity on student development and achievement?
5. What is the role of teacher-leadership in building leadership-capacity?

This chapter discusses first the philosophical assumptions underlying this research, followed by the research design that identifies the boundaries of the study, establishing trustworthiness, and data collection and analysis procedures. Finally, ethical guidelines and limitations of the study are addressed.

3.2 Philosophic assumptions

The paradigm most naturally suited for this research is the interpretive paradigm that seeks to understand and interpret the world in terms of its actors (Cohen et al. 2000:183). It allows researchers to access the experiences and viewpoints of research participants (Verma & Mallick 1999). In interpretive research, education is a process and school is a lived experience. Multiple realities are constructed socially by individuals (Merriam 2001:5), where each interviewee sees reality from his/her own perspective. The research participants - researcher and researched - acquire active roles in this knowledge construction. Similarly, the aim of the present study is to search for a ‘constructed reality’ of building leadership-capacity in three different school contexts. In line with the interpretive paradigm, the conceptual questions of leadership-capacity can only be understood through the eyes of the human actors concerned. Hence, the interpretive paradigm is useful in an attempt to understand building leadership-capacity in all its complexity in particular socio-cultural contexts (Creswell 1998; Flick et al. 2004).

As a result of their epistemological outlook, researchers who choose the interpretive perspective usually use qualitative methods in their research. They study the data inductively for themes, patterns and interpretations – “the ascription of meaning” to observed phenomena – is the key to the process (Gall et al 1996:18). In the same vein this research is based on the interpretation of interviewed people of the leadership-capacity present in their school. Interpretation is important because it is believed that individuals’ interpretation of reality leads them to certain actions (Gall et al 1996:26).

Qualitative investigators describe the “unfolding of social processes, the meaning of social life rather than the social structures that are often the focus of quantitative researchers” (Lee 1992:91). Qualitative research methods are concerned with interpretation and exploring assumptions, feelings and the meaning systems in everyday situations (Lincoln & Guba 1985). There is a need to study teachers and students in their natural setting (the school) because human actions are influenced by the setting in which they occur. Thus, one should study their behaviours in real-life situation. This involves going to the field, gaining access, and gathering material through interviews and observations (Creswell 1998:16).

This research uses qualitative data for several reasons. The nature of the research questions focuses on how and what questions, to describe how to build leadership-capacity for school-improvement. These research questions are best addressed in a natural setting using exploratory and descriptive approaches (Creswell 1998:16). There is a need to present a detailed view of how to build leadership-capacity, what type of leadership is required and what is the role of teachers as leaders in securing leadership-capacity for school-improvement (Ibid:18). Furthermore, to develop an understanding of the ways that leadership-capacity is interpreted by teachers and administrators, it was necessary to uncover structures of meaning in use in a particular setting and “synthesise an image of that group’s reality and make it available for consideration and reflection” (Smircich 1983:164). Data was mainly collected from interviews with principals, teacher-leaders and teachers, from observation of meetings and shadowing teacher-leaders.

3.3 Research design

The exploration of a particular case is essentially interpretive, in trying to elicit what different principals and teachers seem to be doing and think is happening, in trying to analyse and interpret the collected data from interviews, observation of staff meetings and shadowing teacher-leaders (Bassey 2000). A qualitative flexible multiple case-study design is used. Three case-studies of building leadership-capacity in action analyse the leadership-capacity at three private secondary schools in Montréal with different achievement and improvement direction. The design is qualitative, flexible where much less pre-specification takes place. It evolves and unfolds as the research proceeds.

Case-study is ‘an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context ...where multiple sources of evidence are used’ (Yin 1994:13). Case-studies are used when:

- “How” questions are posed (Yin 2003a:1-7).
- The investigator has little control over events (Yin 2003a:1-7): when I was in the field, I observed staff meetings, and shadowed teacher-leaders trying to make my presence as discrete as possible. I had to respect the schedule of participants, without having control over events in the schools.
- When the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon - but when the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated - within some real-life context (Yin 2003a:1-8). I attended staff meetings and shadowed teacher-leaders during their normal working day.
- This research uses sequential discovery rather than testing hypotheses and the selection of people, texts or events to include followed a path of discovery in which the sample

emerged as a sequence of decisions based on outcomes of earlier stages of research (Denscombe 2000:25-7).

This study uses qualitative case-study research to explore how heads and teachers perceive the concept of building leadership-capacity. The cases are educational, where researchers are concerned with “understanding of educational action to enrich the thinking of educators through development of educational theory” (Stenhouse 1985:50). They study the basic actions that some schools took to build leadership-capacity, how this leadership-capacity was able to sustain school-improvement, what type of leadership ensured building leadership-capacity, and its effect on student development and achievement.

Choosing a multiple case-study design for my research has several advantages. First, the analytic conclusions independently arising from the three cases, as with three experiments, are more powerful than those coming from a single case (Yin 2003a:53). The more cases are included, the greater the variation across the cases, the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be (Miles & Huberman 1994) and the study is regarded very robust (Herriott & Firestone 1983). Multiple case designs, allow cross-case analysis and the investigation of a phenomenon in diverse settings (Darke et al. 1998; Yin 2003a). Second, the contexts of cases were different. They were selected because they offer contrasting situations as I am not seeking a direct replication. In this design, if the findings of the cases once analysed support the hypothesized contrast, the results represent a strong start toward theoretical replication (Yin 2003a:53-4). Third, a key strength of case-study method involves using multiple sources in data gathering. There is no single source that

has complete advantage over the others. The various sources are complementary (Yin 2003a:85). I used semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and documents.

In qualitative case-studies there are two levels of sampling. The researcher selects “the case” to be studied, and the sample within the case (Merriam 2001:65-6). For both levels of sampling, criteria are established to guide the process. Since this study is a qualitative case-study research, a purposeful non-probability sampling procedure was used. It used a ‘maximum variation’ sampling strategy (Merriam 2001:65) that involves the selection of cases that ‘illustrate the range of variation in the studied phenomenon to determine whether common themes, patterns, and outcomes cut across this variation’ (Gall et al 1996:232-3). I tried to choose three unusual cases to display multiple perspectives of building leadership-capacity.

The choice of schools was based on the ‘Report-Card’ on Quebec’s Secondary Schools: 2006 Edition (hereafter, ‘Report-Card’) that collects several indicators of school performance into one document that makes the analysis and comparison of individual schools’ performance possible. Schools in Quebec (‘Quebec’) are ranked based on their performance measured by the overall rating out of 10 by descending order from 1 to 458, for the academic year 2004-05. The statistical average (2001-05) ranking and the overall rating out of 10 are provided to study the trend in schools’ performance. The higher the score over 10 the more a school approaches first ranks (Kozhaya & Cowley 2006:3). Secondary schools in Montreal and ‘Quebec’ are distributed as follows (table 3.1):

Table 3.1: Secondary schools in Montreal and Quebec

Schools	‘Quebec’	%	Montreal	%
English schools	83	18%	52	42%
French schools	375	82%	70	58%
Total number of schools	458	100%	123	100%

The top 22 schools in ‘Quebec’ are private schools because public schools accept all applicants living in their district including low performing students, whereas private schools have entrance examination, selection criteria, and can expel low performing students. This is why private schools rank higher than public schools. There are 26 private and 26 public English secondary schools in Montreal administrative region. The schools chosen for my study are from the pool of 26 private English speaking secondary schools.

Negotiating access with school principals was very difficult. I established contact with 16 private English secondary schools in Montreal. I sent formal e-mails to schools’ principals requesting permission to conduct research at their school. I tried to telephone those who did not answer my e-mails, in an attempt to reach them and raise their interest in my research. Some of them were unreachable. As for the 26 public schools, I established contact with the English-Montreal-School-Board (EMSB), prepared a research application and presented my research proposal to the research committee (researchers cannot contact directly public school principals. They have to secure first the approval of the EMSB). I had to make another presentation to the Educational Policies committee, and even if I secured the approval of the EMSB, I still had to wait for the approval of the school principal and I was running out of time because of my pregnancy and expected delivery

date. By that time I had already secured the approval of four private schools. However, I admit that the exclusion of public schools from my research represents a limitation.

I prepared a list of 16 potential private schools in Montreal based on several criteria. In part, they were dictated by practical issues such as ease of access because I live in Montreal. Another criterion is the teaching language, as the research is conducted in Montreal, where most schools have French as first teaching language. The chosen schools are English speaking schools to eliminate the language barrier because I am mostly English speaking. In this way I tried to avoid any translations, as the translation might affect the quality of data. However, there were also crucial theoretical considerations. Cases were selected on the basis not of representativeness but of illustration. Sampling criteria therefore included the selection of cases that would allow cross-case and cross-site comparisons in relation to issues discussed in the conceptual framework.

The 'Report-Card' tracks the improvement in academic performance of schools over the past seven years. The case-studies are distinctive in their performance and trend of performance. They have different contexts and different levels of achievement. The names of schools are fictitious, thus respecting their confidentiality and anonymity, in accordance to the ethical guidelines of my research.

Case 1: Academy1 a high performing school that moderately improved its performance level from rank 59 (2001-05) to 37 (2004-05) among Quebec secondary schools (Kozhaya & Cowley 2006).

Case 2: Academy2 showed significant improvement from 338 (2001-05) to 122 (2004-05).

Case 3: Academy3 a stuck school which improved slightly from 282 (2001-05) to 264 (2004-05).

Pilot case: Academy0 showed significant improvement from 126 (2001-05) to 72 (2004-05).

Table 3.2 summarizes the characteristics of the case-study schools.

Table 3.2: Schools' characteristics

	Academy1	Academy2	Academy3
Number of students (2008)	500	238	170
Number of teachers	42	14	20
Cost of schooling (CAD)	7,000	5,000	13,500
Parents' income (CAD)	94,000	48,000	87,000
Average class size (students)	27	21	10-15
School ranking (2001-05)	59	338	282
School ranking (2004-05)	37	122	264

The three cases were selected to replicate each other in predicting similar results (theoretical replication). If the cases turn out as predicted, they would have provided compelling support for the conceptual framework, if the cases do not work as predicted, then new modifications must be made to the theory (Yin 2003a:47-8). I chose the three cases with different contexts (described in chapter 4, p.111) and different improvement levels. If under these varied circumstances I can still arrive at common conclusions from the three cases, they would represent a strong theoretical replication, thus strengthening the trustworthiness of my findings. As such, data from these cases should identify what successful schools are doing and what unsuccessful schools should be doing in order to build leadership-capacity for their sustained improvement. I could have chosen three schools belonging to the same category, such as three top performing schools or three high

improving schools and analyze the leadership-capacity in them. But I am not seeking literal replication i.e. cases that predict similar results, but theoretical replication.

The improvement or deterioration in a school classification in the 'Report-Card' is based on an overall rating of each school's academic performance. Even though the schools were chosen based on their academic performance (effectiveness) as the 'Report-Card' indicates, my study concentrates on the improvement story of the school and the leadership-capacity that actually lead to this school-improvement and not only the academic performance. I needed a reference from which to choose the schools and the 'Report-Card' is the main official and reliable document available.

As for the sample within each case, a tentative list of people to interview and meetings to attend was prepared before data collection began (purposeful sampling), but the actual selection of people and meetings was done while data were being gathered (snowball sampling) (Merriam 2001:64). Given that the purpose of my research was a small scale multiple-case research, it was clear that purposive sampling was required (Cohen et al. 2000:103), where I handpicked the critical people to be interviewed, namely, the school 'Director' or Principal, administrators, teacher-leaders and teachers. Lincoln & Guba (1985:39-43) state that purposive sampling enables the full scope of required issues to be explored, which in my case-studies was leadership-capacity. In other words, my sampling strategy involved non-probability sampling (Cohen et al. 2000:99), making use of small samples from particular populations within the targeted schools.

Another sampling method used was snowball sampling (Cohen, et al. 2000:144), in which I made use of opportunities to interview individuals who were available and recommended to me by the head or teacher-leader. Advantage was taken of opportunities to collect data as they arose (Burgess1991). This approach was utilized as an expeditious means of finding participants (Burgess 1991; Richards 2003) and to “minimize ethical problems of talking with people about others without permission” (Busher 2005:464). “Following through on the differences” (Strauss & Corbin 1990:109) increased the probability of variation in the data, and therefore contributed to its density. Nevertheless, I am aware of the deficiencies associated with snowball sampling regarding the quality of data in particular the selection bias which limits the validity of the sample (Kaplan et al. 1987; Van Meter 1990) because the interviewees were not randomly drawn, thus they would not allow me to make claims to generality (Griffiths et al. 1993). Another problem is the bias associated with the inclusion of individuals with inter-relationships, therefore emphasizing cohesiveness in respondents’ answers (Griffiths et al. 1993), and missing ‘isolates’ not connected to any social network that I have tapped into. The problem of selection bias was partially addressed through the choice of three case-studies which allows the replication of results to strengthen any generalizations (Van Meter 1990).

A total of 18 people, averaging six persons per school, were picked according to the following criteria: The Head and two senior staff members who have policy decision-making power and set the general climate for leadership-capacity. A teacher-leader and two teachers in direct contact with him/her, who gave a comprehensive understanding of teacher-leadership dispositions and their involvement in leadership activities. Given their

positions at their respective institutions, these two groups of people were able to give me information-rich data about leadership-capacity at their schools. These people are ‘key informants’ who have ‘special knowledge or perceptions that would not otherwise be available to the researcher’ (Gall et al. 1996:218).

3.4 Establishing trustworthiness

The concepts of reliability and validity are vital in quantitative research. Qualitative researchers argue for the use of different terminology when determining the rigor of qualitative studies (Guba & Lincoln 1989; Krefting 1991; Bassey 2000:74; Taylor 2000). Lincoln & Guba (1985) introduced the concept of trustworthiness, which refers to the extent to which the findings are an authentic reflection of the lived experiences of the phenomenon under investigation (Barbour 1998). Trustworthiness is established when findings as closely as possible reflect the meanings as described by participants (Lincoln & Guba 1985), thus avoiding what Rowan (1981:98) calls ‘separating participants from their words’. The qualitative method adopted in this study is guided by the development of theoretical accounts and explanations which conform closely to the observed situations, so that the theory is intelligible to and usable by those in the situations studied, and is “open to comment and verification by them” (Turner 1981:227). In these terms, “participant reflection can be invaluable to creating trustworthy data” (Oliver et al. 2005:1280).

When following an interpretive research paradigm it is important that theory emerges inductively from data, and the demonstration of a clear chain of evidence to support findings and subsequent theory development (Miles & Huberman 1984). This research

presents quotations of informants' own words, designed to demonstrate the consistency of their views and opinions (Harris & Crane 2002:218). The quotes attempt to avoid imposing on participants a "fictional view of their reality" (Minichiello et al. 1990:94). Moreover, using the language of participants served as a "check against straying from the substance of the data" (Rennie et al. 1988:143). The research does not aim to generalize the findings to a broader population, but to maximize the discovery of themes and patterns of leadership-capacity that occur in the particular contexts under study. To enhance the confidence in the research findings, there is evidence of the four components of trustworthiness: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Curtin & Fossey 2007:93).

Credibility is related to the "true" picture of the phenomenon and ensuring that the theoretical framework generated is understood and based on data from the study. Descriptions and interpretations of participants' experiences are recognizable. Credibility of this research is ensured through providing a thick description of the context of each school and the circumstances surrounding the development of leadership-capacity, so that the meaning and importance of behaviours and events can be fully understood. The 'thickness' of description will have an impact on the adequacy of evidence (Marshall & Rossman 1999) and the 'construction of meaning' (Eisner 1998:15). This is done through providing a rationale for choosing qualitative case-study research, outlining the research process, and fully documenting data collection methods, providing details of the raw data generated, and describing the analysis process undertaken. The analysis represents the diversity of perspectives among research participants, leading to an interpretation that includes these variabilities under varying contexts/conditions.

Triangulation is a strategy to enhance trustworthiness and reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation through the use of multiple sources and different participants that draws upon multiple perspectives to reduce systematic bias (Stake 2005:454). It enables the development of a more complete, holistic and contextual portrayal of real life situation. Any finding in a case-study is likely to be more convincing and accurate if it is based on several sources of information, following a corroboratory mode (Yin 2003a:97-8). Acknowledging that no observations or interpretations are perfectly repeatable, triangulation serves also to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the case is being seen (Silverman 1993; Flick 1998; Stake 2003:148). I, as a qualitative researcher, am interested in diversity of perception, even multiple realities within which people live. Triangulation helps identify different realities (Stake 2005:454). Two types of triangulation – methodological and data - were used in this research (Denzin 1984; Patton 1987).

Methodological triangulation is applied where semi-structured interviews, observations and documents are used to collect data. They provide sufficient triangulation of raw data and strengthen my confidence in the data collected. Data triangulation is used as the research is based on three case-studies from three different schools with different contexts and improvement directions in an attempt to maximize the range of data, which might contribute to a more complete understanding of building leadership-capacity. In this study it enhanced the rigor by contributing to the search for ‘completeness’ of data, with each method adding a different piece to the jigsaw (Knafl & Breitmayer 1991). Thus a multi-dimensional picture of building leadership-capacity emerged created by an amalgam of perspectives, rather than a single one.

The aim of case-study research is to capture cases in their uniqueness, rather than use them as a basis for wider generalization (Hammersley & Gromm 2000). This requires a narrative approach where the wider relevance of findings is conceptualized in terms of the provision of vicarious experience, as a basis of ‘naturalistic’ generalization or ‘transferability’ (Ibid:3). Consequently, this research, being qualitative, does not claim to be generalizable. However, in aiming for credibility or authenticity, the findings of this research may become transferable. Readers of my case-studies should, from the detail provided, be able to determine if the findings can be applied to other contexts (Curtin & Fossey 2007).

Different researchers discussed different types of generalisation that might be possible from case-study. Yin (1994:31) said that the mode of generalization is “analytic” where previously developed theory is used as a template against which to compare case-study results. If two or more cases support the same theory, replication may be claimed. To Yin, case-studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions and the researcher’s goal is to expand and generalize theories (2003a:10). Stake (1995:86) argued for “naturalistic” generalization that is the learning processes through which we individually acquire concepts and information and generalize them to other situations. Bassey (2000:44) mentioned fuzzy generalization which is the kind of prediction arising from empirical enquiry, that says that something may happen, but without any measure of its probability.

This research claims analytic generalization. Previously developed theory about building leadership-capacity is used as a template against which to compare case-study results. If two or more cases support the same theory, replication may be claimed (Yin 1984;

1994:31). In multiple-case-studies, I am generalizing from one case to the next on the basis of a match to the underlying theory, not to a larger universe. The choice of cases is made on conceptual grounds, not on representative grounds (Miles & Huberman 1994:29). Each case was carefully selected so that it predicts contrasting results but for predictable reasons (theoretical replication). The case-studies in this research are also subject to ‘naturalistic’ generalization (Stake 2005), i.e. empirically grounded, context-specific generalization. The thick description provided in the case-studies provides the reader with vicarious experience of being there, and supplies them with the necessary knowledge about leadership-capacity that makes them capable of generalising this knowledge to their own situation.

Dependability relates to consistency between data and findings and presents an explanation for factors to which any inconsistent findings might be attributed (Danniel & Onwuegbuzie 2002). Dependability is addressed in this research through data triangulation, with a variety of qualitative data collection and analysis strategies used simultaneously.

Confirmability involves the strategies used to limit research bias in the research, specifically the neutrality of data not the researcher (Danniel & Onwuegbuzie 2002). This is enhanced by me, being the researcher, I was reflective, kept a daily journal, my research was closely supervised by my tutor who audited the decision points throughout the process and discussed with me the ideas and interpretation of data.

3.5 Data collection

3.5.1 Choice of data collection methods

In this study, data collection techniques were developed using Yin's (1994) approach to developing instrumentation. The data collection process was guided by the specific research questions. Deriving from the literature review, these research questions have facilitated data collection. Each research question was addressed in terms of likely sources of data and possible sample strategies (table 3.3). After defining this, instruments were developed and refined, resulting in the production of consent forms, observation schedules and preliminary interview schedules. However, as case-study methodology implies a flexible research design throughout the data collection period, the instruments themselves and the overall plan for data collection were modified during the fieldwork process.

Interviews are an essential source of case-study evidence because most case-studies are about human affairs that should be reported and interpreted through the eyes of well-informed respondents that can provide important insights into a situation (Yin 2003a:92). Interviews are particularly useful when the phenomena under investigation cannot be observed directly (Taylor & Bogdan 1998), such as leadership-capacity. They enable researchers to talk with people about events that happened in the past, opening up a world of experience that is not accessible via observation. The overwhelming strength of face-to-face interviews is the richness of communication and the depth of information (Gillham 2000:59).

Table 3.3: From key research questions to data collection methods

Key research questions	Topics to cover	Likely sources of data collection
1. How do schools get started on building leadership-capacity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Broad-based involvement in the work of leadership: work groups, interaction among school members, leadership roles and teachers. ○ Skilful involvement in the work of leadership: common purposes of learning, group processes, communication, collaboration in planning, reflection and dialogue, constructivist learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interview with senior management and teachers ○ Non-participant observation of staff and department meetings
2. What type of leadership builds leadership-capacity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Description of the leadership of the head ○ Head in meetings ○ Relation between teachers and head 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interviews with senior management and teachers ○ Non-participant observation of the head in meetings ○ Documents: minutes of staff meetings
3. How does building leadership-capacity sustain school-improvement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enquiry based use of information (learning cycle, reflection about student work, and teaching practices to improve practice, mentoring, discovery of school data evidence, visits to other schools) ○ Reflective practice and innovation (support for innovation, learning networks with other schools) ○ Broad involvement (roles beyond classroom) ○ Collaboration among teachers, they share and exchange ideas and know what's going in each other's classes ○ Is the school a professional-learning-community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interviews with senior management and teachers ○ Non-participant observation of staff and department meetings ○ Documents: minutes of meetings, school-improvement plan, school mission statement
4. What is the effect of leadership-capacity on student development and achievement?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ High and improving student achievement (challenging expectations, authentic learning, student achievement) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interviews with senior management and teachers ○ Documents: minutes of department meetings
5. What is the role of teacher-leadership in building leadership-capacity?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teachers participation in leadership activities and decision making ○ Professional-development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Interviews with senior management and teachers ○ Non-participant observation of staff and department meetings ○ Shadowing teacher-leader ○ Documents: minutes of staff and department meetings

3.5.2 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews are the best technique to use when conducting case-studies (Merriam 2001:72).

The use of interviews is needed for my study because:

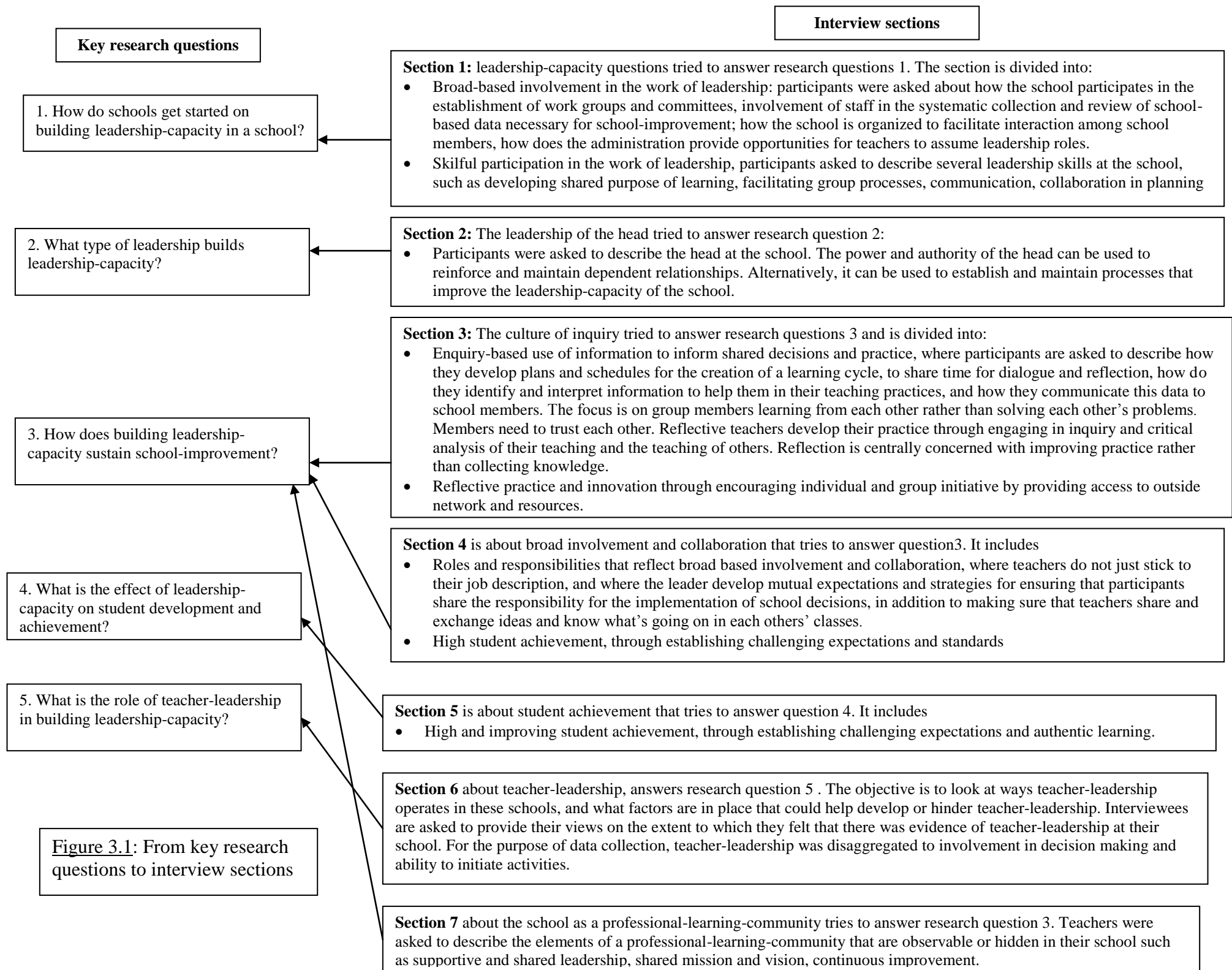
1. My study focuses on the meaning of building leadership-capacity for school-improvement. I wanted to uncover what happens ‘behind the scenes’ in the day-to-day lives of participants concerning their participation in leadership activities (Trowler 1998) to enable an understanding of situation-specific meanings (Richards 2003; Van Manen 1990) and stories (Owen & Demb 2004; Johnson et al. 2005) that participants attribute to leadership-capacity.
2. There was a need to study individual perceptions of leadership-capacity within a particular school. I needed to compare the perception of the head and teachers using a series of interviews, in order to generate thick and descriptive data. Interviews provide ‘access to participants’ ideas, thoughts and memories in their own words rather than in the words of the researcher’ (Reinharz 1992:19). In that sense, interviews had the potential to provide some insights and shared meaning (Eisner 2001).
3. The material is sensitive in character, especially with respect to teachers so trust is involved. Teachers were afraid to criticise the head and needed an assurance of confidentiality. They disclose in a face-to-face interview things they wouldn’t disclose in an anonymous questionnaire (Gillham 2000:62).
4. A major strength of interviewing is the opportunity to probe for clarification and ask questions appropriate to respondent’s knowledge, involvement and status (Merriam 2001). Given the complexity and sensitivity of my research, which includes staff attitudes, experiences and perceptions of leadership-capacity, interviews were

appropriate to gather a data source sufficiently rich to enable the ‘teasing out’ of participants memories, thoughts and actions (Reinharz 1992).

Two types of semi-structured interviews were designed:

- Type1: leadership-capacity school interview (Appendix A): to assess the leadership-capacity conditions in a school. The head and two senior staff members were interviewed to cross-check the answers. Those people provide the most information concerning leadership-capacity because they are at a leadership position. The analysis of these interviews is used to depict school-wide shortcomings and required steps needed to build leadership-capacity.
- Type2: leadership-capacity teacher-leader interview: to assess leadership dispositions, knowledge, and skills needed to build leadership-capacity in schools. It must be completed by a teacher-leader and two other colleagues to cross-check the answers.

