The professional development needs and experiences of mid and late-career principals

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CONTENTS

ABSTRACT

Comparative to what is known about teacher development generally, or what is known about the professional development of aspirant or newly-appointed principals, far less is known about the professional development of experienced principals, defined in this study as principals who have been in the role in excess of five years. This is somewhat surprising when it is considered that this group are key players in the current environment of rapid globalisation of educational expectations and modes of practice. In the state of New South Wales (NSW), Australia, this group represent the majority of Principals in the NSW Government (public) school sector where this study is set. These experienced principals provided the case study for an investigation into the professional development needs and experiences of mid and late-career principals.

The study utilised an iterative, three-phase, mixed method research design. The study began with exploratory interviews and proceeded by way of a state-wide survey and focused, individual interviews. Further insights were sought by triangulating the views of principals with those of a small group of academics and administrators considered to be experts in the field and familiar with working alongside principals. Cumulative analysis of the data gathered across these phases showed the importance and unexpected power of peer-networking engagement in principals' professional development and in building both individual and collective principal efficacy. This was especially so in situations where principals felt in control of these networks and their focus extended beyond the immediate control and priorities of the employing authority. There was also evidence of the need for these connections to become more international in their focus, with principals increasingly aware of their responsibilities and challenges in leading schools in a competitive and global education environment. The implications of these and other related findings for the professional growth and wellbeing of principals, and for educational leadership research, policy and practice, are discussed.

Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signed:_____   Date: June 2018

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PREFACE

As a recently retired school principal with a long-held passion for professional development, embarking on a journey to research the professional learning needs of principals was an awaiting challenge.

Throughout my teaching career I have been committed to seeking appropriate, relevant professional development as a teacher, middle executive leader, aspirant and early years' principal and, finally, as an experienced principal. Professional learning opportunities that satisfied and provided relevant professional development presented themselves throughout my career. However, as an experienced principal, the opportunities to engage in relevant and appropriate professional development became problematic. Anecdotally, my experienced colleagues also found accessing PD specific for their career stage an issue. Happy to take on the responsibility to source our PD, we searched high and low to satisfy our individual and collective professional learning needs.

As an experienced principal, with eleven years' experience in the principalship, my passion for quality, relevant and appropriate professional development for experienced principals had not waned! Accordingly, In the last twelve months of my principalship (2011-12) I enrolled in my doctorate with passion, to research the professional development needs of experienced principals - as perceived by practising experienced principals. The more I read into the literature, the more I saw research in this area as an area of need.

This research investigates this specific issue in the hope that employing authorities and professional development providers will be better informed of the needs and experiences of principals with regard to the professional learning opportunities offered and that, through it, a useful contribution will have been made to the literature on educational leadership.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study explored the professional development needs of experienced principals. Experienced principals are defined in the study as a specific cohort with at least five years in the principalship.

Since the late 1980s in Australia the context of the principalship has been significantly influenced by the movement of business models into the public sector and the rise of globalisation.

Tolofari (2005) has outlined how New Pubic Management (NPM) brought the business world structures (e.g. marketisation, market capitalism, performance measurement and accountability) into the education domain. Along with neo-liberalism with its emphasis on parental choice and competition between schools, this movement has drastically altered the context for principals over the past 30 years (Marks & McCulla, 2016).

It is also widely accepted that globalisation has dramatically and exponentially impacted on every major aspect of life: economic, scientific, political, social, cultural and educational (Baldwin & Martin, 1999; Paige & Mestenhauser, 1999; Bliss, 2005; Townsend, 2008; Organisation for