The interview schedules were developed for eliciting information and in-depth probing to ensure that all five key-research questions are answered. The interviews start with a project description I used as an aide-memoire that helped me introduce the study to participants. Each specific research question was fleshed out into interview questions to provide a framework of questions. The interviews are made up of 20 questions distributed over seven sections inspired by the five critical features of successful school-improvement discussed in the literature review. Each section is also divided into subsections that contain a series of questions that help in answering the key research questions (figure 3.1).



The first school that gave me approval was Academy0, and it was used as a pilot case. After interviewing the head, I revised my interview schedule because the head told me that the questions were too theoretical and I needed to give examples while posing the questions. For each question I put a list of examples to help interviewees understand the questions. I also interviewed one head-master and two teachers. Teachers were asked whether they consider their school a PLC and in what way, they all said yes to this question but were unable to describe in what way. So the question was changed and teachers were asked about the characteristics of a PLC.

In my study, the relationship between interviewees and me was critical to the nature of data gathered. In seeking to uncover the leadership-capacity experiences and meanings, individual interviews provided opportunities to clarify and seek further depth where appropriate. I made sure to attend staff meetings where I was introduced to staff before I approached participants and solicited their acceptance to be interviewed. In this way, they had the chance to get familiar with me which facilitated their acceptance. In fact, except for one teacher-leader in the pilot school, all people I approached agreed to be interviewed.

The face-to-face interviews were conducted in places free from distractions such as offices, or empty classrooms. I conducted 4 pilot interviews and 18 individual interviews, 16 were audio-taped and transcribed and the remaining two were hand-written because participants refused audio recording. Interviews lasted around 60 minutes. To ensure consistency during the interview, I developed an interview protocol (Yin 2003c; Creswell 2005) to guide me. Prior to each interview, I re-introduced myself, described the research, its

purpose, category of interviewees, steps being taken to maintain confidentiality and their anonymity, and notified them about the duration of the interview. Then I asked the interviewee to read and sign the consent form, and sought their consent to audio-record the interview. After completing each interview, I expressed my appreciation to the interviewee for his/her participation (Creswell 2005).

Taping and transcribing interviews in full detail along with my personal comments, is very important given the concerns about the validity of interviews as a data collection method (Taylor & Bogdan 1998). The two interviews which were not recorded were sent to interviewees for verification. However due to time constraints and because of my unique circumstances - as I was pregnant and delivered before transcribing the interviews - the recorded interviews were not sent to interviewees for checking and verification because transcribing was done six months after the interviews. The validity of the findings must be “corroborated by member checking” (Gall et al. 1996:575). This means participants must be given an opportunity to read the transcripts of their interviews or the relevant portion of the research findings pertinent to their institutions for “accuracy and completeness” (Gall et al. 1996:575). This is said to affect the validity of the interviews because “participant reflection can be invaluable to creating trustworthy data” (Oliver et al, 2005:1280). To compensate for this weakness, participants’ statements were cross-checked (triangulated) against different data sources, such as information given by other participants and institutional documents that were made available to me (Taylor & Bogdan 1998).

Interviews have drawbacks. Finding out how someone feels about what happened in the past, does not give researchers access to the past. Interviews allow access to what people say but not to what they do (Darlington & Scott 2002:51). The words and forms of speech the researcher uses may not carry the same meanings for the interviewees as for the researcher and vice-versa (Gall et al. 1996). A reasonable approach is to corroborate interview data with information from other sources (Yin 2003a:92).

3.5.3 Non-participant observation

The major advantage of observation as a research tool is its directness. It provides access to events as they happen (Johnson 1994:52). You do not ask people about their views, feelings or attitudes. You watch what they do and listen to what they say (Robson 2002:310). It enriches and supplements data gathered by other techniques, allowing triangulation and increasing trustworthiness (Coleman 2002:174). Observations were based on attending staff, pedagogical and department meetings, shadowing teacher-leaders, and observation of school facilities. Observation was used as a supplementary method to collect data that complement data obtained from interviews and documents, to validate or corroborate messages obtained from interviews. During data collection, observation and interviewing ran concurrently, allowing data from each to be used to substantiate events, explore emerging issues, and make further decisions about the research conduct.

I tried to minimise observer bias while recording observations (Coleman 2002:179). I prepared detailed semi-structured observation schedules (Appendix B) where I recorded utterances and actions, accurately and in an unbiased manner, directly into my notebook during the observation session. The schedule includes a description of the physical, human,

and interactional settings and an analysis of the content of conversations in accordance to the interview schedules sections. This analysis is parallel to the interview schedules and allows for a direct comparison between what I observed and interviewees' answers, thus validating and corroborating interviewees' answers. I also added my comments where I recorded my feelings, reactions, and initial interpretations.

I piloted the observation schedule, at Academy0, after piloting the interview schedule because I wanted to benefit from the comments of interviewees. After making the adjustments to the interview schedule, I adjusted the observation schedule. I piloted the observation schedule on a staff meeting at Academy0. Directly after the observation session was finished, I reviewed the observation schedule, my field-notes and my reflections about people being observed. Everything was fine, no adjustments were made.

In addition to attending meetings, qualitative shadowing of teacher-leaders was conducted for half a day. A semi-structured shadowing schedule was prepared. The main sections of the schedule include a description of the physical, human, and interactional settings, content of conversations and subtle factors. The shadowing is directly connected to the fifth key research question. The objective is to uncover the shape of a teacher-leader day in terms of actions performed, and to reveal the subtleties and purpose shaping those actions in the real-time context of the school with the objective to see how teacher-leaders interact with staff and students in staffrooms, classrooms and lunch breaks. During the shadowing, I wrote an almost continuous set of field-notes including actions and timing of the teacher-leader. I wrote down answers to questions I asked and as much of the running commentary

as possible. I also attended classes while shadowing the teacher-leaders who introduced me to students and I presented myself to them, trying to reassure their curious eyes.

There are major risks attached in recording information accurately and in an unbiased manner. The presence of an observer in a situation always alters the actions of other people present, generating the risk that the situation an observer records is not an accurate representation of the situations that exist when the observer is absent (Johnson 1994:52). I acknowledge that my presence inevitably had an effect on the behaviour of people being observed (observer effect), both consciously and unconsciously, especially the students. I tried to minimize this effect by always sitting at the end of the room. One school principal described me a 'fly on the wall'. During meetings, I tried not to react (frown or smile). After the observation, I slowly withdrew from the site.

3.5.4 Documents

Researchers supplement observation and interviews with gathering and analyzing documents produced during everyday events. The review of documents is an unobtrusive method, rich in portraying values and beliefs of participants (Marshall & Rossman 1999:116). Documents are a good source of data for numerous reasons. Many documents are easily accessible, free, and contain information that would take an investigator enormous time and effort to gather otherwise. A great advantage of using documents is their stability. Unlike interviewing and observation, the presence of the investigator does not alter what is being studied. Documents are objective sources of data compared to other forms (Merriam 2001:126). Documents are particularly good sources for my qualitative

case-studies because they ground my investigation in the context of the problem being investigated and they corroborate and triangulate evidence from interviews and observations. Analysis of this data source “lends to contextual richness and helps to ground an inquiry in the milieu of the writer” (Guba & Lincoln 1981:234). I needed to collect documents to learn about schools’ history and minutes of previous meetings because the number of meetings I attended was limited. A list of documents to collect was prepared and distributed to school principals: school history; parents’ background; annual reports; agendas; minutes-of-meetings. The pilot school did not provide me with documents. They only gave me the school agenda. So there was no room for piloting documents.

While these documents can furnish valuable evidence to confirm the information obtained from interviews, there is invariably a concern about whether such documentary evidence can guarantee objectivity, consistency, or accuracy, as evidenced in the following ways. As pointed out by Atkinson & Coffey (2004:58), “documents are ‘social facts’ in that they are produced, shared and used in socially organized ways. They are not, however, transparent representations of organizational routines, decision-making processes or professional diagnoses”. Given that “every document was written for some specific purpose and some specific audience” (Yin 2003a:87), it is critical that researchers should carefully assess the document before accepting the evidence using quality control criteria such as authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning (Scott 1990).

When extracting documents, I was mindful of the above risks of being misled by such evidence and took several precautionary steps. These included establishing the authenticity

of the document to ensure the version used for review was correct, the texts within the document were consistent with the context in which they were produced, and the evidence was genuine and derived from the original source. Most documents collected are primary sources, which made them more trustworthy and credible. They were used by me for a purpose other than that for which they were originally intended. So understanding was sought of who were the implied readers and authors to determine whether the evidence available in the documents was applicable to the case-study; and linked documents were searched to ensure that the evidence was credible, consistent and free from error (Scott 1990; McCulloch 2004). Anyway, I only used the evidence provided by documents as a secondary source of information. These steps mitigated the risks of using documents.

3.6 Data analysis

Since this research involves multiple case-studies, there are two stages of analysis: (a) the within-case analysis where each case is treated as a comprehensive case in itself and (b) cross-case analysis where the analysis attempts to see processes and outcomes that occur across cases to develop more sophisticated descriptions and explanations (Yin 1994:112). Initially data collection felt disorganized, as the data were collected from several schools simultaneously and not in sequence. The interviews, observation field-notes and documents collected generated a large amount of text for each school. In order to derive meaningful results, the material must be analysed in a methodical manner (Attride-Stirling 2001:386). Various techniques conducting qualitative data analysis have been documented in the literature (Miles & Huberman 1994; Richards 2003; Punch 2005) and they all share the common objective of identifying themes and patterns embedded in the data.

Data analysis followed a systematic process of transcript based analysis following a form of the iterative stage process outlined by Turner (1981). This process entailed the utilisation of both inductive reasoning (Lincoln & Guba 1985) and comparative methods (Martin & Turner 1986). Data analysis was conducted in accordance with Miles & Huberman (1994:4) framework which is “directed at tracing out lawful and stable relationships among social phenomena, based on the regularities and sequences that link these phenomena”. Their approach is called ‘transcendental realism’ and involves three activities: (a) Data reduction; (b) Data display; and (c) Conclusion drawing and verification. They see these as three concurrent activities, interacting throughout the analysis. The first step involves “selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appears in the written-up fieldnotes” (Ibid:10). Once data is condensed, it is displayed in an organized format that permits conclusion drawing and action taking. The final step is to detect any patterns and common themes that emerge from data; to determine any deviations and interrelationship; and to assess if there is a need to revise any research question based on the findings (Ibid:10-2).

The first two, data reduction and display, rest mainly on the operations of coding and memoing. Coding is the process of putting tags, names or labels against pieces of data to facilitate the search for themes/patterns (Ibid:56; Patton 1990). Interview transcripts, observation field-notes, and documents were broken down into segments according to the individual concept that arose. Coding is achieved by assigning units of meaning to chunks of varying size - words, phrases, sentences and entire paragraphs (Miles & Huberman 1994:56). Thematic coding started by creating a provisional ‘start list’ or priori codes

before examining data derived from the conceptual framework, research questions and interview schedules (Weston et al 2001; Attride-Sterling 2001). This is called 'inductive coding' (Ryan & Bernard 2003:276). The codes were revised as I went through the data. Some codes did not work, others flourished, and new codes emerged. Gradually an organized list of codes emerged (Appendix C) and organized in a relational structure. The codebook became a conceptual web including larger meanings and their constitutive characteristics (Miles & Huberman 1994:62). The meaning units were grouped (Rennie et al 1988) to form categories which helped draw out themes and patterns, thereby allowing the retrieval and organization into chunks relating to particular research question. Interview transcripts (Appendix D) and observation field-notes were coded on word documents to facilitate the retrieval and comparison of data which contributed to themes' development.

Memoing was used to document any initial thoughts or themes as they strike. These notes were useful because they have conceptual content and helped me move from empirical to conceptual level in my analysis (Punch 2005:202). They helped me identify issues that I needed to explore in more detail and what might be important to focus on in data analysis (Punch 1998; Gay & Airasian 2000).

Data displays organize, compress and assemble information. Miles & Huberman (1994:11) regard display as essential: "You know what you display". There are different ways of displaying data – matrices, graphs, network, and diagrams. Valid qualitative data analysis requires displays that are focused enough to permit moving from unreduced texts to

viewing a full data set on one piece of paper, and are arranged systematically to answer the research questions (Ibid 1994:91-2).

I used conceptually ordered displays, where I developed a format based mainly on the codebook. This format (a) displayed all the relevant coded responses of all informants, field-notes' extracts and documents' extracts on the same sheet, (b) allowed an initial comparison between responses, (c) allowed me to see how data can be analyzed further (d) lent itself easily to cross-case analysis because it provided some preliminary standardization. These are informant-by-variable matrices. I had on one spread-sheet a format that included all respondents and all responses relevant to the same code (Miles & Huberman 1994:128). Next I went back to the coded segments in my interviews schedules, observation field-notes and documents and cut and pasted the coded segment in the corresponding cell. Inside the matrices I added one column for any reflection I had about answers which helped me in my interpretation and conclusion drawing.

Reading across matrices uses the tactic of making comparisons/contrasts between answers of different teachers and administrators, and comparisons between these groups. This allowed me to develop under each matrix another parallel matrix containing short summary phrases where I put in one column a summary of teachers' answers, another column a summary of senior management answers and a third column for conclusions and interpretations. Thus, analysis was made in several steps "the result of the analysis is some type of higher level synthesis" (Tesch 1990:97).

Once the analysis of each case is completed, cross-case analysis began. I used a mixed strategy where I integrated case-oriented and variable-oriented approaches. I used what Miles & Huberman (1994:176) called “stacking comparative cases”. I used the findings generated in each case-study for comparing the empirical results of the three cases. After writing the three cases using a standard set of topics, I “stacked” the case-level displays in a “meta-matrix” (Ibid:176), which allowed for systematic cross-case comparison and synthesis of patterns where I used ‘argumentative interpretation’ (Yin 2003a:137).

The reporting style used in the case-studies does not contain the traditional narrative. Instead the composition for each case follows the key research questions and answers based on the questions and answers in the case-study data base. This allowed me to answer the key research questions systematically. The advantages of this format are potentially enormous because my study uses multiple case-studies. I only needed to examine answers to the same question within each case to make cross-case comparisons (Yin 2003a:147).

3.7 Ethical guidelines

‘Ethics is a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others. Ethics say that while truth is good, respect for human dignity is better, even if the respect of human dignity leaves one ignorant of human nature’ (Cavan 1977:810). ‘To be ethical, a research project needs to be designed to create trustworthy outcomes if it is to be believed to be pursuing the truth’ (Busher & James 2007).

The main ethical considerations in my study are informed consent and privacy. Research requires obtaining the consent of participants and of their superiors who provide research facilities particularly when respondents are exposed to substantial risks (Cohen et al. 2000:50-1). Participants should be given a clear idea of the research purpose, the nature of their contribution to the data and the way in which information will be used (Denscombe & Aubrook 1992:127). Ethical concerns encountered in educational research can be extremely complex and can frequently place researchers in moral dilemma, which may appear irresolvable. In order to protect the privacy of participants, the researcher must protect their anonymity and keep research data confidential (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias 1992). One of the risks that participants face is that they 'become visible through the words they use, the way they position themselves, or the way in which they are located' in the case school (Busher & James 2006:7). In my research, I solved the privacy dilemma by protecting people's and research locations' identities. Since the schools are small in size and the administration knows teachers who participated in my research, I had the obligation to protect the anonymity of participants by not using their names or other personal means of identification and by using pseudonyms (Cohen et al. 2000).

I submitted the following documents to the four schools that approved my research:

1. An introductory letter to principals, describing the research, data collection methods and seeking their approval to conduct research.
2. A summarised research proposal providing more details about my research especially ethical guidelines and data collection procedures. I listed people I intended to interview, meetings I intended to attend and documents I wished to collect. I clarified

that the research is anonymous and confidential with respect to name and identity of schools and participants. I clarified that the information would strictly be used for academic purposes as part of my doctoral dissertation.

3. An ethical approval form approved and signed by the Departmental Research Ethics Committee at University of Leicester.
4. A participant informed consent form, to be signed by every research participant before conducting the interview, to ensure that participation is voluntary.

These four documents were submitted to every interviewee and a copy of the interview schedule, so that the potential participant would have a clear idea about the research before giving his/her decision whether to voluntarily participate in or decline participation.

To construct ethical relationships with interviewees, they were asked to read carefully the four above listed documents and sign the participant informed consent form before conducting the interview. The informed consent form addresses: Their right to voluntarily withdraw from the study any time, the purpose of the study and data collection procedures, comments about protecting anonymity of respondents and confidentiality of information they give assuring participants that they will not harm themselves within the micro-political processes of their organization, a statement about known risks associated with participation in the study, and the expected benefits to accrue to participants.

Observations were conducted with the awareness of those being observed in order not to intrude into the privacy of people involved. I observed staff and department meetings and

shadowed teacher-leaders. Before any meeting, the chairman of the meeting introduced me to attendants, and asked me to present myself and my research. Teacher-leaders introduced me to students before I attended their class. I told them about the focus of my observations (what I would be recording) and the purpose of the observation (how the data is going to be used). I used a non-interventionist strategy in observing people.

An underlying ethical principle is that participants have the right to know some of the research findings (Busher & James 2007). Participants, especially school principals asked to review the case-study report about their school. A copy of the case-study report was sent to school principals for their review and comment. The case-study reports both respect participants' right for privacy and the right of society to know about the research (Burgess 1989). All the results of the study are disclosed whether positive or negative.

3.8 Carrying out the research in the field

The sequence of events in each school is summarized in figure 3.2. Fieldwork took place over a four months period. 22 individual interviews were conducted, 8 meetings were attended, and four shadowing were conducted as shown in table 3.4. Alongside fieldwork visits comprising interviewing and observation, a total of 40 documents were collected. Since qualitative research is emergent, evolving, and interpretive (Marshall & Rossman 1999), I used information as it was collected to make decisions about subsequent activities. The data collection took place in a planned sequence so that certain activities could help subsequent ones. First, a meeting was held with the school head to gain his/her consent. In this meeting, the four previously mentioned documents are given to the head, in addition to

a list of documents to be collected. Once I got the approval of the head, he/she designated a teacher-leader to contact and seek his/her approval to participate in my research. Once I secured the approval of the teacher-leader, he/she would designate teachers from his/her department to interview. Then I established contact with the teachers and scheduled interviews according to their schedule. This intervention in choosing participants might bias the results because school principals or teacher-leaders might choose people who may talk positively about them, or they might choose the best performers who may give a positive but unrealistic picture about the school. Since the schools are small, some departments were made of only three teachers, there was little room to manoeuvre.

Figure 3.2: Summary of data collection process

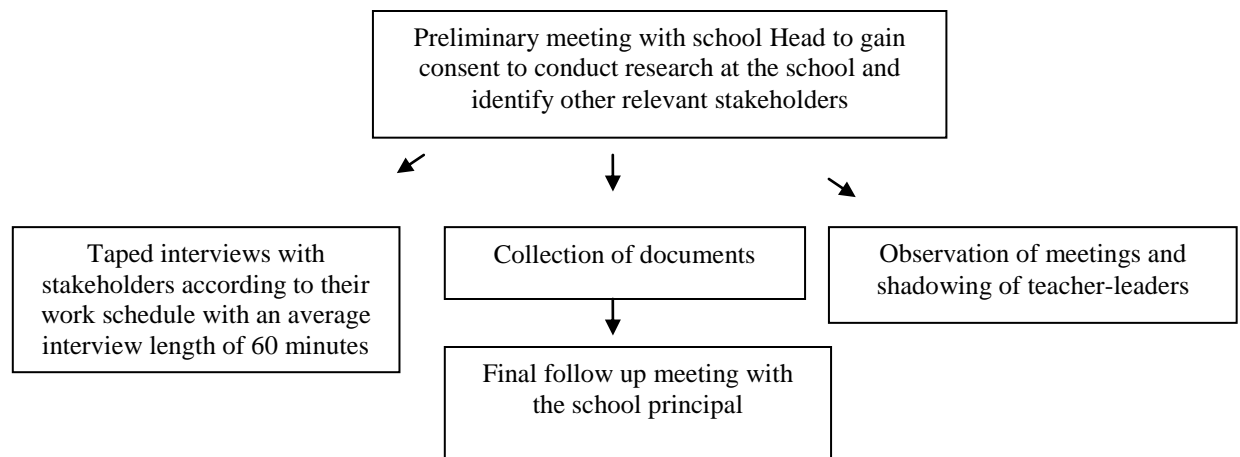


Table 3.4: Summary of data collection carried out

	Academy0(Pilot)	Academy1	Academy2	Academy3	Total
Type1: leadership-capacity school interview (Thesis p.90)	2	3	3	2	10
Type2: leadership-capacity teacher-leader interview (Thesis p.91)	2	4	3	3	12
Total number of interviews	4	7	6	5	22
Meetings attended	1	3	2	2	8
Shadowing teacher-leaders	1		1	1	4

Once the interview and observation schedules were revised and key research questions revisited, I started the fieldwork on November 8, 2007 and ended on February 29, 2008. The original plan was to conduct research at each school at a time. But while in the field, data collection overlapped between the schools, because I had to attend for the schedules of participants and the meetings. There were days where I had interviews at two schools. Another problem faced was the weather. There were several snow storms in Montreal. I had to reschedule interviews and it was not easy due to teachers' busy schedule. The interview took one hour and teachers squeezed me in their lunch break or free hours.

3.9 Limitations of the study

The work of a researcher, especially that of a novice, is not expected to be flawless (Oliver 2004). After much thought and critical consideration of the work, some steps and decisions could have been done differently, if that was ever possible at the time.

The chosen cases included only English speaking private secondary schools, and did not include public schools, nor French speaking schools. This is mainly due to access difficulties and language barrier difficulties faced by the researcher as explained before. The inclusion of these schools would have made the research findings more representative of schools in Montreal and more transferable to other schools. Furthermore, the choice of teacher-leaders was done by school principals, as for the choice of teachers to interview it was done by teacher-leaders. This might have biased the results. However since the schools were small, and the departments were made of three teachers only, there was little room to manoeuvre. This constitutes a further limitation on the potential generalization of

this study as the number of people interviewed is small. Nevertheless, the researcher is personally inclined to believe that the findings reached with the participants are not restricted to them. It is believed that they are more likely to be representative of other schools with similar size in Quebec. However, transferability of data is not possible given the small sample size used in data collection.

The study did not discuss in detail student leadership and the role of parents because they were not accessible. School principals categorically refused conducting interviews with students and parents. The effect of school leadership on student achievement and the role of parents need to be studied in more detail in a subsequent study. This study identified the characteristics of a capacity-building head and confirmed previous research findings that his/her leadership is distributed with a clear moral purpose. But it did not reach a final and definitive decision about the leadership theory that supports building leadership-capacity whether 'distributed' or any other theory.

Effective support from outside the school is required to build internal capacity and is a pre-requisite of successful school-improvement (West 2000). This external agency is provided by English-Montreal-School-Boards as a Local-Education-Authority (LEA) as there is increasing evidence of the importance of LEA in school-improvement (Harris 2000). The role of the LEA in implementing the school reform in schools was not explored mainly because the schools were private and had no contact with any LEA. Their relation was direct with the Ministry of Education (MELS) who left it up to school administrations the freedom to choose the appropriate ways to implement the new Quebec-Education-program.

The researcher is Lebanese, not experienced in Quebec culture. This might have affected the researcher-interviewee communication and understanding of interviews' questions and answers. Nevertheless, the findings of the study have generally succeeded in answering the five key research questions and the researcher's inner thirst for clarification that triggered the study in the first place. Counteracting these limitations, the last two chapters that deal with the presentation of the three cases and analysis of data using cross-case analysis, had jointly succeeded in giving a comprehensive, valid and fresh outlook on the topics under investigation, especially through proposing a leadership-capacity model including a dynamic interaction between capacity/context/culture. The findings from cases were used to construct knowledge pertaining to the topics under investigation instead of providing contrasting results which helped tremendously in answering the research questions and provided a compelling support for the conceptual framework thus building theoretical replication and increasing the trustworthiness of the findings.

Chapter 4

Presentation and Analysis of Data:

The Three Case-Studies

4.1 Introduction

This chapter offers three case-studies of three secondary schools in Montreal. The purpose of these case-studies is to provide insights into the way in which leadership-capacity is generated in different types of schools. Academy1 has moderate leadership-capacity; Academy2 has high leadership-capacity, and Academy3 has low leadership-capacity. The cases are an account of a collection of themes that emerged from interviews, observations of meetings and documents collected from each case-study school. Each case-study includes seven sections: the case starts with a description of school contexts, then the case answers the five research questions through developing arguments and findings based on quotations from participants. The case ends with a discussion section that locates the schools on the leadership-capacity matrix (figure 2.1 p.21) and summarizes the main findings of each case. The names of the schools and participants are fictitious, thus respecting their confidentiality and anonymity, in accordance with the ethical guidelines of my research. Participant quotations are coded as follows:

Academy1	Academy2	Academy3
Head: 1H/300108	Head: 2H/051207	Head: 3H/071107
Senior management: SM	Senior management: SM	Director: 3D/201107
Vice Principal: 1SM1/300108	Vice Principal: 2SM1/041207	
Finance Director: 1SM2/290108		
Teacher-leader: 1TL/300108 (English department head)	Teacher-leader: 2TL/070208 (English department head)	Teacher-leader: 3TL/281107 (Math department head)
English teacher 1: 1T1/250108	English teacher 1: 2T1/051207	Math teacher 1: 3T1/281107
English teacher 2: 1T2/250108	English teacher 2: 2T2/041207	Math teacher 2 :3T2/ 051207
Curriculum Director: 1T3/290208	Shadowing TL: 2STL/070208	
Staff meeting: 1STM/300108	Staff meeting: 2STM/121107	Staff meeting: 3STM/141107
	Pedagogic meeting: 2PedM/201107	

The code starts with the case number, then the interviewee position, number of interviewee, and interview date. For example the following code (1T2/250108) stands for Academy1, teacher 2, interview date is 25, January 2008.

4.2 Academy1 case-study

4.2.1 Context of Academy1

Academy1 was an English language Catholic secondary school for girls established in 1959. The school's building used to be a golf clubhouse, situated on an 18 acre campus. In its inaugural year in 1959, enrolment was 33 students, by 2005, there were over 500 students, two labs, music, art, and media rooms. The tuition fee was around 7,000CAD (Canadian Dollar). Parents' income averaged 94,000CAD, a high income bracket. There were 42 teachers. The class's size averaged 27 students. The school had a multi-cultural student body and staff. The head was a nun appointed ten years ago. Academy1 was part of Quebec-Association-of-Independent-Schools (QAIS), an organization consisting of 25 English-language elementary and secondary private schools in Quebec. QAIS promotes collaboration and provides services that further educational leadership.

Academy1 was a high performing school that moderately improved its performance over the years from a rank of 59 (2001-05) to 37 (2004-05) among Quebec secondary schools (Kozhaya & Cowley 2006). Being a member of QAIS, the school was opposed to school rankings. The best school is the school that meets the needs of each particular child. Seven interviews were conducted including the head, the VP, the Curriculum Director, the English-department-head and two English teachers. Participants were all females.

4.2.2 How do schools get started on building leadership-capacity?

This section answers the first research-question. It will be shown hereafter that at Academy1, leadership-capacity-building was mainly reflected through broadly involving teachers in leadership activities at department level (1SM1/300108) and providing opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles (1T1/250108). It will be shown that leadership-capacity was enhanced through the skilful participation of teachers in the work of leadership through activating departmental group-work (1T3/290208) and collaboration inside departments (1T1/250108). However, teachers needed to work in groups, communicate, and collaborate through holding not only regular department meetings, but also staff meetings where school members worked and reflected together. Successful change needed administrative support and collaborative implementation (1TL/300108).

The broad involvement in leadership activities was mainly revealed through the following evidence. The structure of Academy1 might have encouraged the development of leadership-capacity because it was based on department-based work groups. All interviewees agreed that teachers worked in groups mainly inside departments.

‘Most groups are divided by departments. This school is mostly departmental’
(1SM1/300108).

The groups worked as follows:

‘The workgroup brainstorms and comes up with ideas. We develop a proposal together and present it to the staff’ (1T3/290208).

The school was organized to facilitate interaction among school members, especially inside departments. English teachers stressed the importance of the continuous communication and interaction in their department because they had common staffroom:

'We often share because our desks are very close' (1TL/300108).

Senior management encouraged continuous interaction between teachers through holding regular department meetings, as agreed by all interviewees.

'In the English department teachers meet every eight-day cycle, where they update their information' (1TL/300108).

"People inside departments make efforts to be together and pick their time to do that" (1H/300108).

Teachers at many levels were given opportunities to assume leadership roles mainly inside departments. For example, the English department organized every year a public speaking competition. All English teachers got together to delegate work:

'The department head asks who wants to participate in finding judges, or in this or that. People volunteer and we end up putting things together' (1T1/250108).

Teachers were mainly given inside their departments continuous opportunities to assume leadership roles, but not much at school level. Assuming leadership roles at school level was encouraged by the head as long as they were going to carry them on.

“As long as the head knows that the teacher is going to do a follow through she absolutely allows. In terms of decision-making for the school, she would worry” (1T3/290208).

The skilful involvement of teachers in leadership activities was reflected through the following. Teachers at Academy1 generally sat together (in department meetings) and developed shared purposes of learning with the objective to have common learning goals and the particular learning of students in mind, as highlighted by three interviewed teachers and a senior-management member.

“Since the school is part of the whole curriculum reform in Quebec, we put student learning at the centre and not teaching. The whole purpose is to make sure that teachers sit down and have a common understanding about what the learning goals are” (1SM1/300108).

Teachers were mostly encouraged to work in groups inside departments.

“You speak to your department; you come to decisions about course outlines and the textbooks as a department” (1T3/290208).

This continuous group work most probably lead to frequent communication inside departments, as highlighted by interviewed teachers.

‘In the English department, we have one departmental meeting scheduled every 8 day cycle for an hour and a half. There is regular communication within the English department’ (1T1/250108).

However, at school level, all interviewees, except the head, felt some frustration from the lack of communication between teachers and senior management:

“The rare occasions where most teachers meet are staff meetings which became only just giving information” (1TL/300108).

But the head considered that communication was very good with teachers:

‘Certainly it’s open door, but now that we have the e-mails they’re just flying all the time. So questions and suggestions come in’ (1H/300108).

While teachers generally preferred face-to-face communication.

“We use e-mails. I prefer to meet, listen and question. To meet as a team or individually with someone and talk” (1TL/300108).

All interviewed teachers stated that they constantly reflected about their teaching practices and analyzed how things were being done at the school mainly inside departments.

‘In the department, we bring material to the table and if we have a problem, we examine methodologies and books together. We reflect, does this work and if it does not, why not, how can we improve. Should we change?’ (1T2/250108).

However, the senior management usually only reflected on work in response to parents’ complaint or students’ concerns.

‘The only time we do sit and reflect about teaching practices that is as a reaction if a parent has phoned or if a student had concerns about somebody’s teaching or disciplining’ (1SM1/300108).

All interviewees agreed that the school was very good at managing externally mandated change. The major change that teachers were facing was the school reform, but teachers were adapting to it because the school provided them necessary support to embrace change through appointing a curriculum director who provided teachers support, information, training and tutoring at every stage of the implementation process.

‘I see my role as providing them with information and sorting through what’s available, or giving them books or sending them to the right conferences’ (1T3/290208).

Also teachers tended to implement changes collaboratively. They largely supported each other which made adapting to change much easier and reduced resistance.

‘Teachers do not resist change. We try very hard to go along with changes because we work together, which makes things easier and less stressful. Change is enacted collaboratively which makes adapting to change much easier’ (1TL/300108).

4.2.3 What type of leadership builds leadership-capacity?

This section seeks to answer the second research-question. As will be shown hereafter, the head at Academy1 primarily distributed leadership to department-heads and teachers who had a lot of freedom in teaching and learning and running their own departments

Interviewees admitted that the head empowered and trusted teachers to do their job without interference (1T2/250108; 1H/300108). This may reflect a good level of teacher-leadership mainly inside departments.

At Academy1, all interviewees agreed that the head distributed leadership to teachers when it came to teaching, pedagogy and running their own departments.

‘The head gives teachers complete freedom and trust to teach’ (1T2/250108).

“I basically presume trust and count on the different groups to be functioning well” (1H/300108).

But when it came to school wide decisions the head tended to take decisions without proper consultation, as expressed by interviewees.

“She’s a person who works alone and sometimes decisions come without proper consultation” (1TL/300108).

‘We have a structure that basically makes me in charge of everything and I subdivide it’ (1H/300108).

Interviewed teachers were frustrated because they believed that the head resisted change when initiated by teachers.

“There is frustration, because teachers want to bring about change, but they can’t because of her. Change is brought bound” (1TL/300108).

All interviewees agreed that the head cared more about the well-being of the physical facilities, and the physical comfort of teachers rather than their emotional well-being.

‘The more the facility supports the peace of mind and the good thinking and the correcting, the better job teachers can do. Teachers need to have the tools to do their work’ (1H/300108).

During an observation of a staff meeting (1STM/300108), the head used her authority to inform teachers about decisions already taken. Teachers participated in discussions but the head seemed to take the final decisions, which might have affected negatively the development of teacher-leadership at school level. It was a co-dependant relationship where the head and teachers depended on behaviours of each other to keep old patterns of behaviours in place. This might have impeded the expansion of leadership-capacity. Some strategies used by the head:

The head and VP informed teachers about school rental, new payroll, and school lockdown practice decisions (1STM/300108). They allowed teachers to ask questions and provide suggestions.

“Any other questions?” (1STM/300108)

Some teachers participated in asking questions and giving suggestions but the decision has already been taken.

The head waited for teachers to give their suggestions concerning the homeroom time but she did not encourage the transformation of ideas into realities.

‘I am opened to a redesign of the HR system and to your suggestions’
(1STM/300108).

After several minutes of discussions, the head asked teachers to mail their suggestions.

‘I prefer suggestions in writing to keep hold of ideas. Please feed them in by paper or e-mail and I will work on them for next year’ (1STM/300108).

No decision was reached in the meeting.

4.2.4 How does building leadership-capacity sustain school-improvement?

The following section answers the third research-question. At Academy1, developing a learning cycle (Lambert et al. 1996:66) and a culture of enquiry inside departments constituted part of building leadership-capacity (Harris & Lambert 2003:94). Reflection, inquiry, dialogue were continuous among teachers of the same department (1TL/300108; 1T1/250108) but not frequent in staff meetings among school members (1TL/300108). This suggests continuous collaboration among teachers inside departments but not at school level. Improvement efforts might have been successful because they were implemented collaboratively basically inside departments (1TL/300108; 1T3/290208). Harris & Lambert (2003:4) consider that an improving school possesses all elements of a professional-learning-community (PLC) and has high leadership-capacity.

All interviewees agreed that most elements of a learning cycle were present at Academy1 inside departments but not at school level. Inside departments, teachers shared ideas and reflected on teaching practices and students’ learning. Reflection was centrally concerned

with improving practice. Department meetings were the main place of sharing ideas, reflection and dialogue:

‘Does this work and if it does not, why not, how can we improve. Especially with the reform, different forms of writing, evaluations, competencies based learning’ (1TL/300108).

English teachers also reflected continuously in their common staffroom:

‘We constantly reflect about how things are being done at the school also in the staffroom, we constantly talk about whatever we are doing such as a novel given in class, we discuss what is working, what is not and how we can make it better’ (1T1/250108).

There was also question posing with the objective to enhance student learning:

‘In department meetings there is a lot of question posing, we bring forth that particular thing where students are not grasping certain concepts, then we share possible ways to enhance their learning’ (1T2/250108).

All interviewees agreed that teachers had access to information used to inform decisions and teaching practices. The curriculum director provided teachers with information:

‘Teachers have access to literature, visits to other schools, attend QAIS meetings and conferences. I keep the school up-to-date with information. I get them handouts, send e-mails, or send them to the right conferences’ (1T3/290208).

All interviewees agreed that information was disseminated in departmental meetings:

‘Teachers share what they learn in conferences in department meetings through giving a presentation or handout’ (1T1/250108).

Interviewees agreed that teachers were broadly involved in school activities because they loved spending time at the school and felt being at home.

‘I don’t come here just to do my classes. There is a feeling of being home here. It’s the way that I communicate with students in the hallway. They come and see me at recess to discuss a paper or a personal issue. At the staff room there is nice family interaction’ (1T1/250108).

Teachers performed multiple tasks beyond their immediate classroom responsibilities, which constituted part of building leadership-capacity:

‘I am a member of the parents' association committee. I am also preparing a presentation at the springboard conference. I organize with senior students theatre outings. I am part of the mosaic literary magazine. I am in charge with the English teachers during the public speaking competition (1TL/300108).

All interviewees agreed that the culture of Academy1 was a culture of collaboration and trust, and focused on teaching and learning especially inside the English department.

‘The English department is highly collaborative. It runs like well oiled machine because we work very close together, everyday we are interacting with each other’ (1T2/250108).

Interviewed teachers highlighted that teachers in the same department knew what was going on in each other's classes because they shared and exchanged ideas continuously:

‘Sometimes, teachers in the department teach other teachers what they do in their classroom. The level teachers know what's going on in their classes because they are interacting all the time’ (1TL/300108).

The data analysis suggests that Academy1 seemed to possess some but not all elements of a PLC (Harris & Muijs 2005:51; Stoll et al. 2006:226-7). All interviewees agreed that the leadership was supportive and shared inside departments. At school level, teachers believed the leadership was not supportive, nor shared:

‘Definitely supportive and shared leadership is present within our department but lacking in the greater school community’ (1T1/250108).

While senior management believed that leadership was supportive but not shared:

‘The leadership is supportive. They are supposed to letting them whatever supports the teachers. But leadership in general is not shared’ (1SM1/300108).

Teachers participated in decisions inside departments, but not at school level. They were consulted as agreed by all interviewees.

‘We participate in decision-making only at our department. At school level we may be consulted’ (1TL/300108).

‘Teachers participate in decisions in lots of day to day stuff in their own department and student life’ (1H/300108).

Interviewees agreed that the school vision and mission were not shared among school members. The school values and principles were distributed to teachers and they were expected to embrace them.

‘I don’t know where the school is heading. I don’t think there is shared vision or mission. We received in our mail box a letter telling us these are the school values and principals, we had no input in that’ (1SM1/300108).

The head admitted that there was no strategic long-term planning. Most of the planning revolved around the curriculum which was short term.

‘Most of the planning is revolved around the curriculum and school year’ (1H/300108).

Collective inquiry was present inside departments but much less at school level as admitted by all interviewees.

‘Collective inquiry is present inside departments but not at the school because department heads do not meet so they don’t know what’s happening at other departments. This is a major weakness of the school’ (1T2/250108).

All interviewees agreed that the head was open to new ideas and innovations, but did not follow-up their implementation. This climate made teachers reluctant to innovate and suggest improvements at school level, which may have impeded school-improvement.

‘The head is open to new ideas, but afterwards she does not follow up on them. She’s not even aware that they happened. Consequently, teachers are not motivated to come up with new ideas’ (1T2/250108).

‘Several stop by my office and say I’ve got that idea, am I allowed to try it. My answer is always yes’ (1H/300108).

Interviewees consistently answered that there was continuous collaboration and teamwork inside departments. At school level there was collaboration in extra curricular activities.

‘Collaboration is present in the department but not when we have bigger staff meetings’ (1T1/250108).

‘In extra-curricular activities you see a lot of collaboration. In the drama festival people who have nothing to do with drama help out their colleagues’ (1SM1/300108).

Still interviewees insisted that Academy1 was improving. This improvement was mainly externally mandated by the school reform.

‘At school level, with this school reform everybody is trying to change, adapt and work on project base, teachers have to work more collaboratively. As a department, in terms of improvement, there is more tolerance, we are experimenting and trying new books’ (1TL/300108).

Beside the externally mandated change and improvement, the school appeared to have internal capacity for improvement as agreed by all interviewees. Continuous improvement seemed to constitute part of the school daily practice at department and school level:

“We always look how we can get better as teachers. The head too is working hard to become the best that she can be. I can see that there are things the head is trying to do, like not just getting her approval but working in a way that works for the teachers” (1T3/290208).

Collaboration in improvement efforts and in adapting to externally mandated changes appeared to be embedded in departmental cultures.

‘The English department is highly collaborative. We work very close together all the time and we are constantly updating the programs’ (1T2/250108).

‘What is driving self improvement is the collaborative work among each other’ (1H/300108).

All interviewees agreed that there was great work on teachers' personal growth through continuous professional-development and sharing of knowledge to generate improved learning outcomes.

‘We make sure teachers are informed, go to training sessions. This is one of the strengths of Academy1. When teachers come back they share with their colleagues’ (1T3/290208).

“Many teachers are busy taking courses on self-improvement. They’re implicated in the teachers groups who want to learn” (1H/300108)

4.2.5 What is the effect of leadership-capacity on student development and achievement?

This section answers research-question four. For Academy1, the role of teachers in students' learning and achievement seemed central, through motivating students to set challenging expectations for themselves and work towards higher goals (1TL/300108), learn more (1SM1/300108) and achieve better academically (1TL/300108). At Academy1 student achievement was high and improving, not only academically. Setting challenging expectations made students work towards higher goals and achieve better, as highlighted by interviewed teachers.

“In the literary magazine, we collect creative writing. We push students to work and submit material” (1TL/300108).

The role of teachers in students' learning and achievement appeared to be central, through motivating students to set challenging expectations. This might have contributed to a high and improving student achievement.

‘All comes down to the teacher to motivate students. It's not supposed to be about our expectations it's the student's expectations.... If the teacher allows an amount of freedom and trust for students, they will work to achieve that trust. I tell my students I can't be with you 24 hours, this is what I expect from you... Basically they live up to my expectations” (1T2/250108).

Student learning was central at the school, as emphasized by the school reform.

‘We are a part of the curriculum reform in Quebec that puts learning as the central thing” (ISM1/300108).

‘Student learning is very important and that the kids are growing in their skills, ability and competency and not that they’re getting 47 or 97 on a test’ (1H/300108).

Student authentic learning entailed a lot of discussion and communication with students. To Starrat (2007:165) authentic learning enables learners to encounter the meanings embedded in the curriculum about the natural, social and cultural worlds they inhabit, and find themselves in and through those encounters.

‘My role as a teacher is to communicate with students. I tell my students I don’t want you to learn this because I say so, but I want you to understand why’ (1T3/290208).

As for school academic achievement, it had improved steadily over the years, which was reflected in school ranking improvement.

‘It’s because of the teaching and students are learning what is supposed to be taught’ (1TL/300108).

4.2.6 What is the role of teacher-leadership in building leadership-capacity?

This section tries to answer research-question five. For Academy1, teacher-leadership seemed to contribute to building leadership-capacity. Teacher-leadership was strong inside departments where teachers participated in leadership activities and in decision-making collectively (1TL/300108; 1H/300108).

The fact that the school was structured around departments appeared to give a lot of leadership tasks to department heads and teachers, in decision-making with respect to day-to-day activities inside their department, especially to teaching and pedagogical responsibilities. English teachers participated in leadership activities, volunteered and initiated activities, as agreed by all interviewees.

‘Teachers participate in leadership activities, especially within our department. I give them leadership roles. When somebody comes and tell me I want to try this method. I tell her try it, then come and tell us about it’ (1TL/300108).

The important role of teachers was highlighted in this statement:

“Teachers are keeping the school running and improving” (1TL/300108).

Teachers participated in planning and in decision-making of their department:

“The department head includes us in the planning for next year. I have the power to make a suggestion and have it implemented” (1T1/250108).

All interviewees agreed that decisions were taken collectively inside departments.

“Decision-making concerning books, the forms taught, we all work on this together” (1TL/300108).

“At the science department, we discuss and we reach an agreement based on the strength of the argument. We try to make sense as a group” (1T3/290208).

Interviewees agreed that for school decisions, the head took the final decision. Teachers were consulted but their opinion may not be taken into account.

‘We may be consulted’ (1TL/300108).

‘It really depends which context you are looking at. If at the level of the school, the head makes the final decision’ (1T3/290208).

The head admitted this fact:

‘With respect to teachers' participation in leadership activities and decision-making at the school, we ask for input. Teachers participate in decision-making with respect to lots of day-to-day stuff in their own department and student life (1H/300108).

Muijs & Harris (2007:112) consider that the school culture, structure and purposive action by the head are key factors that support the development of teacher-leadership.

All interviewees agreed that Academy1 had a collaborative and supportive culture that partly contributed to the development of teacher-leadership through developing collaborative practice among teachers. Teachers supported each other inside departments and in extra curricular work.

‘Overall our school culture is a culture of collaboration’ (1T1/250108).

Externally mandated changes (mainly school reform) were generally enacted collaboratively, which tended to reduce resistance and secure successful implementation.

‘Teachers design the program together, support each other, implement the reform changes together. We try very hard to go along with changes because we work together, it makes things easier and less stressful’ (1TL/300108).

It is suggested that this collaborative culture partly drove self improvement. It appears too that it was a culture of trust because interviewees consistently agreed that there was great autonomy inside departments.

‘The head gives teachers complete freedom and trust to teach. She does not interfere with our English department’ (1T2/250108).

The head admitted that teachers were generally trusted to work freely in their own departments; which tended to encourage the development of teacher-leadership and leadership-capacity.

“I basically presume trust and count on the different groups to be functioning well” (1H/300108).

Academy1 possessed some structural elements that might have helped in developing teacher-leadership and building leadership-capacity. At Academy1, teacher-leadership was manifested through the leadership of others such as mentoring other teachers and sharing knowledge and skills as highlighted by all interviewees. Senior teachers mentored new teachers, teachers mentored weak students.

“There is great deal of mentoring by senior teachers and there is a willingness to ask on the part of younger teachers” (1T2/250108).

“New comers are mentored, so they know what we’re all about” (1SM2/290108).

Sergiovanni (2000:140) consider that most capacity-building strategies in schools target individual teachers. All interviewees agreed that Academy1 was highly active in the professional-development of its teachers. The objective of professional-development was to bring in the new practice that the teacher acquired to classroom and share it with other teachers, for the ultimate objective of improving student learning and performance.

‘Professional-development is seen quiet valuable here, they do encourage it’
(1TL/300108)

‘If they want to attend a conference they can, because if it’s good for them it will turn out to be good for students’ (1H/300108).

Teacher-leadership was also manifested in the weekly department meetings considered as time set aside for teacher-leadership work.

‘For department meetings I try to get them a period during the day where teachers in the same department are free to meet’ (1T3/290208).

Collaboration with teachers in other schools and trying new teaching approaches helped teachers develop their expertise and teaching experiences. Teachers collaborated with QAIS schools. They attended several meetings and workshops on a regular basis.

‘I will be presenting to the springboard conference of language teachers and they want to have people (like me) help other teachers’ (1TL/300108).

At Academy1, the actions of the head is suggested to have had considerable influence over developing teacher-leadership through the trust that she gave to teachers and department

heads. She fully distributed leadership inside departments in relation to the curriculum and pedagogic matters. Inside departments, teachers were encouraged to lead and develop teacher-leadership skills.

‘The head does not interfere with our department. She’s very supportive with new ideas that you want to initiate’ (1T2/250108).

Barriers to teacher-leadership were mainly time and the reluctance of top management to distribute leadership regarding school decisions.

‘It’s lack of time and the major decisions have to be approved by the head’ (1T3/290208).

4.2.7 Discussion

The case-study of Academy1 suggests that the school was a blend of quadrant 3 and 4 (figure 2.1 p.21) with high-skilfulness and moderate-involvement of teachers in the work of leadership. It was a combination of “moving school” with some emerging features of an “improving school”. For Academy1, teacher-leadership seemed to contribute to building leadership-capacity. It was shown that teachers assumed leadership roles and participated in decision-making collectively inside their departments in issues related to teaching and pedagogy. When it came to school wide decisions the head tended to take decisions without proper consultation with teachers. Teacher-leadership seemed strong inside departments but not very explicit at school level. There was a feeling of frustration among teachers because they wanted to bring about more change to the school but they felt they were blocked by the head.

Interviews revealed that Academy1 may have lacked the strategic planning and vision because the head thought that the school was doing fine (thesis p.119). The school values and principles were distributed to teachers who were expected to embrace them (thesis p.119). Teachers inside departments explained how they shared ideas and reflected on teaching practices and students' learning together but they complained that this was not the case at school level during staff meetings (thesis p.116). The head was open to new ideas and innovations, but did not follow up their implementation which made teachers reluctant to innovate and suggest improvements at school level (thesis p.120). Interviewees believed that Academy1 had a culture of collaboration and trust mainly inside departments (thesis p.120). Teachers tended to implement changes collaboratively inside departments (thesis p.121). The role of teachers in students' learning and achievement appeared to be central, through motivating students to set challenging expectations (thesis p.122). This might have ensured a high and improving student achievement. The data suggest that Academy1 seemed to possess some but not all elements of a PLC. Teachers tended to use the external requirements of the reform and implemented them in their own internal improvement processes inside departments collaboratively. There was a continual drive for improvement but it was fragmented with no clear set objectives because the school lacked a long-term vision (thesis p.121). Beside the externally mandated changes, the school appeared to have also internal capacity for improvement. Collaboration in improvement efforts and in adapting to externally mandated changes appeared to be embedded in school culture (thesis p.121), which mainly helped in the development of teacher-leadership through developing collaborative practice among teachers. It is also suggested that this collaborative culture

partly drove self improvement. It appears it was also a culture of trust because interviewees consistently agreed that there was great autonomy inside departments.

One theme emerged from my analysis of Academy1 is that sustained improvement is partly ensured by a collaborative culture. Externally mandated improvements (such as school reform) pushes the school towards improvement, if associated with a collaborative culture, it ensures the successful implementation of change and improvement strategies.

4.3 Academy2 case-study

4.3.1 Context of Academy2

Academy2 was a private English-language school, part of a world-wide school system operated by the Apostles-religious-organization (School-website). The school had a modest two-storey building. The chronic lack of finances has prevented the administration from upgrading the physical facilities: they needed to have a gymnasium, an art and bible centres. From an enrolment of few students at the start of a one-teacher mission school in 1937, the school had in 2008, 236 students, offered Christian education from Kindergarten through grade11. Classes' size averaged 21 students. The tuition fee was around 5,000CAD. Parents' income was around 48,000CAD, an average income bracket. There were 14 highly educated teachers: six held Bachelor degrees, six held Masters and the head, who was appointed four years ago, held a PhD.

The school vision was “to foster an environment of learning that challenges the students to reach their God-given potential to maintain a superior standard of Christian Education”

(School-website). Its mission was “the harmonious development of the mental, physical, social and spiritual faculties of a student in preparation for a life of service now and for eternity. Through a Christ-centred education, it strived to achieve excellence” (Ibid). The school had a strong Christian culture. Teachers shared the same cultural and religious background and went to the same Apostles church. The behaviour of school members was driven by their religious beliefs. The school accepted students from different ethnic, cultural and denominational backgrounds. The school prepared a six-year school wide-improvement action plan necessary for the accreditation by the Apostles K-12 Board of Education that addressed: philosophical foundations, Administration, Staff development, Curriculum & Instruction, Student activities (Academy2 schoolwide improvement Action Plan 2003-2008). There were annual progress reports on plan implementation and an on-site review by a visiting committee in year three to evaluate the written progress reports Academy2 showed significant ranking improvement from 338 (2001-05) to 122 (2004-05) performance rank among Quebec secondary schools (Kozhaya & Cowley 2006). Five interviews were conducted including the head, the VP, the English-department-head and two English teachers. All interviewees were females except for the VP.

4.3.2 How do schools get started on building leadership-capacity?

This section tries to answer research-question one. As shown hereafter, leadership-capacity-building at Academy2 was generally revealed through broadly involving teachers in leadership activities through giving teachers voting rights in school decisions (2H/051207), and taking decisions collectively inside committees (2TL/070208). Leadership-capacity was also enhanced through the skilful participation in the work of

leadership where the head shared common purposes of learning and considered that learning is teaching students for all their lives (2H/051207). To reduce resistance to change, teachers were given a chance to discuss their fears and worries about the change and provide suggestions (2T2/041207).

At Academy2, leadership-capacity seemed developed through the broad involvement of teachers in leadership activities, as evidenced hereafter. At the beginning of every school year, the head invited teachers to volunteer in committees and assume leadership roles. All interviewees explained the voting process. First, teachers decided what committees they wanted to join.

“I present to teachers the committees. I invite them to be part committees and they decide what committees they want to serve” (2H/051207).

Then teachers’ representatives were voted in these committees.

‘Teachers vote for members to be on committees’ (2T2/041207).

Decisions were taken inside committees by voting.

‘I bring ideas from teachers and present them to the committee, and we take the vote’ (2TL/070208).

“Decisions are voted by committee members” (2SM1/041207).

The structure of the school tended to encourage the development of leadership-capacity because teachers were continuously given opportunities to assume leadership roles through

their active participation in school committees. Inside committees, teachers were able to bring about change to school operations.

‘I have modified the way student council works... I made changes in textbooks’
(2TL/070208).

The head worked on encouraging building leadership-capacity. She seemed to empower teachers to act as leaders and participate in leadership activities, as agreed by all interviewees.

‘I’ve been able to do my things my way because of the way the head introduced me’ (2T1/051207).

‘At the beginning of the year we decide with teachers what we need to function in the school and this is how we divide courses’ (2H/051207).

All interviewees confirmed that the head waited for people to volunteer in activities instead of assigning them.

‘If the head is looking for somebody to take care of something, she would ask could somebody be in charge’ (2T1/051207).

All interviewees corroborated that departments were established based on teachers’ suggestions.

“A teacher proposed establishing departments and it was voted and agreed upon”
(2T2/041207).

‘The establishment of departments with department heads is a new leadership responsibility for teachers to assume’ (2H/051207).

The school seemed to be structured to facilitate interaction among school members. All interviewees agreed that interaction occurred in the morning worship and in staff and pedagogic meetings (hereafter, meetings):

‘Every morning we (teachers) start our day with devotion where we interact socially and spiritually. That’s a great time to communicate. We also interact in staffroom and teachers’ meetings’ (2TL/070208).

At Academy2, leadership-capacity appeared developed through the skilful participation of teachers in leadership activities, as evidenced hereafter. The interviews and observations revealed that the head seemed excellent in sharing common purposes of learning with teachers, students and parents. She used school discipline to change the behaviour of students and prepare them for the future. She considered that knowledge can be taught later but discipline was taught for life.

‘There is a reason behind every rule we impose on students. Coming on time to school has the objective of discipline so students do not come late to work. It is also concerned with responsibility learning. These are principles of discipline, not school rules. We are teaching students for all their lives’ (2H/051207).

Interviewed teachers admitted that teachers inside departments worked independently and that sharing between teachers on a daily basis was not a school wide practice.

‘We basically work independently. Each person in his classroom works by himself. We are the boss in our classroom. We don’t work together many in groups (2T2/041207).

The administration tried to encourage teachers to work in groups through establishing departments, but departments were just established in August 2007 (two months before research at Academy2) and the role of department head was not well defined yet.

‘We don’t go through the department head at all. We’re just establishing that. This is the first year we actually going to be a team. We are going to be collaborating’ (2T2/041207).

All interviewees agreed that the major group work and communication, especially listening, was done in meetings where teachers discussed openly problems with their students and asked for suggestions.

‘The staff meeting is where we really communicate. We listen to each others as much as we can and each person makes suggestions. We spend time looking at student names, putting them on probation’ (2T2/041207).

All interviewees agreed that in meetings, teachers and senior management reflected on teaching practices and analysed how things were being done at the school.

‘We talk about whatever is happening in classrooms, we speak about problems with students, what we can do together to help’ (2T2/041207).

‘We look at the school ranking. We say what has been done, what we will do, what’s missing and why the results were like this and we question ourselves’ (2H/051207).

All interviewees agreed that teachers resisted change even if it is externally mandated by the MOE, especially the senior ones, but the head would try to explain to teachers the reason for change and would ask for suggestions.

‘If there is a change the head would discuss it in staff meeting. She would say: here is a copy of the new report card do you have any suggestions. We give our ideas and they are usually taken into consideration’ (2T2/041207).

The head admitted that sometimes change was implemented despite resistance.

‘Teachers resist change and some changes are done despite resistance. In that case you close your mouth and accept that they will not be happy but they have to do it. I say you know this something that now you see not useful, I ask you to do it because you’ll discover that your work is facilitated’ (2H/051207).

4.3.3 What type of leadership builds leadership-capacity?

This section attempts to answer research-question two. As evidenced in the discussion hereafter, the head at Academy2 seemed to possess several characteristics of a capacity-building leader who encouraged building leadership-capacity. Teachers were usually invited to discuss and participate in school decisions through voting (2H/051207). Interviews and observations revealed that the head seemed to create a climate of

enthusiasm (2T2/041207), tended to invite people to be at their most innovative (2T1/051207), and leaned towards empowering and trusting teachers to do their job without interference (2T1/051207). Her leadership may have well been supportive (2T2/041207) and shared (2SM1/041207). There was an open door policy for teachers, students and parents. The relationship between the head and teachers appeared to be based on moral values, a relationship of respect, trust and accountability. In meetings the head tried to use her authority to redistribute power which may have helped in developing a culture of teacher-leadership (2PedM/201107).

Described by interviewees,

“The head is a resourceful person, goal driven, sets high standards for teaching and teachers’ performance” (2TL/070208).

She tended to empower and trust teachers to do their job without interference.

‘So far it’s been really good because I’ve been able to do my things the way I want ... I am really in charge’ (2T1/051207).

She would not assign but invited people to assume leadership roles.

‘When we have meetings, if the head is looking for somebody to take care of something, she would ask if somebody is interested or could be in charge’ (2T1/051207).

During my observation of a pedagogical meeting (2PedM/201107), the head listened carefully and was opened to teachers' suggestions. Decisions were consensual, the head always waited for participants to vote. She was concerned about students and tried to provide them with tutoring by asking teachers to volunteer:

‘Anybody willing to mentor Justin so we can give him a second chance and extend his probation?’

Two teachers proposed help.

It seems that the head created a climate of enthusiasm.

‘I don’t think I need to be here, but I’m here because I love being here’
(2T2/041207).

She was inclined towards inviting teachers to participate in decisions through voting.

‘When she says I have an idea, we talk about it and vote. We make decisions together’ (2T2/041207).

‘When there are raising funds projects such as the school bus, I present the idea to teachers and each teacher gives an input and they vote’ (2H/051207).

All Interviewees agreed that the head generally listened to teachers' suggestions and took them into account when taking a decision.

‘The head always asks us for every decision. She lets everybody give their ideas and then she agrees with the majority’ (2T1/051207).

“We are open to all suggestions” (2H/051207).

Her leadership appeared to be supportive,

‘She always goes out of her way to try to help us and give us whatever we need to help students (2T2/041207).

‘There are certain tasks that are completely the responsibility of the VP but I support him. If there is any problem I talk to him what is happening here, how can I help?’ (2H/051207).

And shared

‘If there is a change the head would do the preliminary and discuss it in the staff meeting’ (2T2/041207)

‘She shares ideas and vision’ (2SM1/041207).

She tended to encourage teachers to be innovative.

‘With whatever limitations she faces she tries to push teachers to be creative and innovative’ (2T1/051207).

Everybody agreed that ‘the head is very available. Her door is always opened’ (2T1/051207).

‘My door is always open to any student willing to say something or ask for something. If a parent comes without an appointment, and I’m free I sit with them’ (2H/051207)

She believed that ‘Leadership by example is one of our standards of our international chain of Schools’ (2SM1/041207) and considered that ‘teachers must set the example at all times in everything’ (2H/051207).

She sets ‘very high standards for teaching academic excellence’ (2SM1/041207), as she explained to teachers: “We are willing to excel, if we don’t have a vision, whatever we do is nonsense” (2H/051207). She seemed to be clear about the school core values based around Christian values which tended to make her value driven with a clear moral purpose. She believed that: ‘We are accountable to God’ (2H/051207). However, one teacher complained that ‘the head sometimes skips some important administrative layers. Some things come back to us without giving us a chance to have an input (2TL/070208).

The head somehow agreed by saying:

‘Sometimes when I listen to them, and I see there is no unity in what they suggest. I say well this is what we are going to do’ (2H/051207).

The head communicated with teachers when she felt they thought she was being autocratic and secured their acceptance.

“I explain to teachers it’s not what you or I want; it’s what’s best for the student” (2H/051207).

During an observation of a staff meeting (2STM/121107) the head used her authority to redistribute power which might have helped in the development of a culture of teacher-

leadership. She worked with all teachers to arrive at and implement school decisions. Examples of strategies used by the head to enhance leadership-capacity:

The head did not go fast in discussions, always asked if somebody wanted to add something:

“Any comments?”

She waited for teachers to give their opinion and then they voted on decisions concerning students’ probations:

“Can we give him a last chance?” Teachers voted.

She always posed open ended questions about recommendation for action.

“Anybody willing to mentor Justin so we can give him a second chance?”

4.3.4 How does building leadership-capacity sustain school-improvement?

The following section answers research-question three. For Academy2, part of building leadership-capacity was to develop a learning cycle (Lambert et al 1996:66) and a culture of enquiry (Harris & Lambert 2003:94) that may have provided teachers with information and knowledge necessary for them to make shared decisions and improve their practice. This knowledge was mainly acquired through collective reflection, enquiry, dialogue and question posing as part of the school daily patterns (2T1/051207). For Academy2, collaboration among school members was basically done at school level, since teachers shared the same cultural values and felt connected to the same church family. Teachers

were also broadly involved in school activities because they felt that the school was a continuation of their informal relationship established outside the school being members of the same Apostles church (2T2/041207). Academy2 was fundamentally an improving school that possessed many elements of a PLC. It was a school with continual (external and internal) drive for improvement and teachers were generally involved in change and development (2TL/070208; 2H/051207).

All interviewees agreed that most elements of a learning cycle were present at Academy2 where teachers shared ideas and reflected on their teaching practices. Reflection was mainly done in staff and pedagogical meetings.

“Around exam time, we look at the results and we reflect on what needs to be done, how we can improve” (2T1/051207).

All interviewees confirmed that teachers joined together in meetings to help understand and resolve the school and students problems. They shared ideas on how situations can be analyzed and the different strategies that might be used.

‘As a staff we meet and talk about whatever is happening in classrooms, we speak about problems with students, what we can do together to help’ (2T2/041207).

There was also question posing with the objective to solve school problems:

‘We discuss a lot and ask each others some of questions’ (2T1/051207).

‘We look at Palmares at Quebec. We say what’s missing and why the results were like this and we question ourselves’ (2H/051207).

Group reflection was important to reach objective solution to problems:

‘If I come to the head and say Mary is not doing well, each person has his own personal view. But in a public forum with many teachers who teach this child it becomes more objective’ (2T2/041207).

All interviewees agreed that teachers had access to information used to inform decisions and teaching practices from several sources.

‘Teachers are constantly going to schools and being updated. We just went to the teachers’ convention. Teachers get information on how things are done at other schools’ (2SM1/041207).

Information was disseminated usually in staff meetings.

‘If two teachers are sent to attend a seminar, once they come back they prepare a presentation during the closest staff meeting’ (2H/051207).

At Academy2, teachers were also broadly involved in school activities because they felt that the school was a continuation of their external relationship established outside the school by being members of the same Apostles church. The school culture was based on Christian values and teachers considered themselves part of the same family.

“As teachers we are professionals but we are like family. We go to the same church we see each other on Saturday in the Church” (2T2/041207).

All interviewees agreed that teachers were broadly involved in school activities and performed multiple tasks beyond their classroom responsibilities, which might have enhanced their involvement in the work of leadership.

‘I am all rounded. I do editing for books, letters for teachers who ask me, started a monthly newspaper “Student Times”. I am the head sponsor for student council. I am member in several committees’ (2TL/070208).

The culture of Academy2 was more likely self renewing and responsive to improvement efforts because it was a culture of collaboration, as acknowledged by all interviewees.

‘Teachers are allowed to collaborate, and everything that is going on in the school we are part of it’ (2T2/041207).

Except for one teacher:

‘At the local level we network and collaborate. At the administrative level we are told to do this and that. I would like to see less vertical and more collaboration’ (2TL/070208).

In staff meetings teachers made sure to set time aside to share what was happening in classes.

‘Meetings are a good time where teachers can talk about what’s going on in their class and how you get a sense of what’s happening in the school’ (2T1/051207)

All interviewees admitted that the sharing and exchanging of ideas was done mainly in staff meetings but not inside departments.

‘I don’t coordinate with other teachers. So far, I’ve been doing my own thing. We haven’t been discussing what she was doing because it’s really difficult’ (2T1/051207).

There was a promise of collaboration once departments became well established.

‘We basically work independently. This is the first year that we had an English department. This year for sure we are going to be collaborating’ (2T2/041207).

Academy2 tended to possess many elements of a PLC (Harris & Muijs 2005:51; Stoll et al. 2006:226-7). All interviewees agreed that the leadership of the head was supportive.

‘The administration supports you; even if you have problems with parents’ (2T2/041207).

‘There are certain tasks that are completely the responsibility of the VP but I support him and if there is any problem I talk to him, how can I help’ (2H/051207) and shared.

‘The head always asks us for every decision she usually takes. She lets everybody give their ideas and then she agrees with the majority’ (2T1/051207).

Interviewees revealed that teachers participated in decision-making indirectly through voting for teachers' representatives as committee members and directly by voting inside meetings.

‘There is the voting process. Anything done is voted and it is at different levels’
(2H/051207)

“In the staff meeting, when we get together we do take decisions” (2T2/041207)

As a result there seemed to be a collaborative teamwork in decision-making:

‘It’s not so much at the end of the day that the head takes her own decision, it would be the decision that everybody came by through a consensus’ (2T2/041207).

One teacher disagreed with the claim that teachers at Academy2 worked collaboratively:

‘Most of our planning goes in our staff meeting, and then we go back to the vertical relationship. Other things come back to us without giving us a chance to have an input’ (2TL/070208)

All interviewees agreed that school members are strongly connected because they had the same religious and cultural background and shared the same Christian values, which reflected eventually on the collaborative processes inside the school as will be shown.

“All the teachers have the same Apostles values” (2T1/051207).

“All of us are Apostles and we have the same philosophy” (2H/051207).

All interviewees confirmed that the school vision and mission were developed collectively by school members. They were reviewed on a regular basis to meet the changing needs of students and constituency.

“Mission and vision was built by altogether. From time to time we revise them” (2H/051207).

“We met and developed the mission statement” (2SM1/041207).

Teachers tended to share the same vision of success and excellence.

“Everybody wants success it’s a vision of success” (2TL/070208).

“We have all the same goal of excellence” (2H/051207).

Collective inquiry and creativity appeared to be present at the school but much less inside departments because teachers worked independently inside their classroom. Teachers were encouraged to innovate and be creative. This fact was agreed upon by all interviewees.

“We’re always looking for innovative ideas. We can be as creative as we can be, but not collectively. Everything around here is done together, except for what goes on in your particular classroom’ (2T2/041207).

Collaborative teams seemed to be present at school level and were being established inside departments.

“Everything around here is done together” (2T2/041207)

“The fact that there are departments now is teamwork” (2H/051207).

Except for one teacher:

‘At the local level we network and collaborate. At the administrative level we are told to do this and that’ (2TL/070208).

At Academy2 there were continual external and internal drives for improvement. Academy2 was involved in self-regulated self-renewal and selected carefully areas for development and change through its six-year action plan that was externally mandated for the accreditation by the Apostles K-12 Board of Education. In the plan they developed several objectives, and action steps to achieve them, they specified the person responsible and estimated time and costs for implementation (Academy2 schoolwide-improvement-Action-Plan 2003-2008). There were annual progress reports and an on-site review by a visiting committee in year three to evaluate the implementation of the plan (Visiting-committee-report May 2006). The plan appeared to constitute a continual external drive for improvement and teachers were involved in change and development.

The improvement capacity at the school was partly built by improving the performance of teachers through continuous investment in their professional-development. All interviewees stressed that teachers continuously thrived to take courses, attend seminars, take more degrees, and make the required readings for the Apostles certifications.

“Teachers are always being encouraged to go and upgrade and everything is paid for” (2T1/051207).

Teachers tended to use the acquired knowledge to improve their teaching practices.

‘We try as much as possible to bring in the new practices that we acquire to see how best we can help our students’ (2T2/041207).

The preparation and execution of the six-year action plan was compelling evidence that the school had a strategic, long-term vision and continuously worked on improving its operations, performance and mission, still remembering that this improvement was externally mandated.

Improvement also may have been internally driven because it was part of a culture of excellence of the school as agreed by all interviewees.

‘We received an award of excellence in teaching’ (2TL/070208).

‘Excellence in teaching has to be part of the results. There are certain steps for excellence, such as the year planning has to be very well done, such as the lesson plans’ (2H/051207).

At Academy2, it was shown that there was internal capacity for improvement. Interviewees agreed that improvement was part of the daily practice of teachers.

“We’re always trying to find ways to improve ourselves, to improve what we teach and to improve our students. That’s what we are about as a school” (2TL/070208).

All these efforts were mainly directed to improve student learning and performance.

‘We take students in grade 7 who cannot read and by the time they finish grade 7 many of them can read’ (2T2/041207).

4.3.5 What is the effect of leadership-capacity on student development and achievement?

This section tries to answer research-question four. For Academy2, capacity was pictured as the ability to enable students to reach higher standards (2TL/070208), and equip them academically, spiritually with a strong personality and make them capable of facing life challenges (2H/051207). Students seemed empowered to participate in their own learning journey and develop their critical minds (2STL/070208). All might have been done with the objective of improving student learning and performance and developing them as whole human beings (2TL/070208).

Academy2 was not highly ranked because of the quality of students as agreed by all interviewees. The school accepted all applicants because of its Christian culture. This doubled the effort of teaching.

‘We accept students with low marks. This is because Apostles culture, if somebody needs our help we cannot say no. This affects the school level and makes teachers work much harder with students’ (2T1/051207).

‘Many students who might not be successful in other institutions are accepted with all the difficulties associated with that’ (2SM1/041207).

Despite these difficulties, the administration and teachers tried to foster an environment of learning that challenged students to reach their highest potential, given their background:

‘We are working against extreme odds, and we bring students up to great heights’ (2TL/070208).

‘We have the desire for teachers’ and students’ success as high as possible given the quality of the students that we have’ (2H/051207).

Interviewed teachers admitted that the head set challenging expectations:

‘She has very high standards for teaching academic excellence’ (2SM1/041207).

Because the school was about success:

‘We are about success’ (2T2/041207).

The head believed that teaching was not only giving students academic knowledge, but also principles of life.

‘The strategy of the school is to guide students in all areas of their life. We train the mental, physical, social, spiritual human being’ (2SM1/041207).

‘Teaching is not only giving students knowledge, but also principles of life and values; because the knowledge they will forget but values and principles stay in their minds’ (2H/051207).

During a class observation, the teacher did not use lecturing. She invited students to come up with ideas and research answers to their questions. She taught them to develop critical thinking by asking them to evaluate each others’ presentations (2STL/070208). This classroom observation gave the impression that some teachers empowered students to lead their own learning journey and develop their critical minds, as students were involved in peer and teacher evaluation.

These strategies might have contributed to the improvement of the school's academic achievement, reflected in the school ranking improvement.

‘We have good and remarkable students. Our students go to McGill, and do pre-med’ (2TL/070208).

4.3.6 What is the role of teacher-leadership in building leadership-capacity?

This section attempts to answer research-question five. For Academy2, teacher-leadership was the most distinguishing characteristic. Teacher leadership was partly manifested through teachers' participation in decision-making, represented in their voting power (2T2/041207). Leadership was broadly and skilfully distributed at the school because every teacher had a voice, which tended to build leadership-capacity (2SM1/041207).

All interviewees agreed, except for one, that teachers at Academy2 participated in leadership activities, volunteered and initiated activities. Teachers' leadership activities were manifested inside and outside their classroom where they contributed to the teaching community and influenced others towards change and improved educational practice. Some examples of leadership activities:

“We are the boss in our classroom” (2T2/041207).

“I have modified the way student council works and made changes in textbooks” (2TL/070208).

Participation in leadership activities was part of the teachers' daily routine:

“Everything that is going on in the school we are part of it” (2T2/041207)

However, one teacher disagreed:

‘Teachers are willing to assume leadership roles but the structure of the school does not lend itself. I do it in my class with my students’ (2TL/070208).

All interviewees agreed that teachers participated in decision-making because they elected their representatives in committees. Decisions were voted inside committees. Consequently, every teacher was expected to have a voice in decision-making.

“We have different committees where different teachers over the years participate. We, the teachers, are the ones who vote for members to be on committees. We are given the opportunity to go at a higher level to make decisions of the school” (2T2/041207)

An example of how decisions were taken collectively:

‘If the head has an idea, we talk about it and collaborate on it and then we vote. We make the decisions together’ (2T2/041207).

Most interviewees admitted that there was generally collaborative teamwork in decision-making.

“All teachers participate in the decision concerning putting a student on probation” (2SM1/041207).

One teacher was complaining that teachers did not participate in all school decisions:

‘Other things come back to us without giving us a chance to have an input’ (2TL/070208).

Another teacher clarified:

‘Sometimes the head comes and say this is my decision, but for the most part she is open to our opinion because we are with the students. She usually brings things to us if she has an idea and asks for our opinion’ (2T1/051207).

Some teachers seemed enthusiastic about this fact as expressed by one teacher:

‘I like to work here because you really get the chance to be part of things of planning and decision’ (2T2/041207).

The school culture, structure and purposive action by the head are considered by Muijs & Harris (2007:112) main factors that support the development of teacher-leadership.

At Academy2, all teachers belonged to the same church or cultural group, which seemed to have strongly affected the culture inside the school and made it highly collaborative:

‘All teachers are members in Apostles Church. It’s in the culture ... I attend church with several members of the school... It is so much collaborative ... that it reflects on our work in school. As teachers we are professionals but we are like family. We go to the same church; we see each others on Saturday in the Church, and in concerts’ (2T2/041207).

Collaboration among teachers outside the school might have helped them construct their collaboration inside:

“Teachers are allowed to collaborate, and everything that is going on in the school we are part of it” (2T1/051207).

All interviewees agreed that teachers had common and shared norms and values to encourage teachers to innovate and lead, which might have created a culture of innovation.

“We’re always looking for innovative ideas” (2T2/041207).

It seemed to be a culture of trust and mutual respect.

“Everything is based on respect. Teachers respect each other” (2TL/070208).

Academy2 structure might have encouraged the development of teacher-leadership. Leadership-capacity was mainly manifested in teacher’s leadership activities such as mentoring as a schoolwide practice as agreed by all interviewees. Teachers regularly assisted students with tutorials outside class time:

‘We have teachers who give up their time and do special tutoring classes for children who need special help in certain areas’ (2T2/041207).

Strong students mentored weak students.

‘I assigned three brilliant students to mentor other weak students. The students do the mentoring willingly’ (2TL/070208).

Senior teachers mentored new teachers,

‘Department heads mentor the teachers because they have been for a long time with the school’ (2SM1/041207).

All interviewees agreed that the administration provided opportunities and incentives for teachers’ professional-development.

‘We have in service training and we attend teachers’ convention. They also encourage us to take courses outside the school and they pay for them’ (2T2/041207).

The objective was to bring in the new practice that teachers acquired to classroom, continuous improvement was the ultimate goal.

“We try as much as possible to bring in the new practices that we acquire” (2T2/041207).

‘Teachers try to take actions and apply what they learned’ (2SM1/041207).

This was mainly reflected on the teaching practices of teachers:

“We received an award of excellence in teaching” (2TL/070208).

Professional-development is suggested to have helped in building leadership-capacity because it was used to foster collaboration among teachers, once a teacher attended a workshop, he/she prepared a presentation in the staff meeting. In those meetings teachers

shared good practice and learned together, which might have increased the possibility of securing better quality teaching.

Regular staff and pedagogical meetings were considered as time set aside for teacher-leadership work. The observations of those meetings revealed that they usually allowed for fast follow-up on raised issues and continuous communication where collaborative work, planning together, and building teacher networks took place.

All interviewees admitted that the head was very supportive for teachers. She supported them with the higher organization, sent them to attend courses to develop their skills, and tried to get them all the necessary equipments for their work.

“Whatever materials we need we can go and ask her. She really does work hard to make things happen” (2T1/051207).

Also interviewed teachers described the head as being great in communicating with teachers and explaining the reason for decisions. She communicated all the news to teachers and asked for input and suggestions.

“Whatever she does, the head plans, she brings up things to teachers and asks them to provide input. Before the implementation of any plan, it is brought to teachers” (2SM1/041207).

4.3.7 Discussion

The case-study of Academy2 suggests that it was an “improving school” aligned with Quadrant(4) (figure 2.1 p.21), with high-skilfulness and high-involvement. The head seemed to possess several characteristics of a capacity-building leader who encouraged building leadership-capacity (Thesis p.136). Her leadership appeared to be supportive and shared (Thesis p.139). Teacher leadership was partly manifested through teachers’ participation in decision-making, represented in their voting power. Decisions were voted inside committees (Thesis p.132). Teachers’ leadership activities were manifested inside and outside their classroom where they contributed to the teaching community and influence others towards change and improved educational practice (Thesis p.152). The school vision and mission were developed collectively by school members (Thesis p.146-7). Group reflection was commonly practiced in meetings, leading to objective solutions to problems (Thesis p.143). The head tended to encourage teachers to find innovative solutions given the limited resources (Thesis p.139). Collaborative teams seemed to be present at the school and were being established inside departments (Thesis p.144). Students seemed to be empowered to lead their learning journey and develop their critical minds. These strategies might have contributed to the improvement of the school’s academic achievement, reflected in school ranking improvements (Thesis p.152).

Academy2 tended to possess many elements of a PLC. There were continual external and internal drives for improvement. The school was involved in self-regulated self-renewal and selected carefully areas for development and change through its six-year action plan that was externally mandated for the accreditation by the Apostles K-12 Board of

Education. The plan appeared to constitute a continual external drive for improvement. Improvement also may have been internally driven because it was part of a culture of excellence of the school and it seemed to have been daily practiced by teachers with the objective to improve student learning and performance (Thesis p.148). There was a focus on adult learning through investing in teachers' professional-development (Thesis p.148). Academy2 improvement is expected to be sustained because it's externally mandated and updated by its long-term improvement plan and internally generated by its internal culture of excellence (thesis p.149).

The research at Academy3 suggests two themes highlighting building the capacity for school improvement requires internal and external forces of change and development:

First, the school belonged to the greater Apostles organization and the presence of an improvement action plan that is continuously updated ensured the sustainability of the improvement momentum. Improvement was externally mandated by the MOE and by the Apostles organization (two external agencies).

Second, connectedness between teachers through their belonging to the same church increased the internal collaboration among school members and also increased their broad involvement in school activities.

4.4 Academy3 case-study

4.4.1 Context of Academy3

Academy3 was a private English-language school, founded, owned and operated by its school director since 1978. The school was an elegant three-story building including

Music/Art room, library, computer and Science labs, and a newly renovated cafeteria. The school had small classes 10-to-15 students. It had 170 students in 2008. The tuition fee was 13,500CAD. Parents' income was around 87,000CAD, a high income bracket. There were 20 teachers. The senior management team comprised the director, the head and the general manager (GM). The director was in charge of the business aspect including finance, school promotion and new students' and teachers' admission. The head, a newly appointed retired administrator, ran the daily operations and was in direct contact with teachers and students.

Academy3 was characterised by comprehensive, individualised learning with custom-tailored programs based on students' needs, especially for learning disabled and international students. It provided a college preparatory program for students of average to superior intelligence with learning disabilities including dyslexia and attention deficit disorders representing 20% of student population. The services included small class sizes, Individualized-Education-Program (IEP), in-house tutorial services, and a special education consultant for parents and students. The school also offered a home-stay, guardianship and language programs for international students. Academy3 ranking improved slightly from 282 (2001-05) to 264 (2004-05) (Kozhaya & Cowley 2006). Five interviews were conducted including the director, the head, math department head and two math teachers. All interviewees were females except for the head.

4.4.2 How do schools get started on building leadership-capacity?

This section tries to answer research-question one. As evidenced hereafter, the structure of Academy3 seemed not to encourage the development of leadership-capacity because

teachers did not appear to be broadly and skilfully involved in leadership activities. Interaction seemed not facilitated among school members (3T1/281107). These appeared justified by the fact that teachers did not have continuous presence in school activities (3D/201107). Teachers actually did not meet regularly, which may have affected negatively the communication among teachers and their reflection together (3T1/281107). Interviews and observations suggested that there was environment of distrust among school members which may have lead to poor communication and collaboration (3T2/051207; 3H/071107). Since teachers were not active partners in change management and implementation, resistance to change appeared very high (3T1/281107; 3D/201107).

Teachers seemed not broadly involved in leadership activities as evidenced hereafter. The director admitted that she established committees and the head supervised them.

‘I established the committees, now they are supervised by the head’ (3D/201107).

There was no mention of how decisions were taken inside committees.

All interviewees agreed that most interaction among teachers was informal:

‘We feel free to contact each other for any situation without waiting for a regular meeting’ (3T1/281107).

‘The size of the school lends itself to interaction. A lot of informal discussions happen at the photocopy, the water fountain’ (3D/201107).

However, the school structure may have made interaction more difficult because there was no teacher presence after classes.

‘Teachers when they’re not teaching they don’t have to be in the building. This is for financial reasons because we pay less than the scale, so teachers see that as a perk and are willing to do it’ (3D/201107).

All interviewees agreed that department meetings were rare. Interaction among teachers in the same department was minimal. This process transformed the school into an isolated work environment for teachers, which may have affected negatively the teacher involvement in the work of leadership.

‘Regular meetings between teachers and department heads are not many. There is no interference from the department head with daily activities. Everybody is isolated in his own work’ (3T1/281107).

The head admitted this weakness but there was no effort on improving the situation.

‘I was hoping that they would meet often by themselves. This did not happen because once people are teaching and running a tight schedule, it’s very hard for them to meet. It’s a real problem and I don’t know what the answer is’ (3H/071107).

To improve interaction among school members, the administration decided to hold weekly staff meetings:

‘To improve interaction we decided to make Tuesdays as a staff meeting day’ (3H/071107).

However, as will be shown later, staff meetings were formal one way communication.

All interviewees agreed that the opportunities for teachers to participate in leadership activities were related to student activities:

‘All extracurricular activities are in the hands of teachers’ (3T1/281107).

One teacher and two administrators admitted that teachers rarely assumed leadership roles not only because the administration did not distribute leadership but also because teachers were not willing to participate when invited.

‘Rarely teachers assume leadership roles. The head asks teachers if they want to be responsible for an activity but he doesn’t get much response’ (3T2/051207).

‘I can’t say I give teachers responsibility, we tried it in the past and it hasn’t been that successful. Teachers have not shown interest in leadership activities’ (3D/201107).

Teachers appeared not to participate skilfully in leadership activities as revealed here below. The administration usually shared common purposes of learning with teachers mainly with respect to learning disabled students in staff meetings:

‘We have many learning disabled students. We often address that issue in staff meetings’ (3H/071107).

All interviewed teachers and administrators except for the department head agreed that teachers worked independently and not in groups.

‘I don’t see much group processes and collaboration between teachers even when they are teaching the same course, except when it comes to exam time’ (3T1/281107).

The director and head admitted this fact, but seemed helpless because they would have to provide more time for teachers to meet:

‘It’s not strength of the school for teachers working together’ (3D/201107).

‘We don’t have teams in the school. It’s one of our weak points. I want departments to meet and do some sharing. But I have to provide more time and that’s impossible’ (3H/071107).

Communication appeared free downward but not upward, as witnessed in the staff meeting observation. In this meeting, listening and questioning were very frequent, especially questions addressed from senior management to specific teachers. They never asked teachers if they needed to add something. The meeting was one way communication where the director and the head alternated giving instructions.

“Do not discuss class issues with parents, only with us” (3STM/141107).

All interviewed teachers agreed that communication between teachers was not high. Teachers did not feel the need to communicate. They were afraid to communicate their problems because there was no mutual trust.

‘This interview made me realize how much teachers do not communicate. We don’t feel the need. We do all the things and we’re just happy with it. If something is

wrong with you you're afraid to tell your colleagues because it's going fine for them, and you're scared they would say what's your problem' (3T2/051207).

Interviewed teachers agreed that reflection on teaching practices was not frequent among teachers.

'Not too frequently but we do whenever we feel the need for modifications' (3T1/281107).

Reflection was mainly done between senior management members.

'I do a lot of reflection with the GM and the director. We will often say: How did that go, could we have done anything better?' (3H/071107).

The head admitted that teachers were not included because senior management members did not trust that teachers were saying the truth because upward communication was not free.

'We don't ask teachers what do you think, because they're looking at us in a different way. Yes upward communication. Are they going to tell me what I want them to tell me?' (3H/071107).

This communication barrier seemed to be caused by the administration. Teachers were threatened if they showed resistance.

'We took a drastic action. We called him and said: look, if you don't agree with our policies, we think you don't want to work here. Since then he's much better.

Teachers don't drive the policy though. The change would happen, regardless of them' (3D/201107).

Change (whether internally or externally mandated) was usually initiated by top management without consultation with teachers. They were just informed about the change:

'We had changes in the report cards for grades 7 and 8. We had a staff meeting and we were informed about the changes and were given details about what is expected of us and I managed alone' (3T1/281107).

Q: When you made the change did you allow teachers to participate in setting it?

The head just said: "No" (3H/071107).

This might have led to a strong resistance among teachers.

'There's huge resistance to change as you noticed in the staff meeting' (3D/201107).

Trying to justify why teachers resisted change:

'Most teachers stick to their own habits and change means more work and they are already overwhelmed' (3T2/051207).

'Teachers like what they're doing and they don't want to change' (3D/201107).

Change was usually implemented despite teachers' resistance.

'Once a decision is made we're going to go through with it. We're not going to delay it because there was some resistance' (3H/071107).

Teachers felt offended once change was imposed:

‘Teachers take it personal if you suggest something new. They would say: are you suggesting I am not doing a good job?’ (3T2/051207).

Teachers tended to implement change in isolation and not collaboratively. They were usually checked and supported by the head:

‘I wanted all teachers to use the computerized marking books. There was great resistance because teachers were afraid of technology. I sat with every teacher and helped them put their first grade. Then, I left them on their own’ (3H/071107).

All teachers agreed that change was implemented by teachers in isolation but they seemed to like it this way.

‘I just implement the change by myself and I’m very happy with the way it goes’ (3T2/051207).

4.4.3 What type of leadership builds leadership-capacity?

This section attempts to answer research-question two. At Academy3, the leadership of senior management, as revealed in interviews and observations hereafter, tried to maintain dependent relationships with teachers and subsequently appeared as an inhibitor to building leadership-capacity. Their philosophy about the role of teachers is suggested to affect negatively the leadership-capacity of the school. It was shown that the head was not successful in building positive relationships among teachers and in attending to the emotional, motivational life of the organization. The leadership of Academy3 was shared

between the director and the head and both positions were shown to influence the school leadership-capacity.

The director admitted that she distributed leadership to senior management team but not to teachers.

‘My leadership is in terms of key people like the head and the GM, department heads and teachers to a lesser extent’ (3D/201107).

Describing her leadership:

‘I collaborate to come to a decision. But I take the final decision’ (3D/201107).

The head agreed:

‘The director is the owner and takes the final decisions’ (3H/071107).

The director acknowledged that she was focused on students at the expense of teachers:

‘My particular interest is that every student has a performance file. The head takes care of teachers in developing leadership roles. This is not my particular strength’ (3D/201107).

She expressed that her philosophy about teachers was that their leadership was restricted to their classroom. She seemed not to believe in the benefit of involving teachers in leadership activities outside their classroom:

‘My way of thinking is that the teachers’ job is to really perform in the classroom. I see them as kind of pre-Madonna with their own classroom. Why try to get them do things that in the end might be ineffective’ (3D/201107).

The director’s philosophy and the resulting work norms and habits were suggested to create a climate not conducive to change and development, because teachers became resistant to change.

‘The important thing is that teachers are performing in the classroom and that they have the energy and feels good about their job. It developed over time that teachers haven’t to stay in the school if they are not teaching. The downside is that there is a kind of resistance to staying late or doing extra work’ (3D/201107).

Interviewed teachers agreed that there was a psychological barrier between teachers and the Director, which may have worked against leadership-capacity:

‘Teachers are generally intimidated by the director. I’m describing what I see in staff meetings. In our job we are used to talk to people below us (students), we’re not used to talk to our boss’ (3T2/051207).

As for the head, he admitted that he listened to suggestions but tended to take the final decisions and provided teachers with the necessary support to implement them.

‘At the end of the day the head makes the decisions but he is very cooperative’ (3T2/051207).

All interviewees agreed that teachers were consulted but the head along with the director took the final decision.

‘I want teachers to feel consulted. It doesn’t mean I’m going to go with what they say. I’m certainly going to try to go with what I think it’s going to work for the school’ (3H/071107).

Described by teachers:

“He is a very collaborative head” (3T2/051207).

He even saw himself as collaborative.

“I always see myself as a collaborative head” (3H/071107).

He treated teachers like students whose work needed to be supervised and corrected.

“Pass by my office at your convenience, I will look at your mark books, we discuss it and I will give comments” (3STM/141107 p.10).

His leadership seemed supportive but there was no indication that his leadership was shared:

“When a teacher is sick I am happy to take over their class. I feel strongly that a school is the teacher. It’s the teachers that make the school work and I have to support them a 150%. I really believe in support for staff” (3H/071107).

Interviewed teachers asserted that he was open to suggestions and new ideas.

“We are very comfortable at bouncing ideas off him, and seeing what he says about things. He’s very open minded, ready to try new things” (3T2/051207).

An observation of a staff meeting (3STM/14110) gave the following impressions. The meeting was run by the head who used one way communication. He used his authority to give teachers instructions and not to redistribute power thus inhibiting the development of teacher-leadership. The director sometimes interfered to give instructions. There was no dialogue in the meeting.

‘If a student fails with one subject, the teacher must fill a computer generated request for parent interview’ (3STM/14110).

In this meeting, the head informed teachers about decisions already taken by the administration, for them to implement. Several strategies were used by the head that encouraged the development of dependent relationships. The head went fast in discussions. He was trying to finish the agenda so teachers would leave at 3:30 p.m. He never asked if someone wanted to add something.

“Some of my strategies are to have an agenda and keep it moving quickly”
(3STM/14110).

Open ended questions were rare. The only questions addressed were directed towards specific teachers concerning particular students and teachers’ suggestions to the TAG.

“Any suggestions you might have with respect to TAG group, I am opened”
(3STM/14110).

4.4.4 How does building leadership-capacity sustain school-improvement?

The following section answers research-question three. It appears that Academy3 may have failed to develop a learning cycle (Lambert et al 1996:66) and a culture of enquiry (Harris & Lambert 2003:94) because collective reflection, enquiry, dialogue and question posing, seemed absent among school members (3STM/14110; 3H/071107). Interviews revealed that teachers tended to work in isolation (3T2/051207; 3TL/281107) which diminished their chances for acquiring information and knowledge necessary for them to make shared decisions and improve their practice. Teachers tended to become less creative due to the lack of group discussions (3H/071107) that might have triggered their creative thinking. Improvement ideas appeared less frequent. School members admitted indirectly that they did not trust each other (3T2/051207) in order to collaborate, share knowledge, and suggest innovative ideas. As a result, it was very difficult for Academy3 to have high leadership-capacity especially that it did not possess most of the elements of a PLC.

Most elements of a learning cycle were not displayed at Academy3. Teachers appeared not to share ideas nor reflect about teaching practices and students' learning. They seemed not to work in groups, but most certainly in isolation. Interviewed teachers and administrators agreed on this fact.

‘I don’t see much group processes here. I don’t see a lot of collaboration between teachers even when they are teaching the same course’ (3T1/281107).

‘We don’t actually have teams in the school. In fact, it’s one of our weak points’ (3H/071107).

The director did not believe in action learning, in teachers learning from each others in groups:

‘I think it’s through the discussion of particular students a lot of learning happens. You can’t do it much in a meeting but you can do it on individual basis’ (3D/201107).

The result was that instead of learning from each others, teachers competed with each other:

‘I said, guys we are not here to compete, we’re here to develop’ (3T1/281107).

The main group meetings were staff meetings and department meetings were very rare.

‘We never had a formal department meeting with written minutes. There are department meetings every now and then’ (3T2/051207).

‘Once people are teaching and running a very tight schedule, it’s very hard for them to organize meetings’ (3H/071107).

Staff meetings as described before were one way communication. Reflection, enquiry, dialogue, question posing were not really part of the patterns in staff meetings. These facts diminish the possibility of having action learning for people to share time for dialogue and reflection, to share ideas and learn from each others. All interviewees agreed that, on a daily basis teachers reflected on student work in isolation and not in groups.

‘We need to analyze low classes because if they are not working, we have to find a way to make these kids able to learn. I analyze alone’ (3TL/281107).

The lack of continuous presence of teachers in the school definitely had drastic consequences on the school operations. Teachers were not broadly involved in school activities. They just gave their class and left. They seemed not to perform tasks beyond their classroom responsibilities, which certainly have reduced their involvement in the work of leadership.

‘There is the problem of presence. We don’t have teacher presence in school when they are not teaching. If I want to see a teacher in the last period he might already left. That’s a certain barrier’ (3H/071107).

The culture of Academy3 appeared not to be a culture of collaboration. This lack of collaborative practice was admitted by teachers and senior management.

‘We do our own things. We don’t work with each other; we work with students. In my department they don’t know what I’m doing and I don’t talk to the department head very much’ (3T2/051207).

‘It’s not a strength of the school for teachers working together in the everyday process (3D/201107).

Teachers mainly collaborated in extra curricular activities:

‘Collaborative teamwork goes with the activities not with academics’ (3T1/281107).

Since staff meetings were one way communication and department meetings were rare, teachers were not given the chance and seem not to like sharing what was going inside their classes.

‘In staff meetings, we don’t discuss what’s going on in classrooms. Teachers get very offended if you question them what’s happening in their lessons. They take it very personal. Lesson plan, teaching strategy, and how to deal with discipline are very personal’ (3T2/051207).

Consequently, it is suggested that collaboration was difficult inside departments and at school level.

Nevertheless, there may have been some informal sharing based on teachers’ personal relationships:

‘I have an excellent teacher who teaches the same level as I do. I interact with her more than the department head. This interaction is based on personal relationship’ (3T1/281107).

‘A lot of the discussions happen at the photocopy, the water fountain, having a coffee together. It tends to be very informal’ (3D/201107).

Teachers seemed to prefer working in isolation because they felt more secure. This might be due to a lack of trust among teachers.

‘I do my own things and it works very well with me. Teachers don’t take very much help. Even if you offer them your help, they don’t accept it. They’re so much used to be on their own. We don’t feel we need each other’ (3T2/051207).

The administration admitted this fact but did not take serious action about it.

‘To tell you truth the administration already admits this’ (3T1/281107).

‘The teacher comes into the classroom teaches and leaves. So it’s a very isolated job’ (3H/071107).

Academy3 appeared to lack most of the elements of a PLC (Harris & Muijs 2005:51; Stoll et al. 2006:226-7). The leadership of the administration was supportive as agreed by all interviewees.

‘We have great people who work at the administration. They are extremely supportive’ (3T1/281107).

‘I feel strongly that a school is the teacher and I have to support them 150%’ (3H/071107).

But not shared.

“The decision is taken by the administration and teachers carry it out” (3T1/281107).

‘Teachers don’t take decisions’ (3D/201107).

Interviewed teachers admitted that they did not participate in decision-making, they just implemented decisions. Teachers were consulted but the head along with the director took the final decision.

‘We are not decision makers. We just report and say what we think about the situation’ (3T2/051207).

‘I want teachers to feel that they’re being consulted. It doesn’t mean I’m going necessarily go with what somebody says’ (3H/071107).

This monopoly of decision-making by the administration was expected to work against building leadership-capacity and teacher-leadership.

The administration considered that teachers were not concerned with the school vision and mission.

‘The school vision and mission are the concern of the administration’ (3D/201107).

The director admitted that inquiry and creativity were present at the school but on individual basis.

‘I’m not sure creativity is collective’ (3D/201107).

All interviewees agreed that teachers were encouraged to innovate and initiate new ideas.

‘For the administration, we have free hand to create, motivate, innovate, and make the school a nice place that the kids enjoy joining’ (3T1/281107).

‘I encourage independent ideas by teachers. When a teacher comes with an idea, I say if you can do it, do it. How can I help?’ (3H/071107).

The administration may have supported innovation and initiative, but teachers were not motivated to suggest ideas:

‘In my experience, I haven’t seen someone come in and say I have this idea. I see teachers who come and say: I have a problem’ (3H/071107).

It may be argued that the fact that teachers worked in isolation, might have made them less creative because there were no group discussions that triggered their creative thinking.

As mentioned before, collaborative teams were present at the school with respect to extracurricular activities but were not related to teaching and learning:

‘There is no group work. We do our own things. We all take the course outline for the same course but other teachers don’t know what I’m doing. We don’t work with each other; we just work with the students’ (3T1/281107).

This fact was agreed by the administration:

‘Collaborative team building is a very weak part of the school. It’s not a strength of the school for teachers working together. It works well when we are doing something specific or any outside event’ (3D/201107).

Academy3 did not demonstrate that it was an improving school. The administration concentrated on selecting areas for development and change mainly related to student learning and activities, but not related to teacher-leadership and involvement at the school (3H/071107; 3T2/051207). One justification may be that teachers were not involved in change and development. They just implemented them, whether the change was externally mandated or internally generated.

The administration tended to decide where the school needed to improve without consulting with teachers:

‘Improvements were initiated by me in consultation with the director and GM but not with teachers’ (3H/071107).

The administration admitted the lack of group processes and collaboration among teachers but there was no real effort on improving the situation. There was no improvement in academic performance, as revealed in the continuous low ranking of the school. This was always attributed to learning disabled and International students.

‘We justify the low ranking to a high percentage of learning disabled and International students’ (3T2/051207).

‘What can I do about our ranking? We have learning disabled and foreign student populations. There is nothing I can do’ (3D/201107).

The major improvement was in terms of student detention and behaviour and school facilities:

‘I left for three years and I came back. The improvement is unbelievable. Teenagers used to call each others names, and bullying. When I came back it’s nonexistent. Also, we didn’t use to have smart boards, now we have five’ (3T2/051207).

‘Late comings are no longer a problem’ (3H/071107).

4.4.5 What is the effect of leadership-capacity on student development and achievement?

This section answers research-question four. At Academy3, it is suggested that the administration seemed not active in developing leadership-capacity and teacher-leadership, hence student development and achievement may have been jeopardised. The administration tended to concentrate on student and parent satisfaction (3T2/051207; 3H/071107) and appeared to put controls on teachers (3D/201107) in order to maintain this satisfaction, consequently student learning may have been in danger. Teachers seemed not active in developing challenging expectations or in setting high standards for student achievement and learning (3T1/281107). On the other hand, they appeared to set moderate standards for students' success (3T1/281107), which may have affected students' learning because the grades seemed not reflecting authentic student learning (3D/201107).

Given the learning disable population and in order to keep parents satisfied, teachers tended to set moderate standards for students' success, instead of challenging expectations:

‘I am working with a low group, I play it both ways. I give them easy stuff that boost their self confidence but I also try to pull them higher and higher’ (3T1/281107).

Consequently, the director seemed not sure that student learning was secured because the grades did not reflect authentic student learning.

‘It’s very easy for teachers to get comfortable with their class and students are happy. We check what teachers are doing because sometimes teachers want

students to pass. Maybe because they feel sorry for them or want to show they are successful. We developed some controls like standardized tests and ministry exams' (3D/201107).

The director expressed a lack of confidence in the quality of student work:

'I'm not sure that the quality of student work is as good as it could be' (3D/201107).

The administration believed that better student work and achievement were secured through putting more controls on teachers:

'We are looking at the actual work that the student is doing through going to the teachers' classroom. We are putting more control on teachers' (3D/201107).

The school culture seemed centred on parent and student satisfaction and getting their money's worth.

'The minute a student is accepted, we work on how we make sure how he gets his money's worth. They come because they want attention from teachers; they want to reach their potential. That's the philosophy behind the school' (3T2/051207).

'We really encourage the idea that we're here for the kids who. They are our clients' (3H/071107).

All interviewees agreed that teachers were completely focused on student support.

‘If you look at our time table you see that we are with students all the time. Students are our priority’ (3T2/051207).

Teachers tended to communicate a lot with parents:

‘We hold parent-teacher evening and information evening at the beginning of the year, and parents have access to our e-mails and are free to communicate with the teacher directly, there is continual and mutual interaction with parents’ (3T1/281107).

4.4.6 What is the role of teacher-leadership in building leadership-capacity?

This section aims to answer research question five. At Academy3, teacher-leadership seemed not developed outside classrooms (3D/201107) because teachers were not shown to participate in leadership activities (3T2/051207) and in decision-making collectively (3T1/281107). Knowing that teacher-leadership was collective leadership in which teachers developed their expertise by working collaboratively (Harris & Lambert 2003:43), when teachers work in isolation (3T1/281107), teacher-leadership would not be expected to develop at the school, nor leadership-capacity.

As revealed throughout this case, teacher-leadership appeared not developed at Academy3, which seemed more student oriented at the expense of teachers. This was explicitly admitted by the director:

‘There was no emphasis on developing teacher-leadership because there hasn’t been a necessity for it’ (3D/201107).

Teachers did not appear to participate in leadership activities.

‘Rarely teachers assume leadership roles. We’re used to making sure that our students are our priorities’ (3T2/051207).

Teachers and administrators agreed that teachers did not take decisions beyond their classroom.

‘We take decisions concerning things related to our responsibilities as teachers’ (3T1/281107).

‘Teachers don’t really take decisions because the head and I have taken a lot of responsibilities. Consequently, the leadership of teachers has not developed’ (3D/201107).

All interviewees agreed that teachers were being consulted and provided input but the head along with the director took the final decision. This was suggested to be the limit of their participation in decision-making.

‘The final decision goes back to the administration but that would be based on input from teachers’ (3T1/281107).

‘I want teachers to feel they’re being consulted. But I’m certainly going to try to go with what I think will work for the school’ (3H/071107).

The school culture, structure and purposive action by the head that usually contribute to the development of teacher-leadership (Muijs & Harris 2007:112) were not shown to be present at Academy3.

The school culture appeared not to encourage the development of teacher-leadership because it was centred on satisfying students' needs.

'In our school community, we care more about students than about teachers' (3T2/051207).

All interviewees admitted that it was a culture of isolation instead of collaboration.

'The administration already admits this. Everybody keeps their distance. Everybody is secluded and isolated in his own work' (3T1/281107).

'Collaboration is a very weak part of the school. It's not a strength of the school for teachers working together' (3D/201107).

It seemed a culture of distrust. Interviewed teachers admitted that they did not trust each other since they felt they did not need each other.

'If something is going wrong with you you're afraid to tell your colleague because it's going fine for them. We don't feel we need each other' (3T2/051207).

It is suggested that the school structure did not encourage the development of teacher-leadership. Teachers' presence problem appeared to represent a major constraint to teacher-collaboration due to time constraint. Teachers were only present in classes, there were slight chances for developing teacher-leadership, because teachers seemed not willing to stay in school and assume leadership roles.

'Very specifically, there is the problem of presence. When a teacher is free they don't have to be here' (3H/071107).

Teachers seemed not motivated to lead. Most teachers' learning was incidental, occurring in the classroom. Teachers' learning lives were characterized by fragmentation and discontinuity. Direct classroom experience seemed to be the principal means of learning.

'Rarely teachers assume leadership roles. The head asks teachers if they want to be responsible for an activity or committee, but he doesn't get much response from them' (3T2/051207)

'There is lack of willingness on the part of teachers to put in extra time to develop leadership' (3D/201107).

Mentoring appeared not to be a schoolwide practice among teachers. One assigned senior teacher mentored all new teachers.

'Miss Filion, a fabulous teacher, takes new teachers under her wings, and mentors them' (3D/201107).

There were specific paid teachers who regularly assisted students with tutorials.

'I tutor every day at the school. I teach students study skills, I do the home-works with them, I review the report cards with them and see their progress' (3T2/051207).

Professional development seemed not consistent at Academy3. Teachers attended government trainings and workshops.

'Professional-development involves going to workshops, attending conventions (3T2/051207).

However, one teacher admitted that department heads constituted a barrier to professional-development.

‘If it were left to department heads, they would go alone, and will not let any teacher go. I was never asked to go to any workshop last year’ (3T1/281107).

Another barrier seemed money and time:

‘We don’t have much time to go to conferences because our priority is to teach, but we also have to make up for the time lost’ (3TL/281107).

‘I think we have a problem of funding and time. When teachers are away, they have to leave their lessons. It’s almost more crumple to go away then to stay’ (3H/071107).

Staff and department meetings are usually considered as time set aside for teacher-leadership work (Harris & Muijs 2005:128). At Academy3, staff meetings were held every week, but department meetings seemed very rare. Usually, staff meetings allow for fast follow-up on raised issues and continuous communication (Ibid.). At Academy3, staff meetings as described before were formal one way downward communication and seemed to lack the collaborative work, the planning together, and the building of teacher networks.

‘We decided to make Tuesdays as a staff meeting day. At the beginning of the year, there were professional days, they had department meetings. But once people are teaching and running a very tight schedule, it’s very hard for them to organize meetings’ (3H/071107).

4.4.7 Discussion

The case-study of Academy3 suggests that it was a blend of quadrant 1 and 2 with low-skillfulness and low-involvement. It was a combination of “stuck school” with some promising features of “fragmented school” (figure 2.1 p.21). The philosophy of the director was that teachers’ job was to lead their class, which tended to diminish teachers’ involvement in leadership activities outside their classes. The school head seemed collaborative, tended to listen to teachers’ suggestions but usually took the final decision along with the director (Thesis p.169). In staff meetings, the head informed teachers of decisions already taken by the administration (thesis p.171), for them to implement. It appeared to be a top-down reliance on the administration to take the major decisions, which tended to reduce teacher-leadership. The leadership of senior management as revealed in interviews and observations, tried to maintain dependent relationships with teachers and subsequently appeared as an inhibitor to building leadership-capacity (Thesis p.167). Change (whether internally or externally mandated) was usually initiated by top management without consultation with teachers, and implemented despite teachers’ resistance (Thesis p.166). At Academy3, teacher-leadership seemed not developed outside classrooms because teachers were not shown to participate in leadership activities and in decision-making collectively (Thesis p.182). The administration considered that teachers were not concerned with school vision and mission (Thesis p.177). The director did not believe in teachers learning from each other in groups. The result was that instead of learning from each other, teachers competed with each other (Thesis p.173). Teachers tended to reflect on student work in isolation, which is suggested to make them less creative due to the lack of group discussions that might have triggered their creative

thinking (Thesis p.173). Proposals for new practices, to which compliance was expected, usually came from the top (Thesis p.166).

Collaborative teams were present mainly in extracurricular activities but were not related in most part to teaching and learning (Thesis p.178). The director seemed not sure that student learning was secured because the grades did not reflect authentic student learning. Given the learning disabled population and in order to keep parents satisfied, teachers tended to put moderate standards for students' success (Thesis p.180). The low ranking of the school was always attributed to learning disabled and International students (Thesis p.179). Academy3 appeared to lack most of the elements of a PLC as discussed in the case-study before. It is suggested that it was a stagnant school because teachers were not really involved in change and development, they just implemented them (Thesis p.166).

The research at Academy3 suggests the following themes:

First, trust is the key to open communication among teachers and between teachers and the head. Trust is important for successful change implementation because it would allow teachers to implement change collaboratively, and willingly.

Second, the philosophy of the head concerning the role of teachers affects the leadership-capacity of the school.

Third, the sustainability of change and improvement efforts even if they are externally mandated (MOE) may not be secured if the internal (structural and cultural) processes inside the school are not existent in order to guarantee their success.

Chapter 5

Cross-Case Analysis and Synthesis

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I analyze data across the three cases and identify similarities and differences in the process of building leadership-capacity. In doing so, I seek to provide further insight into issues concerning building leadership-capacity by providing a general explanation of the case-study results. I used the findings generated in each case-study for comparing the empirical results of the three cases. The analysis within and across the cases allowed me to identify the distinguishing features of leadership-capacity. This chapter proceeds as follows: I start with a cross-case analysis by comparing the major patterns and themes in the data that are common across the cases, identifying similarities and differences and compare them to the literature, then I present a synthesis of findings where I present emerging themes and suggest a leadership-capacity model.

5.2 Cross-case analysis

The following section discusses the similarities and differences of findings across the cases while trying to answer the research questions. There is also a critical reflection on these findings with reference to the literature. What is noticed is that the findings of the cases build on each others and each one adds clarifying answers to the research questions.

5.2.1 How do schools get started on building leadership-capacity?

The three cases agreed that leadership-capacity-building generally starts by broadly involving teachers in leadership activities and providing opportunities for teachers to

assume leadership roles but they differed in the way they involved teachers in leadership activities.

At Academy1, broadly involving teachers in leadership activities was possibly done through developing department-based work groups representing work entities, where teachers had common work areas that facilitated continuous group-work and collaboration. Teachers held regular department meetings, continuously worked in groups, communicated and collaborated regularly, and implemented changes together (thesis p.108-9). This to Penlington et al. (2008:73) constitutes part of building capacities of staff within a school and is an important means of achieving school-improvement.

At Academy2, the head encouraged teachers to get involved in leadership activities through giving teachers voting rights in school decisions, establishing departments, taking decisions collectively inside committees, asking for teachers' suggestions and opinion (course offered), asking them to volunteer in committees and providing them with frequent opportunities for interaction, hence developing teacher-leadership. This might have constituted one element of leadership-capacity because teachers, through their voting power, seemed to have been able to bring about change to school operations (thesis p.132). The voting power probably made the internal conditions inside the school inclined to change and development (Hopkins & Harris 2001) so that school-improvement was not simply dependent on the head or outside forces (Harris & Lambert 2003:13). Participation in committees possibly allowed teachers to negotiate real changes and deal with the conflicts that inevitably arose.

At Academy3 teachers seemed not broadly involved in leadership activities. The school appeared structured to make interaction more difficult because teachers did not have continuous presence after classes (thesis p.161). Teachers did not meet regularly, which may have affected negatively the communication among teachers and their reflection together (thesis p.162). This process transformed the school into an isolated work environment for teachers, which may have affected negatively teacher involvement in the work of leadership. The administration did not appear to play an active role in facilitating and encouraging regular interaction among school members: department meetings were rare, staff meetings were downward one way communication (thesis p.164). Teachers have rarely assumed leadership roles not only because the administration did not distribute leadership but also because teachers seemed not willing to participate when invited (thesis p.163). This agrees with Harris & Lambert (2003:31-32) 'engaging all faculties in those processes is very important for getting the work done'.

The analysis of the three cases also suggests that leadership-capacity appeared enhanced through the skilful participation in the work of leadership. At Academy1, the skilful participation of teachers in leadership activities was manifested through activating group-work and collaboration inside departments through (1) having common work areas for teachers, (2) holding regular department meetings. Teachers inside departments used to sit together in department meetings and develop a common understanding of the learning goals: the student learning (thesis p.110). Teachers used to regularly work in groups, communicate, collaborate, and collectively reflect on teaching practices inside departments, consequently high-quality communication among teachers seemed to prevail.

Teachers also developed their leadership skills when they constantly reflected on their teaching practices and analyzed how things were being done at the school inside departments but this was not frequent with senior management (thesis p.111). To Slater (2008:58) teachers develop leadership skills by learning from each other in supportive and collaborative environments. Also teachers engaged in successful change management that was secured when the administration supported teachers and when they implemented changes collaboratively which reduced resistance (thesis p.112). The major changes were usually externally mandated by the MOE such as the school reform. This successful implementation of change laid in the internal change management. This collaborative implementation of change as Day (2009:725) suggests leads to a high level of trust that allows leaders to ask for change without resistance. It also enhances the willingness of people to participate in the change process because it increases the norms of reciprocity and responsibility that enhance ownership (Sullivan & Transue 1999).

Interviewed teachers in Academy2 agreed with the suggestions of those in Academy1 and added that common purposes of learning were shared between teachers and senior management, as highlighted by Harris & Lambert (2003:31-32): 'teachers develop a shared sense of purpose'. At Academy2, the skilful participation in the work of leadership was manifested in the regular communication, listening and interaction among school members in different school occasions (morning gatherings, staff and pedagogical meetings) where teachers shared concerns, opinions and learned from each others. In meetings, teachers and senior management tended to reflect on teaching practices and analysed how things were being done at the school (thesis p.135). Similarly, Slater (2008:55) suggested that effective

communication is instrumental in establishing collaborative relationships and is a key aspect of building leadership-capacity. The head seemed excellent in sharing common purposes of learning with teachers, students and parents. She considered that learning is teaching students for all their lives (thesis p.134), as stated by Lambert (2007:313) as part of student achievement 'self-knowledge and social maturity'. When teachers were given a chance to discuss their fears and worries about change (whether internally or externally mandated) and provide suggestions, they tended to resist less the change (thesis p.136). This may be caused by the trust that is said to develop as a result of interaction and communication (Byrk & Schneider 2002). As Slater (2008:61) suggests, trust decreases organizational fear and encourages the risk-taking.

At Academy3, teachers appeared not to skilfully participate in leadership activities mainly because trust between senior management and teachers was missing (Thesis p.163). For example, the administration did not appear to share common purposes of learning with teachers. Teachers were not usually given time and space to work and reflect together because weekly department meetings were very rare and staff meetings were formal and used downward communication (thesis p.164). Interviews and observations suggested that there was an environment of distrust among school members which may have lead to poor communication and collaboration. Communication appeared free downward but not upward (thesis p. 164). In staff meetings senior management appeared free in questioning and giving instructions to teachers. However, teachers' participation in discussions was shy (thesis p. 164). These constitute part of leadership skills necessary if collaborative work is expected to flourish in a school as highlighted by Harris & Lambert (2003:31) and Slater

(2008:59). An emerging theme is that trust is key to open communication among teachers and between teachers and the head (thesis p.188). It is a two way relationship: Once teachers do not feel threatened if they criticize the administration, upward communication would be freer and the administration would trust that teachers are giving them their real opinion. So trust has to be mutual and initiated by the administration (thesis p.165). Trust is important for successful change implementation because it would allow teachers to implement change collaboratively and willingly (Day 2009:725; Louis Seashore 2007:19). Without trust, positive collaboration and mutual development would not occur. To Harris (2002a:61), a school culture that advocates trust, collaborative working relationships and that focuses on teaching and learning is self-renewing and responsive to improvement efforts. To Sullivan & Transue (1999), having high levels of organizational trust allows leaders to ask for change without resistance. Seashore (2007:19) added that if teachers cannot trust each other, they cannot work together effectively to create systemic change. In fact, change (whether internally or externally mandated) was usually initiated by top management without consultation with teachers. Since teachers were not active partners in change management and implementation, resistance to change appeared very high. When coerced, teachers seemed to prefer implementing change in isolation.

5.2.2 What type of leadership builds leadership-capacity?

To Harris (1998), a climate for change is influenced by the school leader and is set by the particular leadership style adopted. The three cases identify the characteristics of a capacity-building head.

At Academy1, the head primarily distributed leadership to teachers who had freedom in teaching, pedagogy and running their own departments (thesis p. 113). The head tended to empower and trust teachers to do their job without interference inside their departments (thesis p. 113) as highlighted by Harris & Lambert (2003:38): 'Heads empower others to lead'. There appeared to exist a good level of teacher-leadership mainly inside departments (thesis p.112). Interviewed teachers expressed their frustration and desire to be also involved at school level and bring about change (thesis p.113), because when it came to schoolwide decisions as observed in a staff meeting (1STM/300108), the head seemed to use her authority to inform teachers of decisions already taken. Teachers participated in discussions but did not impact decisions (thesis p.114), which might have affected negatively the development of teacher-leadership at school level and somehow impeded the expansion of leadership-capacity. This is emphasized by Slater (2008:59), teachers describe their great satisfaction derived from being given the opportunity to 'make happen something that you believe in' (Barth 2003:62).

At Academy2, the head seemed to possess several characteristics of a capacity-building leader who encouraged building leadership-capacity. The head usually invited teachers to discuss and participate in decisions through voting (thesis p.138). She seemed to create a climate of enthusiasm (thesis p.138) which coincides with the view of Goleman (2002:3) that 'great leadership works through emotions'. She tended to invite people to be at their most innovative (thesis p.139). This occurs with Harris & Lambert (2003:38) who suggest that 'where there is a capacity-building teachers feel invited to be at their most innovative, work together and give their best'. The head also leaned towards empowering and trusting

teachers to do their job without interference (thesis p.137). Her leadership appeared to be supportive and shared (thesis p.139). The head would invite teachers to assume leadership roles such as mentoring students, or give suggestions (thesis p.141). She seemed opened to suggestions and encouraged teachers to act as professionals and perform according to high standards (thesis p.140), because she believed like Harris & Lambert (2003:38) that every teacher has the responsibility and capability to work as a leader.

The head tended to believe in leadership by example and set high standards for teaching academic excellence (thesis p.140). She appeared to be very creative in finding ways to do things and thought of ways and means to improve the institution, and set very high standards for teaching academic excellence. The relationship between the head and teachers was based on moral values with a clear ethical purpose, a relationship of respect, trust and accountability (thesis p.140) which was described by Begley (2007: 163-4) as ‘authentic leadership, a metaphor for professionally effective, ethically sound and consciously reflective practices in educational administration. A leadership that is knowledge-based, values informed and skilfully executed’. This was mainly driven by the school core values based around Christian values as stated in Academy2 mission statement. The head communicated with teachers and secured their acceptance because she always explained the reason for any action (thesis p.140). The strategies used by the head in meetings to enhance leadership-capacity and reduce teachers’ co-dependency were through working with all teachers and inviting them to arrive at and implement decisions together (thesis p.138). To Harris & Lambert (2003:41), these uses of authority redistribute authority so that a culture of teacher-leadership can grow.

At Academy3, the leadership of senior management, as revealed in interviews and observations, tried to maintain dependent relationships with teachers and subsequently seemed not active in developing leadership-capacity. The director's philosophy about the role of teachers seemed to affect negatively the development of leadership-capacity in the school because she considered that teachers were only leaders inside their classrooms (thesis p.168). Further the head seemed not successful in creating and building positive, collaborative and trusting relationships among teachers and between management and teachers and in attending to the emotional, motivational life of the school (thesis p.170). Unlike Slater (2008:59) who argued that shared leadership depends on collaboration that relies on trust, respect for the expertise of others and mutual interdependence for success. Also Day (2009:725) stressed that school principals have a particular responsibility for promoting trust among school members. At Academy3 the administration failed to do so, consequently teachers did not feel they belonged to the school.

The director's philosophy and the resulting work norms and habits were suggested to create a climate not conducive to change and development, because teachers became resistant to change and improvement as it meant extra work (thesis p.169). To Sullivan & Transue (1999), having high levels of organizational trust allows leaders to ask for change without resistance. At Academy3, teachers implemented change already decided by the administration despite their resistance. Without a climate for change, it would be very hard for change and improvement efforts to succeed (thesis p.169). An emerging theme is that the philosophy of the head concerning the role of teachers affects the leadership-capacity

of the school. Heads are responsible for creating and encouraging the building of positive, collaborative and trusting relationships among school members (thesis p.188).

5.2.3 How does building leadership-capacity sustain school-improvement?

The three cases agree that part of building leadership-capacity is to develop a learning cycle (Lambert et al. 1996:66) and a culture of inquiry (Harris & Lambert 2003:94) at department and school level that provides teachers with information and knowledge necessary for them to make shared decisions and improve their practice.

At Academy1 (thesis p.115) inside departments, teachers shared ideas and reflected on teaching practices and students' learning. Teachers learnt from each others by developing a learning cycle with collective inquiry and group reflection which might have helped in improving teaching practice. Department meetings seemed to be the main place of sharing ideas, reflection and dialogue and the benefit was distributed to teachers inside departments (thesis p.116). The objective was to improve teaching practices and student learning. This learning cycle helped in building knowledge among teachers, and making them capable of leadership activities, and suggesting improvements to their departments. Such collaborative enquiry results in meaningful shifts in teacher practice (Loughran 2003) and a dynamic co-construction of knowledge (Huberman 1995; Bereiter 2002).

At Academy2 (thesis p.142), teachers and administrators reflected on student work and problems, on teaching practices with the objective to improve practice and reach objective and innovative solutions to problems. This knowledge was mainly acquired through

collective reflection, enquiry, dialogue and question posing as part of the school daily patterns. Consequently, teachers tended to learn from each others (thesis p.143). To Harris & Lambert (2003:32-3), performed on a regular basis, this reciprocal learning process can become a regular practice, thus leading to sustainable learning. This learning cycle contributed to building knowledge among teachers, and making them more capable of leadership activities, and suggesting improvements, thus participated in building leadership-capacity because teachers became more knowledgeable of what was going on around (thesis p.142). To Lambert (2007:313): ‘Inquiry is a generative learning process that is self-renewing and serves as the bases of reflective practice and innovation’.

Academy3 is a school that may have failed to develop a learning cycle with collective inquiry and group reflection among school members. Teachers reflected and analysed in isolation on teaching practices and student work, so they did not learn from each others’ experiences (thesis p. 172), which diminished their chances for acquiring information and knowledge necessary for them to make shared decisions and improve their practice. They tended to become less creative due to the lack of group discussions that might have triggered their creative thinking and made them capable of leadership activities (thesis p.173). Consequently, improvement ideas appeared less frequent. To Harris & Lambert (2003:32-3) opportunities to discuss and reflect are crucial if progress is to be made. School members at Academy3 admitted indirectly that they did not trust each other in order to collaborate, share knowledge, and suggest innovative ideas. Day (2009:725) stressed that school principals have a particular responsibility for promoting trust among school members. To Slater (2008:61), trust decreases organizational fear and encourages

the risk-taking that provides the opportunities for others to be leaders. In the absence of trust, teachers at Academy3 remained isolated in their own thinking and there was no chance of sharing knowledge or suggesting improvements (thesis p.175). In the absence of this new knowledge, the leadership-capacity of the school was expected to diminish because teachers became less knowledgeable of what was going on around them. As agreed by Day (2009) who stated that trust is a key component of capacity-building and decisions about the extent to which leadership is distributed.

At Academy1 (thesis p.117), teachers' broad involvement in school activities, especially within departments appeared to constitute part of leadership-capacity. At Academy2 (thesis p.143-4) teachers were also broadly involved in school activities because they felt that the school was a continuation of their informal relationship established outside the school, all being members of the same Apostles church. Teachers tended to perform multiple tasks beyond their immediate classroom responsibilities, which enhanced their involvement in the work of leadership. This according to Slater (2008:56) opens up leadership opportunity to more people. At Academy3 (thesis p.174), the lack of continuous presence of teachers in the school definitely had drastic consequences on the school operations. Teachers were not broadly involved in school activities. They just gave their class and left, which certainly have reduced their involvement in the work of leadership.

Collaboration seemed strong inside departments at Academy1 and at school level at Academy2. Mitchell & Sackney (2000:78) found that, 'building school capacity implies that schools promote collaboration'. Improvement efforts become more successful when

implemented collaboratively as highlighted by Harris & Lambert (2003:4). At Academy1, inside departments, teachers shared and exchanged ideas and knew what was going on in each others' classes through holding weekly department meetings and providing space and time for teachers to continuously interact and share and exchange ideas and coordinate course contents (thesis p.117-8). At Academy2, at school level, holding regular staff meetings and pedagogical days for people to interact and discuss school issues ensured regular interaction and communication among school members (thesis p.144). Harris (2002a:55) confirmed that collegial relations and practice are at the core of building capacity for school-improvement.

At Academy3 (thesis p.174), teachers seemed to prefer working in isolation because they felt more secure when doing so, so they did not share their daily practices. This lack of collaboration and isolation seems to have made teachers less responsive to change or improvement efforts To West et al (2000: 33), the types of school cultures most supportive of school improvement efforts are those that are collaborative. Teachers' work was restricted to classroom responsibilities and their involvement in the work of leadership was minimized. Teachers did not feel they needed each other, because they did not trust each others (thesis p. 175).. The efforts of senior management to make teachers collaborate were fruitless. Teachers and administrators appeared not developing trusting relationships, they implemented change in isolation. For Slater (2008:59-61), shared leadership is dependent on collaboration that rely on trust and mutual interdependence for success.

Academy1 and 2 seemed to possess some elements of a PLC (DuFour & Eaker 1998:25; Harris & Muijs 2005:51; Stoll et al. 2006:226-7), while Academy3 lacked most elements. Academy1 seemed to possess some but not all elements of a PLC (thesis p.118). The leadership seemed supportive and shared mainly inside departments. Teachers participated in decisions essentially inside their departments. The school values and principles were distributed to teachers who were expected to embrace them. Collective enquiry and creativity seemed present inside departments but were lacking at school level. Change and improvement were mainly externally mandated by the school reform initiated by the MOE. The school was adapting to external changes for two reasons: (1) The appointment of a curriculum director who supported and trained teachers in the implementation process (2) teachers worked together and implemented the changes collaboratively inside their respective departments (thesis p.120). Teachers tended to use the external requirements of the reform and implemented them in their own internal improvement processes inside departments collaboratively (thesis p.121). Beside the externally mandated change, the school appeared to possess some internal capacity for improvement as continuous improvement was part of the departments' daily practices. Collaboration in improvement efforts and in adapting to externally mandated changes appeared to be embedded in departmental culture (thesis p. 121). For Hipp et al. (2008:176), a school culture in which teachers work collaboratively is a necessary component of school success. People who engage in collaborative team learning are able to learn from one another, thus creating momentum to fuel continued improvement (DuFour & Eaker 1998:27). An important theme emerged that externally mandated improvements (such as school reform) pushes the

school towards improvement, if associated with a collaborative culture, it ensures the successful implementation of change and improvement strategies (thesis p.88).

Academy2 tended to possess many elements of a PLC. For West et al (2000:33) the types of school cultures most supportive of school-improvement efforts are those that are collaborative, have high expectations for both students and staff that exhibit a consensus on values and those which encourage all teachers to assume leadership roles appropriate to their experience. At Academy2 the leadership seemed supportive and shared at the school (thesis p.145). Mulford & Silins (2003) consider that it is difficult to see how a PLC could develop in a school without the active support of leadership at all levels. Teachers tended to participate in decision-making indirectly through voting for teachers' representatives as committee members and directly by voting inside meetings (thesis p. 145). There seemed to be a collaborative teamwork in decision-making (thesis p. 146). This collective and collaborative decision-making might have helped in enhancing leadership-capacity and building teacher-leadership at Academy2. As Harris & Lambert (2003:4) confirmed that the concept of capacity-building involves providing opportunities for people to work together collaboratively. Mitchell & Sackney (2000:78) added that building school capacity implies that schools promote collaboration, empowerment and inclusion. It is concerned with maximizing teacher-leadership and teacher learning. At Academy2, school members were strongly connected because they shared the same religious and cultural background and shared the same Christian values, which reflected eventually on the collaborative processes inside the school (thesis p.146). Teachers at Academy2 participated along with the administration in developing the school mission and vision that highlight

continuous success and excellence (thesis p.146). Collective enquiry and creativity appeared to be present at the school but were much less inside departments.

Academy2 was a school with continual (external and internal) drive for improvement and teachers were generally involved in change and development. At Academy2, the capacity for improvement was externally mandated by the Apostles organization (through its six-year action plan). The plan appeared to constitute a continual external drive for improvement and teachers were involved in change and development (thesis p.148). Improvement was also internally generated by teachers as part of the school culture of excellence and of teachers' daily practice with the objective to improve student learning and performance (thesis p.149). Improvement became what Hargreaves & Fink (2006) called a 'habit of mind' that ensures sustainability of improvement efforts. The improvement capacity at the school was partly built by improving the performance of teachers through continuous investment in their professional-development (thesis p.148). To Harris (2002a:57) building-capacity means extending the potential and capabilities of individuals and investing in professional-development (Harris 2002a:57).

The following two themes suggest that building the capacity for school-improvement requires internal and external forces of change and development. First, when a school belongs to a greater organization (such as the Apostles Church) and with the presence of an improvement action plan that is continuously updated ensures the sustainability of the improvement momentum. Second, at Academy2, the connectedness between teachers through their belonging to the same church increased the internal collaboration the broad

involvement of school members in school activities (thesis p.88). The connectedness among teachers refers to the linkages between individuals. That is how they know each others (from outside the school) and how they are connected to one another. Teachers were informally drawn together through the Apostles organization and formed relationships outside the school, which eventually translated into collaboration inside the school. The group of teachers felt they have associations or a sense of belonging to the school. Collaboration among school members used the formal and informal patterns of communication among teachers.

Academy3 (thesis p.176) seemed to be a stuck school (Lambert 2006:240) as it lacked most elements of a PLC. The head took decisions without consultation with teachers and supported and supervised teachers to implement them individually and not in collaboration (thesis p.179). This monopoly of decision-making by the administration was expected to work against building leadership-capacity and teacher-leadership. School vision and mission were defined by the administration. Teachers tended to share common values of isolation and distrust. They liked to work alone and did not feel confident in sharing their problems with other teachers (thesis p.178).

Academy3 did not seem to be improving school. It was shown that teachers did not share or collaborate their daily practices (thesis p.178), they did not learn from each other, thus Academy3 did not collectively improve. This lack of collaboration and isolation is suggested to have made teachers less responsive to improvement efforts. The administration concentrated on selecting areas for development and change mainly related

to student learning and activities, but not related to teacher-leadership and involvement at the school (thesis p.178). One justification for this might be that teachers were not involved in change and development. They just implemented them, whether the change was externally mandated or internally generated. Since teachers and administrators appeared not developing trusting relationships, they implemented change and improvement in isolation. The school could not improve because the administration seemed helpless in solving the problems and teachers were happy with the prevailing situation and they wanted to maintain it (thesis p.179). As a result, it was very difficult for Academy3 to build leadership-capacity especially that it did not possess most of the elements of a PLC. Bezzina (2002), Giles & Hargreaves (2002) confirmed that in a context that is alien to collaborative work practices, facing a legacy of 'top down' administration, departmentalization, and fragmentation of teachers' subject community establishing a PLC is a challenge. An emerging theme is that the sustainability of change and improvement efforts even if they are externally mandated (MOE) may not be secured if the internal (structural and cultural) processes inside the school guarantee their success, such as the presence of a collaborative culture, where teachers participate in leadership activities, in decision-making, and in initiating and implementing change (thesis p.88).

5.2.4 What is the effect of leadership-capacity on student development and achievement?

Knowing that the ultimate goal of school-improvement is to enhance student learning and achievement (Harris 2002a:20), this was achieved at Academy1 (thesis p.122-3), when the school extended the capacity of all students to reach higher standards, set challenging

expectations, and made students responsible for their learning journey. This is confirmed by Stoll (2009:115) and Hopkins (2001a:13). Student learning was central at the school, as emphasized by the school reform. It entailed a lot of discussion and communication with students as confirmed by Harris & Lambert (2003:36) who highlighted the importance of building authentic relationships between teachers and students.

At Academy2 (thesis p.150), student progress and achievement was realized when the school extended its own capacity for development. Capacity was pictured as the ability to enable students reach higher standards, to equip them academically, spiritually with a strong personality and to prepare them to face life challenges. Students seemed empowered to lead their own learning journey and develop their critical minds (thesis p.151). School success was measured by how well students were prepared to succeed in life, not only academically. This is what Lambert (2007:313) termed as ‘social maturity’. Building leadership-capacity among teachers and students made students responsible for their learning journey and ensured better student performance. This is what Lambert (2006:241) called ‘student leadership’. Stoll (2009:122) confirmed that the most fundamental shift in developing leadership-capacity is promoting student leadership, i.e. developing the capacity for students to be leaders of their own learning and to play a role in evaluating the quality of their learning experiences.

At Academy3 (thesis p.180-1), it is suggested that the administration seemed not active in developing leadership-capacity and teacher-leadership, hence student development and achievement may have been jeopardised. The administration tended to concentrate on

student and parent satisfaction and appeared to put controls on teachers in order to maintain this satisfaction, consequently student learning and performance may have been in danger. Teachers tended to set moderate standards for students' success, which may have affected students' learning because the grades seemed not reflecting authentic student learning. Harris (2002a:57) confirmed that the central importance in building capacity within organizations is the human perspective. By placing people at the centre of development there is greater opportunity for organizational growth.

5.2.5 What is the role of teacher-leadership in building leadership-capacity?

For the purpose of data collection, teacher-leadership was disaggregated to involvement in decision-making and participation in leadership activities. It is assumed that all teachers are leaders in their own classrooms but the term 'teacher-leadership' as used here implies influence beyond this (Frost 2009:340).

At Academy1 (thesis p.124), teacher-leadership seemed developed through teachers' participation in leadership activities where they volunteered and initiated activities mainly inside departments. This agrees with Muijs & Harris (2007:113), for them teacher-leadership can operate within traditional structures rather than requiring wholesale school restructuring, and have operationalized teacher-leadership as increased teacher participation in decision-making, and opportunities for teachers to take initiative and lead school-improvement. At Academy2 (thesis p.152), teacher leadership seemed partly manifested through teachers' participation in decision-making, especially in school committees represented by their voting power. There was generally collaborative teamwork in decision-making (thesis p.153). Teachers' leadership activities appeared

manifested inside and outside their classroom where teachers contributed to the teaching community and influenced others towards change and improved educational practice (thesis p.153). This is similar to the findings of Frost & Durrant (2002:157-8), where the nurturing of teachers as leaders is fundamental to effective school-improvement.

At Academy1 (thesis p.125), the autonomy that teachers had inside departments and the high level of collaboration among teachers tended to contribute to developing high quality learning and teaching. What really strengthened teacher-leadership was the high level of collaboration among teachers, which secured the successful implementation of change. Teachers became capable of keeping the school running and improving (thesis p. 126). This agrees with Harris & Muijs (2005:17) who confirmed that teacher-leadership opens up the possibility for all teachers becoming leaders at various times, which has potential for school-improvement because it is premised upon collaborative work among teachers.

At Academy2 (thesis p.153), the head equipped teachers to be leaders through allowing all teachers to volunteer in leadership activities and to have a voting right in school decisions. Harris (2003c:43) stated that collaboration is at the heart of teacher-leadership, as it is premised upon change enacted collectively. One example at Academy2 is the collaborative teamwork in decision-making represented in their discussions and voting in meetings. At Academy3 (thesis p.182), teacher-leadership seemed not developed outside classrooms because teachers were not shown to participate in leadership activities and in decision-making collectively. Knowing that teacher-leadership was collective leadership in which teachers developed their expertise by working collaboratively (Harris & Lambert 2003:43),

when teachers work in isolation, teacher-leadership would not be expected to develop at the school, nor leadership-capacity. For Lambert (1998:20), teachers see themselves responsible beyond their own classroom. Teachers' voice did not emerge, consequently leadership-capacity was not developed.

School culture, structure and purposive action by the head are key factors that support the development of teacher-leadership in schools (Muijs & Harris 2007:112). At Academy1 (thesis p.125-6) the collaborative and supportive school culture partly contributed to the development of teacher-leadership through developing collaborative practice among teachers. Externally mandated changes (mainly school reform) were generally acted collaboratively, which tended to reduce resistance and secure their successful implementation. It is suggested that this collaborative culture partly drove self improvement. A culture of trust offers great autonomy inside departments (Muijs & Harris 2007:119) because at Academy1 people were trusted to work freely in their own departments, which tended to encourage the development of teacher-leadership and leadership-capacity. At Academy2 (thesis p.154), there was a common and collaborative school culture. All teachers belonged to the same cultural group, which seemed to have strongly affected the culture inside the school and made it highly collaborative. Collaboration among teachers outside the school might have reflected on their collaboration inside, and made it a culture of trust and mutual respect (thesis p.155). Given such a culture, collaboration inside and outside classrooms became a natural behaviour which helped in providing a safe and nurturing learning environment for students. Muijs & Harris (2007:113-29) confirmed that teacher-leadership flourishes most in collaborative

settings. Creating a culture of trust that allows collaboration to grow is crucial to the development of teacher-leadership.

At Academy3 (thesis p.184), the school culture appeared not to encourage the development of teacher-leadership because it was shown to be a culture of distrust, of isolation instead of collaboration, and seemed centred on satisfying students' needs (thesis p. xx). A climate of isolation superseded because teachers did not trust each other. Given such a culture, collaboration among teachers is suggested to be extremely difficult, improvement efforts appeared implemented in isolation and their success could not be secured.

Academy1 (thesis p.126) and 2 (thesis p.155) possessed some structural elements that might have helped in developing teacher-leadership. Teacher-leadership was manifested through the leadership of others such as mentoring other teachers and sharing knowledge and skills (Katznmeyer & Moller 2001). Professional-development helps in building leadership-capacity for school-improvement because it is used to foster deep collaboration among teachers (Harris 2002:110). In both academies once a teacher attended a workshop, he/she would prepare a handout and a presentation in meetings. This allowed teachers to allocate time for personal reflection and provided opportunities for teachers to talk together about teaching and learning. The objective of professional-development was to bring in the new practice that teachers acquired to the classroom and share it with other teachers, continuous improvement was the ultimate aim. Teacher-leadership was also manifested in the regular department meetings (in Academy1) and staff meetings (Academy2) considered as time set aside for teacher-leadership work. Time was set aside for teacher-leadership

work such as continuous meetings and collaborative work, and planning together at the level of the school (Academy2) and inside departments (Academy1). Where teachers shared good practice and learned together the possibility of securing better quality teaching was increased. Muijs & Harris (2007:113) added that providing time for teachers' leadership work, to meet, plan and discuss issues such as curriculum matters, developing school-wide plans, leading study groups, organizing visits to other schools, and collaborating with colleagues.

At Academy3, it is suggested that the school structure did not encourage the development of teacher-leadership. Teachers' lack of presence at the school outside their classes appeared to represent a major structural constraint to teacher-collaboration. Teachers were only present in classes, there were slight chances for developing teacher-leadership, because teachers seemed not willing to stay in school and assume leadership roles (thesis p.184). Staff and department meetings that are usually considered as time set aside for teacher-leadership work (Harris & Muijs 2005:128), were formal one way downward communication and seemed to lack the collaborative work, the planning together, and the building of teacher networks.

At Academy1 (thesis p.127-8), the actions of the head seemed to have had considerable influence on developing teacher-leadership mainly inside departments through the trust that she gave to teachers to run their departments in relation to curriculum and pedagogic matters. At Academy2 (thesis p.157), the head tended to create a climate that support teacher-leadership, and provided opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles and

develop teacher-leadership skills: mentoring, active participation in committees and staff meetings through voting, participating in planning and initiating school activities. The head appeared to be very supportive for teachers and was great in communicating with teachers and explaining the reason for decisions and asking for input and suggestions. Harris & Muijs (2005:65) confirm that heads empower, motivate, and encourage teachers to become leaders and provide opportunities for teachers to develop their leadership skills. At Academy3, the administration appeared to have restricted teachers' job to teaching inside their classroom, instead of creating opportunities for teachers to demonstrate leadership behaviours and develop teacher-leadership skills.

5.3 Synthesis of findings

This thesis has reported on a study that provides a contribution to the theory of leadership-capacity-building. The study, which was carried out in Montreal Canada, brings to light the importance of building leadership-capacity among school members, taking into account the particular school culture and context if improvement is to be sustained. This interaction of capacity, culture and context ensures sustainable improvement and suggests a differentiated capacity-building tailored to each school. Leadership-capacity is defined as broad-based, skilful participation in the work of leadership (Lambert 1998:5; Harris & Lambert 2003:13) and a way of understanding sustainable school-improvement (Lambert 2006:239), given each school culture and context.

There are several interrelated factors that are expected to be present in a school in order to build leadership-capacity such as broad and skilful involvement of teachers in leadership

activities, a capacity-building head, and teacher-leadership. However, school members (teachers and administrators) are the best people to evaluate what their school needs to do to build leadership-capacity, taking into account their particular contextual factors and school culture. This is what is called differentiated capacity-building that is tailored to every school, because no two schools are identical. The ultimate objective is improved student learning and achievement. To achieve this objective, teachers are supposed to be given the chance to develop their leadership skills in a collaborative school environment. The findings of this research tend to coincide with other research findings concerning leadership-capacity and school-improvement, but they tend to highlight the dynamic interaction between capacity, culture and context. The following discussion summarizes and theorizes the findings from the cross-case analysis.

The findings indicate that building leadership-capacity starts by broadly involving teachers in leadership activities and providing opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles. This is done through giving teachers voting rights in school decisions, participation in committees, and providing teachers with frequent opportunities for interaction through holding regular department and staff meetings, hence developing teacher-leadership. Leadership-capacity is also enhanced through the skilful participation of teachers in the work of leadership. Skilfulness refers to leadership skills that allow teachers negotiate real changes in their school and deal with the conflicts that inevitably arise (Lambert 1998:12). Skilfulness in the schools in this study developed when teachers shared common purposes of learning, continuously worked in groups, communicated, collaborated, and collectively reflected on teaching practices inside and outside departments with senior management.

Teachers develop their leadership skills when they constantly reflect on their teaching practices and analyze how things are being at the school. 'Opportunities to discuss and reflect are crucial if progress is to be made' (Harris & Lambert 2003:32-3). Furthermore, successful and sustained implementation of change (whether externally mandated or internally generated) lays in the internal change management strategies that are unique to each school, given its cultural characteristics. Successful change implementation is generally secured in a school when the administration supports teachers to implement changes collaboratively which reduces resistance and when teachers are given a chance to discuss their fears and worries about change and provide suggestions. This collaborative implementation of change as Day (2009:725) suggests leads to a high level of trust that allows leaders to ask for change without resistance. Trust also develops as a result of interaction and communication. Trust is important for successful change implementation because it would allow teachers to implement change collaboratively and willingly, and change resistance is reduced. Without trust, positive collaboration and mutual development would not occur. So even when schools are subject to the same external change factors (such as the school reform), they tend to react to them differently. Their success in the change implementation is function of their internal cultural and structural characteristics. At that stage, it might be suggested that leadership-capacity in a school is intimately linked to its particular context and culture.

The findings reveal that the leadership of the head is essential to building leadership-capacity in a school. Heads set the climate for improvement empower others to lead and provide the needed energy for change. They play an important role in internally generating

change and sustaining improvement instead of waiting for externally mandated changes. They engage others in the emotional work of building collaborative, trusting relationships (Harris & Lambert 2003:38). The cross-case analysis identified several characteristics of a capacity-building head, who empowers and trusts teachers to do their job without interference, invites them to assume leadership roles, and discusses and participates in school decisions, through voting, which helps in developing leadership-capacity. Furthermore, the findings point out that the head attends to teachers' feelings and motivation and move them more in a positive emotional direction through creating a climate of enthusiasm. His leadership is supportive and shared, and is opened to suggestions and encourages teachers to be innovative, act as professionals and perform according to high standards. Capacity-building here means focusing on helping teachers collectively think-about and do things differently to improve all students' life chances, and find ways they can stimulate their colleagues to be creative through providing the necessary conditions, environment and opportunities. The head believes that every teacher has the responsibility and capability to work as a leader inside and outside the classroom.

To maintain the link with school-improvement, capacity-building means spotting leadership potential and providing a range of opportunities for people to develop leadership practices and interactions (Stoll 2009:122). The findings reveal that the leadership-capacity head is value driven and has a clear moral purpose that is continuously communicated to school members. This resonates with what Begley (2007:163) named authentic leadership, a metaphor for professionally effective, ethically sound and consciously reflective practices in educational administration. A leadership that is

knowledge-based, values informed and skilfully executed. This represents an integrated image of leadership and management that is a values-informed leadership. The head is responsible for creating and encouraging the building of positive, collaborative and trusting relationships among teachers and between management and teachers. It is a form of leadership that Harris et al. (2001) described as distributed and teacher owned. Leadership-capacity necessitates a particular form of leadership, a leadership that is distributed and shared (Harris & Lambert 2003:5-7). To ensure sustainability, leadership has to be distributed within the school and embedded within its culture (Stoll 2009:122).

The findings indicate that part of building leadership-capacity is to develop a learning cycle and a culture of inquiry that provides teachers with information and knowledge necessary for them to make shared decisions and improve their practice. This knowledge is acquired through continuous reflection, inquiry, dialogue and question posing as part of the daily practice of teachers, performed inside and outside departments so that the benefit is distributed among school members. The ultimate objective is to improve teaching practice and student learning. The focus here is on group members learning from each other continuously. Mutual trust among teachers is important, in order to reflect collectively, share their knowledge, experiences, and frustrations, and come up with innovative ideas, hence sharing knowledge and suggesting improvements. This learning cycle contributes to building knowledge among teachers, and making them more capable of leadership activities, and suggesting improvements, thus participates in building leadership-capacity because teachers become knowledgeable of what is going on around them.

Teachers' broad involvement in school activities is also part of leadership-capacity building. When teachers are connected through belonging to the same cultural group outside the school and sharing the same cultural values, they feel they are part of a family, they become broadly involved in school activities because they feel the school is a continuation of their external relationships. As such teachers perform multiple tasks beyond their immediate classroom responsibilities, which enhance their involvement in the work of leadership. Based on the findings from this study, a school is more likely self-renewing and responsive to improvement efforts when there is collaboration inside departments and at school level through holding weekly department meetings and providing space and time for teachers to continuously interact and share and exchange ideas and coordinate course contents, and holding regular staff meetings for people to interact and discuss school issues. Collaboration and trust are enhanced when school members are strongly connected, such as when they share the same cultural background, which ultimately reflects on the collaborative processes inside the school. This ensures regular interaction and communication among school members, which helps in building trusting relationships among them. For Slater (2008:59-61), trust decreases organizational fear and encourages the risk-taking that provides the opportunities for others to be leaders.

The findings reveal that an improving school possesses all the elements of a professional-learning-community and has high leadership-capacity. Developing PLCs holds considerable promise for capacity-building for sustainable improvement (Stoll et al. 2006:221). Continuous improvement is part of a school culture of innovation and improvement. It is a school with a continual drive for improvement and teachers are

involved in change and development. It is a school with high leadership-capacity where teacher-leadership is high. Teachers participate in department and school decisions. Collective enquiry and creativity are present inside and outside departments. The ultimate objective is to improve student learning and performance. Teachers share common cultural values and participate along with the administration in developing the school mission and vision that highlight continuous improvement. There is a continual drive (external and internal) drive for improvement as teachers continuously collaboratively strive to succeed and improve. Collaboration in improvement efforts is part of the daily practice of teachers. There is great work on teachers' personal growth through continuous professional-development and sharing of knowledge to generate improved learning outcomes. If sustained improvement is to be achieved, teacher collaboration should be encouraged (Harris 2002:55-6). In an improving school, improvement is mainly internally generated by teachers as part of the school culture of excellence and of teachers' daily practice with the objective to improve student learning and performance. There is a strategic long-term plan for improvement. Improvement becomes what Hargreaves & Fink (2006) call a 'habit of mind' that ensures sustainability of improvement efforts.

The findings also suggest that given the ultimate goal of school-improvement to enhance student learning and achievement, this is achieved when schools extend the capacity of all students to reach higher standards, sets challenging expectations, to equip them academically, spiritually with a strong personality and to prepare them to face life challenges. Higher standards are also achieved once students are empowered to participate in their own learning journey and develop their critical mind which ensures better

performance. School success is measured by how well students are prepared to succeed in life, not only academically what Lambert (2007:313) termed as ‘social maturity’. It is about building ‘student leadership’ (Lambert 2006:241) through developing the capacity of students to be leaders of their own learning (Stoll 2009:122). The role of teachers in students’ learning and achievement is central, through motivating students to set challenging expectations for themselves and work towards higher goals and achieve better academically and in extracurricular activities.

The findings also indicate that every teacher is a leader through his participation in leadership activities and participation in decision-making collectively at department and school level especially in school committees and represented by his/her voting power. When every teacher has a voice, leadership-capacity is built. When teachers work together inside departments and assist each others to explore and try out new ideas, then they provide feedback and analysis of these new methods in order to make sure that improvements in teaching and learning are achieved. What makes teacher-leadership strong in a school is the high level of collaboration among teachers, which secures the successful implementation of change.

Three important factors contribute to the development of teacher-leadership in a school. First, a collaborative and supportive school culture partly contributes to the development of teacher-leadership through developing collaborative practice among teachers. The connectedness between teachers through belonging to the same cultural group outside the school is shown to increase the internal collaboration among school members and their

broad involvement in school activities. Collaboration among teachers outside the school ultimately reflects on their collaboration inside, and makes it a culture of collaboration, innovation, trust and mutual respect. Subsequently, externally mandated changes are generally acted collaboratively, which tends to reduce resistance and secure their successful implementation. Given such a culture, collaboration inside and outside classrooms become a natural behaviour which helps in providing a safe and nurturing learning environment for students. A school culture in which teachers work collaboratively is a necessary component of school success (Hipp et al. 2008:176). Hopkins (2001) suggests that collaborative cultures promote improvements in teaching and learning.

Second, schools possess structural elements that enhance the development of teacher-leadership and build leadership-capacity. Teacher-leadership is manifested through the leadership of others such as mentoring other teachers and sharing knowledge and skills. Professional-development also helps in building leadership-capacity for school-improvement because it is used to foster deep collaboration among teachers. The objective of professional-development is to bring in the new practice that the teacher acquires to the classroom and share it with other teachers, continuous improvement is the ultimate aim. Teacher-leadership is also manifested in regular department and staff meetings considered as time set aside for teacher-leadership work. They allow for fast follow up on raised issues and continuous communication where collaborative work, planning together, and building teacher networks take place. Third, heads play a key role in developing teacher-leadership. They need to trust that teachers are capable of assuming leadership tasks and that they have good judgements of what makes the school a better learning environment. Heads need to

provide opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles and develop teacher-leadership skills: mentoring, active participation in committees through voting, regular staff meetings, participating in planning, initiating school activities.

Finally, -linking all the findings to sustained school-improvement- it is suggested that learning that occurs in groups, allow teachers to connect in new and sophisticated ways, and thereby inspiring critical thought and energizing self-organization. When heads are willing to maintain the school values while distributing power and authority, schools are more prone to sustain improvement. Also ensuring sustainable improvement depends on a capacity-building ‘habit of mind’. Capacity for change is about continuous learning, where teachers individually and collectively engage in continuous reflection of their beliefs, skills, knowledge and practices. This kind of learning is connected to sustainability: sustainability of transparent evaluation of school conditions and results; of inquiry and reflection; of communication inside the school; and of continuous learning and professional-development designed to enhance students’ learning and achievement. As (Stoll 2009:121) advocated ‘sustainability is the goal; capacity is the engine that will ultimately power the sustainability journey. Capacity-building needs to become a ‘habit of mind’ (Hill 1997). Sustained improvement means that learning is lasting. Lambert (2007:322) asserted that when learning is continuous and participation in that learning is broad-based and skilful, there is the potential and the reality of sustainable school-improvement. These findings highlight the internal leadership-capacity processes inside the school that ensure sustainable improvement assuming “Ceteris Paribus”, i.e. other

factors held constant, mainly the school context. However, schools do not operate in a vacuum and each school has its own contextual factors that are unique to it.

The findings suggest further that capacity-building is “multifaceted” (Fullan 2006), involving both those internal school conditions (leadership conditions, school culture (level of trust, collaboration and connectedness among teachers) and structure) and external factors those supporting them externally (such as policymakers, Ministry of Education, School reform requirements, local community) in generating and sustaining the necessary conditions, culture and structures; facilitating learning and skill-oriented experiences and opportunities, ensuring interconnectedness and synergy between all the constituent parts. Given the same external factors (such as the school reform), each school tend to respond to them differently based on their internal structural, cultural and leadership-capacity predispositions available inside the school. The way the school internal leadership-capacity, culture and context interact is what really determines whether improvement shall be sustained or not. Consequently, contextual capacity-building is needed if improvement efforts are to be sustained. Hopkins et al. (1997) recognized that capacity-building needs to be differentiated. Varied school contexts add another dimension to leadership-capacity and necessitate differentiated capacity-building. Meaning that capacity-building strategies are not generic and do not apply to all schools. In fact, no two schools are identical and capacity-building has to take this into account. Consequently, contextual capacity-building strategies provide the answer to successful improvement strategies. It is a dynamic process based on developing strategies that are unique to each school and that take into account the school context, internal leadership-capacity predispositions and school culture. It is this

dynamic interaction between capacity, culture and context that works on ensuring sustainable improvement for each particular school.

Throughout the cases and the cross-case analysis, a number of themes emerged in each case-study which can be merged into the following themes:

- 1) Connectedness between teachers outside the school increases the internal collaboration among school members and their broad involvement in school activities. Teachers feel they have associations or a sense of belonging to the school. Collaboration among school members uses the formal and informal patterns of communication.
- 2) Trust is a key to open communication among teachers and between teachers and the head. Trust is important for successful change implementation because it allows teachers to implement change collaboratively, and willingly.
- 3) The philosophy of the head regarding the role of teachers affects the leadership-capacity of the school. Heads create an emotional climate for change and development. They are responsible for creating and encouraging the building of positive, collaborative and trusting relationships among school members.
- 4) Sustainability of change and improvement efforts even if they are externally mandated (MOE) will only be secured if the internal (structural and cultural) processes inside the school support them. Such as the presence of a collaborative culture among school members to support each other, where teachers participate in leadership activities and decision making, and in initiating and implementing change and improvement. Given the same external change factors, each school deals with them based on its internal structural and cultural processes and leadership-capacity predispositions.

- 5) The major thread that emerged from the study is that leadership-capacity is context specific and differentiated among schools. This has become the major theme of this thesis. The dynamic interaction between leadership-capacity predispositions in a school, its unique culture and context tend to ensure sustained improvement. Building the capacity for school-improvement requires internal and external forces of change and development.

The school case-studies highlight some of the major concerns and difficulties intrinsic in building leadership-capacity. But a major question arises: how do schools build leadership-capacity for sustained school-improvement, and under what conditions? There is no magic formula to answer the question, it is a matter of a dynamic relationship between leadership-capacity predispositions, school culture and school external context. Of course, there are a set of conditions that need to be present if leadership-capacity is to develop inside a school that are associated with some cultural characteristics such as having high level of collaboration and trust among school members. But the sustainability of any school-improvement strategy is dependent on the dynamic interaction between internal capacity, school culture, and external context. The three case-studies and the findings suggest that building leadership-capacity for sustained school-improvement requires a number of interrelated factors that can be sketched into a coherent triangular model made of three apexes: internal capacity, culture, and external context (figure 5.1).

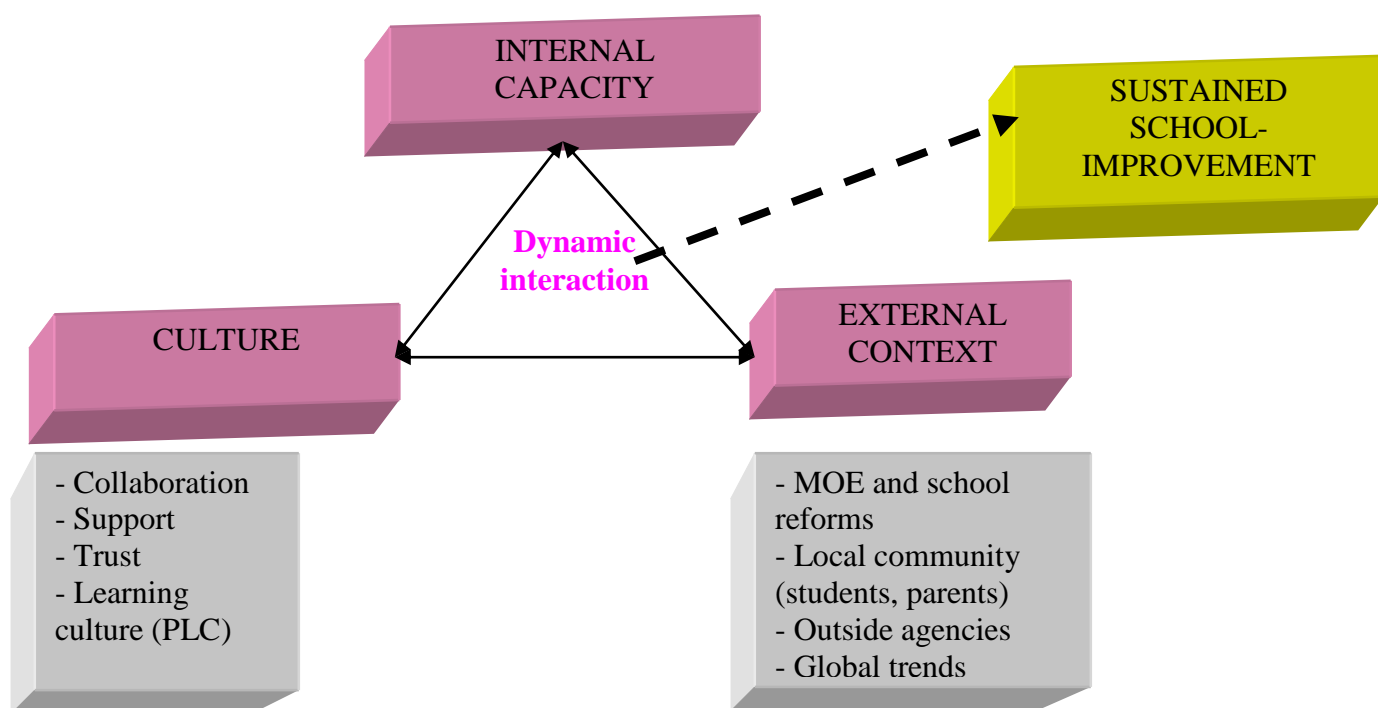


Figure 5.1: Differentiated-Contextual Capacity-Building model

Internal capacity of figure (5.1) is described in detail in figures (5.2 and 5.3) that describe the internal leadership-capacity predispositions that provide schematic answers to the key research questions. They are based on two main building blocks:

- How to build leadership-capacity inside a school
- How building leadership-capacity sustains school-improvement.

The steps in figures 5.2 and 5.3 relate to my findings, and describe the different factors that contribute to building leadership-capacity inside a school and those that ensure sustainability of improvement. Figure 5.2 describes a systemic framework for building leadership-capacity. Its elements form a dynamic relationship. The model looks like a web where different elements are interrelated in different ways. It represents an attempt to visualize building leadership-capacity inside a school, given the school culture and context. Note that the colours indicate elements that belong to the same group. The type of arrows

and their thickness are for cosmetic purposes to make the figure clearer to the reader. The summarized model (figure 5.3) shows how the main elements of the internal leadership-capacity model interact with school culture and context, and the emerging themes.

Creating sustainable school-improvement means understanding the school culture and developing strategies for change and development that match the particular school context. For a school that is involved in the process of improvement, teachers and administrators have to be allowed to search for their own solutions, investigate and manage change inside their own institution. They are the best persons to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of their school and are able to decide the necessary steps to build leadership-capacity and sustain their school-improvement, given the school external context. In judging a school's ability to build leadership-capacity for improvement, a key question is what are the elements of a PLC that are present at the school? Schools differ in size, culture, type and context. PLCs hold the key for transformation. Teachers constitute a crucial point in achieving school-improvement. Teacher-leadership and professional teacher development are key to building the capacity for sustained school-improvement.

Figure 5.2: Internal Leadership-capacity model

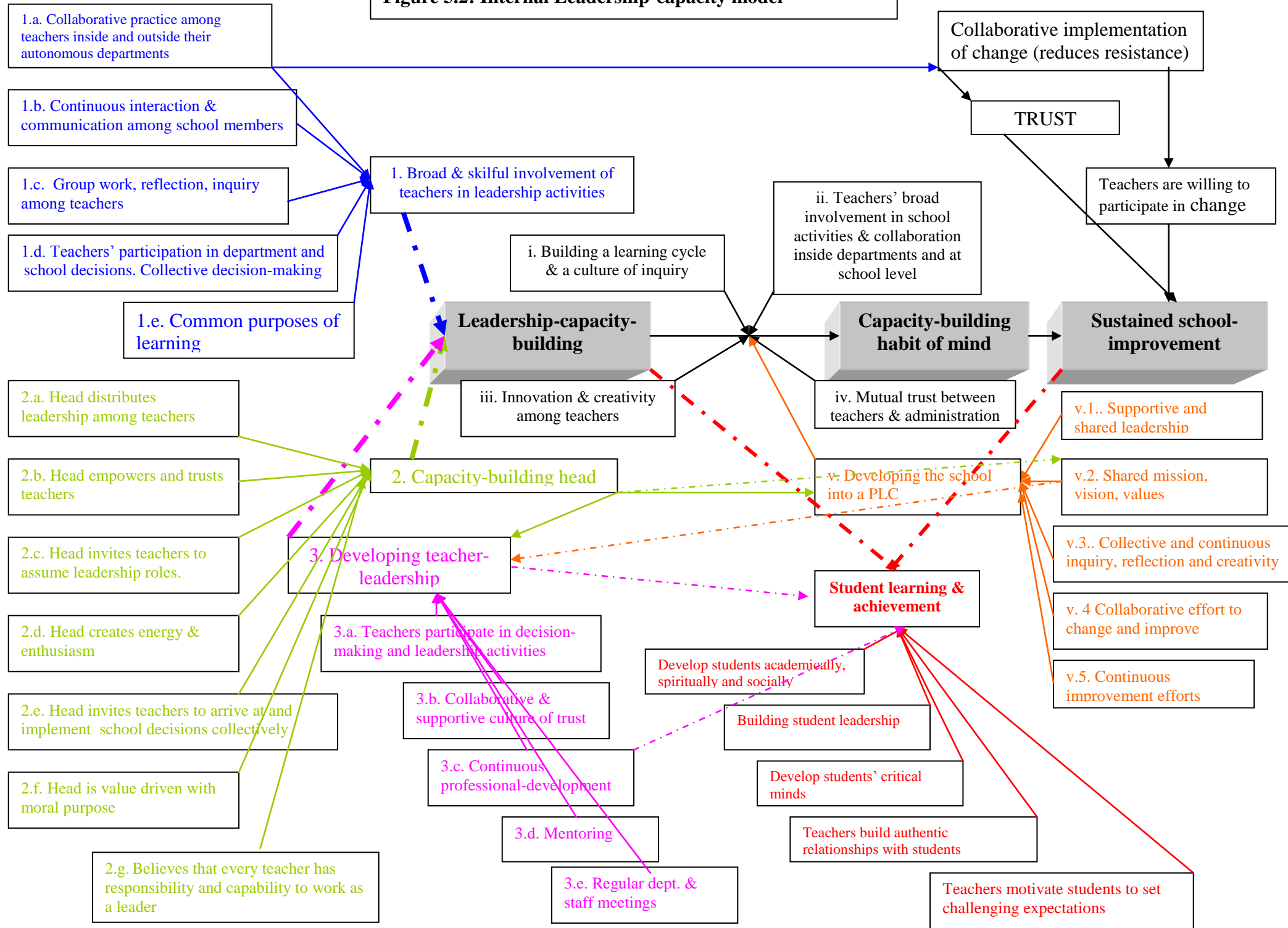
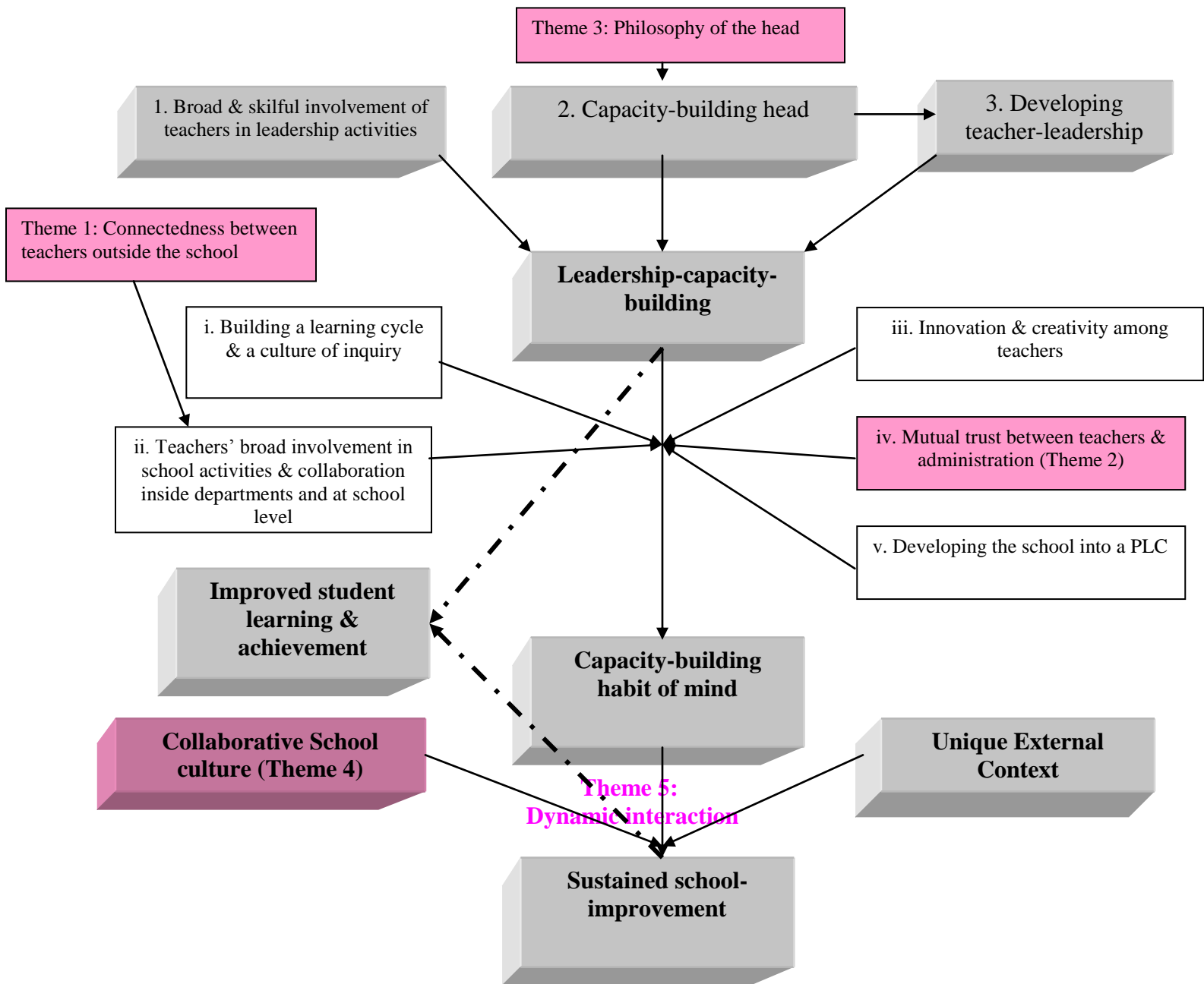


Figure 5.3: Leadership-capacity summarized model: Themes



Chapter 6

Conclusions, Implications and Reflections

6.1 Purpose and outline of chapter

The purpose of this chapter is to present a summary of the whole study and a synthesis of its outcomes. The chapter presents a reflective commentary on the implications of the leadership-capacity model to research, policy and practice communities. It begins (section 6.2) with a review of findings and analysis of building leadership-capacity and sustaining school-improvement as evidenced in the study. Section 6.3 continues with a discussion of the implications of the study to research, policy and practice. Finally, section 6.4 highlights some areas of the study which may be useful to explore in future research.

6.2 Review of findings

RQ1: How do schools get started on building leadership-capacity?

Building leadership-capacity starts by broadly involving teachers in leadership activities and providing opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles. This can be done through developing department-based work groups representing work entities, where teachers continuously work in groups, collaborate and implement changes together (Ch.5 p.190). This view is supported by Harris & Lambert (2003:31-32) where ‘multiple groups are needed for getting the work done’. It can also be done through giving teachers voting rights in school decisions, participation in committees, and providing teachers with frequent opportunities for interaction through holding regular meetings (Ch.5 p.190).

Leadership-capacity might also be enhanced through the skilful participation of teachers in the work of leadership. Skilfulness is developed when teachers share common purposes of learning, continuously work in groups, communicate, collaborate, and collectively reflect on teaching practices with senior management. Successful and sustained implementation of change (whether externally mandated or internally generated) lies in the internal change management strategies that are unique to each school, given its cultural characteristics (Ch.5 p.192). Successful change implementation is generally secured in a school when the administration supports teachers to implement changes collaboratively which reduces resistance and when teachers are given a chance to discuss their fears and worries about change (Ch.5 p.193). This collaborative implementation of change as Day (2009:725) suggests leads to a high level of trust that allows leaders to ask for change without resistance. Trust is important for successful change implementation because it allows teachers to implement change collaboratively and willingly, and change resistance is reduced (Day 2009:725; Louis Seashore 2007:19). Even when schools are subject to the same external change factors (such as school reform policies), they tend to react to them differently. Their success in implementing change is a function of their internal cultural and structural characteristics. It might be suggested that leadership-capacity in a school is intimately linked to its particular context and culture. Trust is key to open communication among school members and to collaborative working relationships which makes the school more responsive to improvement efforts (Ch.5 p.194).

RQ2: What type of leadership builds leadership-capacity?

The leadership of the head is important to building leadership-capacity. Heads set the

climate for improvement, and engage others in the emotional work of building collaborative, trusting relationships (Harris & Lambert 2003:38). They play an important role in internally generating change and sustaining improvement instead of waiting for externally mandated changes. The cross-case analysis (Ch.5 p.195) identified several characteristics of a capacity-building head who empowers and trusts teachers to do their job without interference and invites them to assume leadership roles, discuss and participate in school decisions. The head attends to teachers' feelings and motivation and move them more in a positive emotional direction through creating a climate of enthusiasm (Ch.5. p.195). His/her leadership is supportive, shared, and open to suggestions and encourages teachers to be innovative, act as professionals and perform according to high standards (Ch.5 p.196). The head believes that every teacher has the responsibility and capability to work as a leader inside and outside the classroom. To maintain the link with school-improvement, capacity-building means spotting leadership potential and providing a range of opportunities for people to develop leadership practices and interactions (Stoll 2009:122). Capacity-building means focusing on helping teachers collectively think-about and do things differently to improve all students' life chances, and find ways they can stimulate their colleagues to be creative through providing the necessary conditions, environment and opportunities. The head is value driven and has a clear moral purpose that is continuously communicated to school members. This resonates with what Begley (2007:163) named authentic leadership, a metaphor for professionally effective, ethically sound and consciously reflective practices in educational administration. The head is responsible for creating and encouraging the building of positive, collaborative and trusting relationships among teachers and between management and teachers (Ch.5 p.197).

RQ3: How does building leadership-capacity sustain school-improvement?

The findings suggest that part of building leadership-capacity is to develop a learning cycle and a culture of inquiry that provides teachers with information and knowledge necessary for them to make shared decisions and improve their practice (Ch.5 p.198). The focus here is on group members learning from each others continuously. Mutual trust among teachers is important, in order to reflect collectively, share their experiences, and frustrations, and come up with innovative ideas, hence sharing knowledge (thesis p.198). Consequently, teachers tend to learn from each other. This learning cycle contributes to building knowledge among teachers, and making them more capable of leadership activities, and suggesting improvements, thus participates in building leadership-capacity because teachers become knowledgeable of what is going on around them (thesis p.199). Teachers' broad involvement in school activities is also part of leadership-capacity. Teachers perform multiple tasks beyond their immediate classroom responsibilities, which enhance their involvement in the work of leadership. 'Building school capacity implies that schools promote collaboration' (Mitchell & Sackney 2000:78). Based on the findings from this study, a school is more likely to be self-renewing and responsive to improvement efforts when there is collaboration inside departments and at school level. Collaboration and trust are enhanced when school members are strongly connected, such as when they share the same cultural background, which ultimately reflects on the collaborative processes inside the school. This ensures regular interaction and communication, which helps in building trusting relationships among school members them (Ch.5 p.203).

An improving school possesses all the elements of a PLC and has high leadership-capacity

(Cha. 5 p.202). It is a school with a continual drive for improvement and teachers are involved in change and development. Teachers participate in department and school decisions. Teachers share common cultural values and participate along with the administration in developing the school mission and vision that highlight continuous improvement (Ch.5 p.202-3). There is a continual (external and internal) drive for improvement as teachers continuously collaboratively strive to change and improve. There is great work on teachers' personal growth through continuous professional-development and sharing of knowledge to generate improved learning outcomes (Ch.5 p.204). Improvement is part of the daily practice of teachers. In an improving school, improvement is mainly internally generated by teachers as part of the school culture of excellence and of teachers' daily practice with the objective to improve student learning and performance (Ch5 p. 204-5). Improvement becomes what Hargreaves & Fink (2006) call a 'habit of mind' that ensures sustainability of improvement efforts (Ch.5 p.208).

RQ4: What is the effect of leadership-capacity on student development and achievement?

The findings suggest that given the ultimate goal of school-improvement to enhance student learning and achievement, this is achieved when schools extend the capacity of all students to reach higher standards, to equip them academically, spiritually with a strong personality and to prepare them to face life challenges. Higher standards are achieved once students are empowered to participate in their own learning journey and develop their critical mind, which ensures better performance. School success is measured by how well students are prepared to succeed in life, what Lambert (2007:313) termed as 'social maturity'. It is about building 'student leadership' (Lambert 2006:241) through

developing the capacity for students to be leaders of their own learning (Stoll 2009:122). The role of teachers in students' learning and achievement is central, through motivating students to set challenging expectations for themselves and work towards higher goals and achieve better academically and in extracurricular activities (Ch.5 p.207-8).

RQ5: What is the role of teacher-leadership in building leadership-capacity?

The findings indicate that every teacher is a leader through his participation in leadership activities and decision-making at department and school level. What makes teacher-leadership strong in a school is the high level of collaboration among teachers, which secures the successful implementation of change (Ch.5 p.209). Teachers become capable of keeping the school running and improving.

Three important factors contribute to the development of teacher-leadership. First, a collaborative and supportive school culture partly contributes to the development of teacher-leadership through developing collaborative practice among teachers. The connectedness between teachers through belonging to the same cultural group outside a school tends to increase the internal collaboration among school members and their broad involvement in school activities. Collaboration among teachers outside a school ultimately reflects on their collaboration inside, and makes it a culture of collaboration, innovation, trust and mutual respect. Externally mandated changes are generally acted on collaboratively, which tends to reduce resistance and secure their successful implementation (Ch 5 p.210-11). Given such a culture, collaboration inside and outside classrooms become a natural behaviour which helps in providing a safe and nurturing

learning environment for students. Second, schools possess structural elements that enhance the development of teacher-leadership and build leadership-capacity. Teacher-leadership is manifested through the leadership of others such as mentoring other teachers and sharing knowledge and skills. Professional-development also helps in building leadership-capacity because it is used to foster deep collaboration among teachers. Teacher-leadership is also manifested through providing time set aside for teacher-leadership work (Ch.5 p.211-2). Third, heads play a key role in developing teacher-leadership. Heads need to trust that teachers are capable of assuming leadership tasks and that they have good judgements of what makes the school a better learning environment. Heads need to provide opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles and develop teacher-leadership skills: mentoring, active participation in committees through voting, regular staff meetings, participating in planning, initiating school activities (Ch.5 p.213).

Collectively, the research findings discussed above indicate, that group learning allows teachers to bond in new and complicated ways, hence inspiring critical thinking and stimulating self-organization. When heads choose to distributed power and authority while maintaining school values, schools are more capable of sustaining improvement. The most effective heads build the capacity for school improvement by empowering others to lead and develop the school (Hadfield & Chapman 2002). When the heads use their power and authority to involve teachers in developing a shared vision; organize and maintain momentum in learning dialogue; work with teachers to arrive at and implement school decisions, they establish processes that improve the leadership-capacity of the school (Harris & Lambert 2003:41). Ensuring sustainable improvement depends on a capacity-

building ‘habit of mind’ (Hargreaves & Fink 2006). Capacity for change is about continuous learning, where teachers individually and collectively engage in continuous reflection of their beliefs, skills, knowledge and practices. This kind of learning is connected to sustainability (Ch.5 p.222). These findings highlight the internal leadership-capacity processes inside the school that ensure sustainable improvement. However, each school has its own contextual factors that are unique to it. The findings suggest further that capacity-building is “multifaceted” (Fullan 2006), involving both internal school conditions and external factors in generating and sustaining the necessary conditions, culture and structures; facilitating learning and skill-oriented experiences and opportunities, ensuring interconnectedness and synergy between all the constituent parts. Given the same external factors, each school reacts to them differently based on their internal structural, cultural and leadership-capacity predispositions available inside the school. Hopkins et al. (1997) recognize that capacity-building needs to be differentiated by school so capacity-building strategies are not generic and do not apply to all schools. Consequently, contextual capacity-building strategies provide the answer to successful improvement strategies. It is a dynamic process based on developing strategies that are unique to each school, that take into account the school context, internal leadership-capacity predispositions and school culture which works on ensuring sustainable improvement for each particular school.

The findings of this study also suggest the following five themes:

- 1) Connectedness between teachers outside the school increases the collaboration among school members and their broad involvement in school activities.

- 2) Trust is key to open communication among teachers and between teachers and the head. Trust is important for successful change implementation.
- 3) The philosophy of the head regarding the role of teachers affects the leadership-capacity of the school.
- 4) Sustainability of change and improvement efforts even if they are externally mandated will only be secured if the internal (structural and cultural) processes inside the school support them.
- 5) Leadership-capacity is context specific and differentiated among schools. The dynamic interaction between leadership-capacity predispositions in a school, its unique culture and context ensure sustained improvement (see figure 5.3 p.229).

6.3 Implications of study

The findings of this study provide several contributions to knowledge about leadership-capacity-building and sustaining school-improvement. They confirm previous research findings such as the findings of Harris & Lambert (2003), especially those related to the internal leadership-capacity processes inside the school that ensure sustainable improvement. However, previous research findings do not fully position or capture explicitly the role of the external context. Consequently, the findings provide a platform for further theoretical development which has the potential to inform building leadership-capacity through developing a dynamic interaction between school internal capacity predispositions, culture and external context (Figure 5.1 p.226). The findings suggest further that capacity-building needs to be differentiated and context specific, involving both those internal school conditions and external factors those supporting them externally

in generating and sustaining the necessary conditions, culture and structures; facilitating learning and skill-oriented experiences and opportunities, ensuring interconnectedness and synergy between all the constituent parts. Capacity-building strategies are not generic and do not apply to all schools. It is a dynamic process based on developing strategies that are unique to each school and that take into account the school context, internal leadership-capacity predispositions and school culture. Worth mentioning that the internal leadership-capacity predispositions such as the factors that build teacher-leadership namely school culture, structure and leadership of the head might seem generic however they are actually enacted in each school. It is this dynamic interaction between capacity, culture and context that works on ensuring sustainable improvement for each particular school. Consequently, building the capacity for school-improvement requires internal and external forces of change and development. The suggested leadership-capacity model provides a visual display of leadership-capacity-building (Figures 5.1, 5.2 & 5.3 p. 226-9). The synthesized model suggests that building leadership-capacity for sustained school-improvement requires a number of interrelated factors that can be sketched into a coherent triangular model made of three apexes: internal capacity, culture, and external context. The following implications for research, policy and practice are raised as a result of this study.

6.3.1. Implications for research

Research is an ongoing activity that builds on past research and thrives on further research endeavours done in the same area (Oliver 2004). Future research could capitalise on the strength and wealth of results of this piece of research. It could equally work on its limitations by trying to avoid them or finding answers to them. The research efforts could

be invested in different applications thus guiding potential research through different paths. The choices are many depending on variations in different elements of the research, such as time, context, sample, method, and/or research questions. It all depends on the interests of the researcher or team of researchers, their finances and audiences. The research could be done at different sites in different countries to check for the impact of the place and culture on the results. The research could be also replicated at different times in a longitudinal-like style, to check for any variations in results.

While this study focuses on English speaking private secondary schools, future research could gain valuable insights through including public schools, and French speaking schools. Also different levels of schools such as primary and CEGEP (pre-university) could be included. Furthermore, it would be much useful to interview students and parents in addition to teachers and administrators to study in depth student leadership and the role of parents in building leadership-capacity and sustaining school-improvement. The role of the Montreal school boards and the Ministry of Education (MELS) could also be investigated. While this study used three cases for building leadership-capacity in a Canadian school context, the question that could be asked is whether these cases are transferable to other educational settings such as the country of origin of the researcher, Lebanon or the Middle East, for example. Further studies are needed to study and confirm the leadership theory that builds leadership-capacity as this current study did not reach a definitive conclusion about the type of leadership of the head.

In the midst of calls for improvement at both the micro and macro level of performance,

little attention has been given to the crucial role parents/caregivers play in the capacity building process. If increasing parental involvement and honoring the true meaning of partnership is desirable in the quest for improvement, then a preparedness to critically assess what happens in context promotional of this must exist. Maintaining a critical perspective in the building of authentic home/school partnerships may add to the pressures and tensions already faced, but failure to act perpetuates the myth that is home/school partnership and the true value of partnership fails to be established. The need for further research on the topic is necessary.

The limited nature of the case-study approach used leaves many questions open. While, for example, I had identified a number of factors that were present in these schools, causality and the importance of each individual factor are difficult to judge without more longitudinal work. The limited sample makes any generalization of these factors tentative. For example, the role of the head in initiating teacher-leadership appeared particularly strong in this study. The role of clear structures also appeared particularly strong in my case-studies, while conflict between teachers was not widely reported. The extent to which these differences result from the Quebecois educational context, specificity of the cases or my definition of teacher-leadership is hard to determine. What is clear is that the development of teacher-leadership is by no means a straightforward process, and that further interaction of research and practice is needed to help develop the potential that teacher-leadership has to offer.

6.3.2. Implications for policy

The results of this study indicate that the establishment of strong networks of collaboration between MOE, outside agencies and school stakeholders is crucial for sustaining capacity-building for improvement. For example, connectedness, trust, collaboration and teamwork assist in the minimization of limitations and maximization of opportunities to promote capacity. It is important that schools, in their drive to improve, gain and exploit the support of the Ministry and outside agencies to achieve successful outcomes. Trust, collaboration and teamwork at both micro and macro level of practice must be acknowledged as an essential prerequisite to meeting individual, collective and systemic needs.

Networking and a commitment to assisting schools on an individual basis requires full acknowledgement and support by MOE officials and outside agencies. In this respect, Honig & Hatch (2004:27) note, ‘ongoing processes where schools and central agencies work together to manage external demands’ challenge the stereotypical role of policy makers as primary decision makers and this stance needs replacing with one more supportive of schools and the decisions they make. In trying to implement successfully the school reform, the Ministry and outside agencies need to be open and responsive to suggestions from school stakeholders as to what works given their schools’ context and culture. A context, culture specific, connected response to highly complex issues of improving schools is needed to sustain and strengthen capacity-building for improvement.

6.3.3. Implications for practice

In light of the above results, the dynamic interaction between school internal leadership-

capacity predispositions, school culture and external context is acknowledged as influencing practice. Knowing that capacity-building strategies are not generic and do not apply to all schools, contextual capacity-building strategies provide the answer to successful improvement strategies. It is a dynamic process based on developing strategies that are unique to each school and that take into account the school context, internal leadership-capacity predispositions and school culture. It is this dynamic interaction that works on ensuring sustainable improvement for each particular school.

There is a need for each school to ensure that its core philosophy, values and beliefs are fully integrated in school life to form a culture supportive of improvement, given its external context. Contradictions between what is articulated and enacted may serve to negate any capacity building measures for improvement. For school boards, administration and staff this means evaluating the school culture, its external context, the quality of interpersonal relationships and the degree to which they contribute to capacity-building for school-improvement. If school stakeholders are collectively responsible for assisting in the capacity-building process, then it follows they be afforded regular opportunities to ‘jump-on-board’. A system that enables stakeholders to learn more about school operational processes, systems and structures builds capacity for improvement from within.

The present study reveals that sustainability of improvement efforts continues to be the most confounding problem in schools. The complexity of student learning and bureaucratic limitations places education more at risk. These risks include episodic improvements subject to rapid diminution with personnel changes. The present study suggests that

sustainable improvement is ensured through transforming the school into a professional-learning-community where learning and improvement become part of the daily practice of teachers and students, they become a habit of mind thus ensuring sustainability even with the change of the head. Collaborative forms of professional-development, a situated, layered approach and a learning community culture not only fosters collective stakeholder opportunities to discuss beliefs about teaching and learning, but also gives permission to critique practice, take risks and share in on-going processes of knowledge acquisition and utilization. The learning that results connects stakeholders to a situation where outcomes align with purpose. Learning, albeit individual, collective and/or systemic, is transformative. Learning creates capacity in context.

6.4 Reflections

What I have learnt about research from carrying out this study that successful research requires the adaptability of the researcher to rise to circumstances. This research was originally intended to be conducted in Lebanon, but was actually conducted in Montreal, Canada. As a researcher, I had to switch my thinking into a new educational setting with different cultural, structural, and contextual components. Research undertaken in an unfamiliar environment places additional demands on the sensitivities of the researcher. Gaining insights into people's feelings of leadership-capacity in their school can be stimulating; however, it can also be challenging because there is a major responsibility on me as a researcher to make participants trust me and reveal their thoughts and uncover their stories, being a complete stranger and speaking English with an 'accent', not immersed in the Quebecois culture. Uncovering people's feelings, emotions and challenges

is a complex process. This has required a continual alertness and a need to take stock of elements that may impact on gaining the rich data needed to explain leadership-capacity. The delicate nature of the research questioning and research context needed to be thought through carefully. Being mindful and sensitive to the fact that some participants feared losing their job for criticizing the principal has created a personal sense of gratitude for the time people provided for this research.

As a researcher, this research has installed a deep respect for people in the case-study schools and a reassurance in human nature that people are willing to give their time and opinions freely, especially given the levels of staff vulnerability in an unpredictable work environment. The contribution teachers and administrators have made to this study has instilled a confidence in the possibility and practicality of further research. Most important from this study, I realise that researchers rely on teachers and administrators and their willingness to express their emotions, feelings and lived experience of leadership-capacity and school-improvement. In this respect, as a researcher rich data is gained by investing in sensitising oneself to the context. The value of doing this cannot be overstated and has become more evident to the researcher as this study progressed.

The multiple challenges that I faced while working on this research made me more persistent and perseverant on completing the thesis. I quote the American writer and poet James Whitcomb Riley (1849-1916): “The most essential factor is persistence – the determination never to allow your energy or enthusiasm to be dampened by the discouragement that must inevitably come... Continuous, unflagging effort, persistence and determination will win, let not the man be discouraged who has these”.

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Appendix A
Leadership-capacity-school-interview-schedule
Summary

Project:
Time of interview:
Date:
Place:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Position of interviewee:

Section 1: Leadership-capacity questions

1. How do you participate in the establishment of work groups and committees?
2. How is the school organized to facilitate interactions among school members?
3. How do you provide opportunities for teachers at many levels to assume leadership roles?
4. How do you model, describe, and display the following leadership skills?
 - a) Develop shared purposes of learning with teachers
 - b) Facilitate group processes
 - c) Communicate
 - d) Reflect on teaching practices
 - e) Enquire into issues confronting your school community
 - f) Collaborate in planning
 - g) Manage change and transitions

Section 2: The role of the head

5. How do you describe yourself as a leader?

Section 3: Culture of enquiry

6. How do you develop plans and schedules for the creation of a learning cycle where you share time for dialogue and reflection?
7. How do you identify, discover and interpret information and school/data evidence that are used to inform your decision and teaching practices?
8. How do you communicate this data to school members?
9. How do you demonstrate and encourage individual and group initiative by providing access to resources, personnel, time, and outside network such as other schools and organizations?
10. How does the school principal deal with new ideas and innovations?

Section 4: Broad involvement and collaboration

11. In what ways does your own role include attention to the classroom, the school, the community and the profession at the same time and does not just stick to the job description?
12. How do you develop mutual expectations and strategies for ensuring that participants share responsibility for the implementation of school community decisions and agreements?
13. How do you make sure that teachers share and exchange ideas and know what is going on in each other's classes?

Section 5: Student achievement

14. How do you work with members of the school community to establish challenging expectations and standards in order to secure high student achievement?

Section 6: Teacher-leadership

15. How teachers participate in leadership activities and decision making at your school?
16. What factors present in your school contribute to the development of teacher-leadership?
17. How does the school engage in the professional-development of its teachers and staff?
18. What do you think are the barriers for professional-development at your school?
19. In your opinion, what are the barriers to teacher-leadership at your school?

Section 7: Professional-learning-community

20. What elements of a learning-community are observable, elusive, or hidden in your school?
 - Supportive and shared leadership
 - Teacher participate in decision making
 - Shared mission, vision, and values
 - Collective inquiry and creativity
 - Collaborative teams and work and accept joint responsibility for work outcome (shared personal practice)
 - Continuous improvement

Appendix B
Semi-structured observation schedule
Staff Meeting

School: _____ Date: _____

Meeting type: _____

Time of day: _____

List of attendance and position held: _____

Length of meeting: _____ minutes

Type of meeting: _____

1. *The physical setting:*
2. *The human setting (the participants):*
3. *The interactional setting:*
 - How many subjects were involved
 - The roles of the subjects involved
 - The time of day at which the observation occurred
 - The seating arrangements
 - The timetable of events
 - The point at which any critical incidents occur.

Content of conversations:

I. Leadership-capacity

1. Which of the following leadership skills did the head demonstrate?
 - a) Develop share purposes of learning
 - b) Facilitate group processes
 - c) Communicate
 - d) Reflect on practice
 - e) Enquire into the questions and issues confronting your school community
 - f) Collaborate in planning
 - g) Manage change and transactions

II. The role of the head

2. How did the head behave?
3. Did the head block new ideas or encouraged the transformation of interesting ideas into reality? How was the relationship between attendants and the head?

III. Culture of enquiry

4. Did the meeting demonstrate the use of dialogue, reflection, enquiry, question posing, and construction of new meaning and knowledge?
5. Was new school data or information communicated and/or analyzed?
6. Was there evidence that the school head encouraged individual and group initiative and innovation?

IV. Broad involvement and collaboration

7. How did the school head demonstrate broad based involvement and collaboration?
8. Did the head develop a plan for shared responsibilities in the implementation of decisions?
9. Was there any indication in this meeting that teachers share and exchange ideas and know what is going on in each other's classes?

V. Student achievement

10. Was there any mention of students' achievement?

VI. Teacher-leadership

11. How decisions were taken in this meeting? Did teachers ever initiate decisions?
12. Where there incidents that contributed to the development of teacher-leadership?
 - In school culture
 - School structure
 - The role of the head
13. Where there any discussion of professional-development of teachers and staff?
14. Where there clear barriers to teacher-leadership in this meeting?

VII. Professional-learning-community

15. What elements of PLC were observable, elusive, or hidden in this meeting?
16. Subtle factors:
17. Researcher behaviour:
18. Observer commentary:

Field notes:

Appendix C

Codebook extract

Categories and themes	Codes	Interview question
I. Leadership-capacity answering key research question 1		
1. How do schools get started on building leadership-capacity in a school?		
<i>I.A. Broad-based, skilful involvement in the work of leadership (Leadership-capacity)</i>	LCa	
I.A.1. Work groups, committees, governance groups	LCa-CM	1
I.A.2. Interaction among school members	LCa-INT	2
I.A.3. Opportunities for teachers to assume leadership roles	LCa-TL	3
<i>I.B. Skilful participation in the work of leadership</i>	P-Lead	
I.B.1. Common and shared purposes of learning	P-Lead-CoPuLear	4-a
I.B.2. Facilitate group processes	P-Lead-GPro	4-b
I.B.3. Communicate (especially listening and questioning)	P-Lead-Comm	4-c
I.B.4. Reflecting on teaching practices	P-Lead-RefTea	4-d
I.B.5. Enquire into issues confronting the school community	P-Lead-Enq	4-e
I.B.6. Collaborate in planning	P-Lead-CoPl	4-f
I.B.9. Manage change and transitions	P-Lead-MaCha	4-g

Appendix D

Coded Interview Transcript

(Extract)

With a teacher-leader

1. How do you assist in the establishment of work groups and committees?

Over the years I've been on various committees.

Now I'm on the parents' association committee. (I.A.1: LCa-CM) I'm the teacher representative for the school. I attend meetings once a month with the head. We're non voting members. But sometimes I do give them feedback. They have questions about certain situations especially related to the curriculum. One of my jobs as a teacher representative, they have teacher wish list. I ask the teachers to present to me requests for funding such as audiovisual materials or whatever. I collect requests maybe of 17 people. Requests have to be approved by department heads, and they have to support the reasons for their request, in addition to several evaluations for costs. I'm the spokesperson for them, I try to be neutral. (Role of parents V.B.1.g. Par-comm-ass)(III.A.1. BroadI)

Sharing ideas and interaction is facilitated because desks are close to each other. The shrinking of the staff room affected negatively on this interaction in other departments and between different departments.

Q: Did you participate in the establishment of a committee, given the fact that you've been for a long time at the school?

- I participated in the establishment of the social committee, (I.A.1: LCa-CM) way back, with some people. We got together, we needed a social outlet, we met once a month, we had drinks and food, we were able to talk.
- Other things I used to organise, not necessarily committees, these would be more with students. I used to organise with senior students, to Stratford, or to other places where there are theatres (I.A.1: LCa-CM).

(III.A.1. BroadI)

Q: What about workgroups at your department?

- Sometimes I have teachers in the department give workshops (II.A.1.e. LCy-ShId), they teach us what they do in their classroom (III.A.3: Coll-TeaCl). We often do that. We often share, because our desks are very close we're meeting and discussing all the time (I.A.2. LCa-INT).

Factors that contribute to the development of teacher-leadership: Collaborative practice between teachers (IV.C.1.a. TL-FactCult-Coll)

2. How is the school organized to facilitate interactions among all school community members?

Frequent meetings all the time, we're meeting constantly (IV.C.1.a. TL-FactCult-Coll), there are official meetings in the English department every 8 day (IV.C.2.d. TL-FactStruc-Time), where we update (I.a.2: LCa-INT), and also we're organising this public speaking competition we get together to delegate work (I.A.3.: LCa-TL) somebody is in charge of the food, somebody is in charge of greeting the guests, replying to the schools who have competitors coming in, we also someone in charge of

Leadership roles done together collectively

debating. (III.A.1. BroadI) and (III.A.2. Coll-ShResp) (V.A.5. PLCcollteams)

Challenging expectations to win contests: public speaking, science fair and literacy magazine)

- I am also part of the mosaic literary magazine (I.A.1: LCa-CM), I'm on that committee with another teacher. We collect creative writing and we meet with the students every Wednesday. We have to push them to work and to submit material (II.B.1: Ach-ChExp), they do most of the layout. Our literary magazine has won several awards over the years, we come second throughout North America (III.B.3.f. Ach-Cont).

3. How do you provide opportunities for teachers at many levels to assume leadership roles? Tell me a story to illustrate.

- Especially within our department I give them leadership roles. When somebody comes and tell me I would like to try this method. I tell him go and try it (II.B. ReflInn-Supp) and then come and tell us about it. Or someone might be in charge taking charge of the debating and she goes with it (I.A.3. LCa-TL). (IV-A TL LeaAct)

Feedback is important to the teacher leader; and sharing too

Q: When they say this is one of the best departments why do you think?

- I think it's because I try very hard to work as a team. (VA.5. PLCcollteams)
- And what has helped us over the years especially the last 2 years, is because we decided to have these meetings one day on the 8th. We make sure we get together and we keep in touch (III.A.4.a. Coll-TeaShaIdCou). And if we have any problems or any issues we raise them there. If there are some books we are not comfortable with, we might want to change or we might ask questions about teaching methodology (I.B.4. P-Lead-RefTea). So there is constant contact and regular contact. Because especially now we are not in the same room, we're scattered it's hard to meet up on a regular basis. They seem to like this very much.

Continuous and regular collaboration and teamwork at the department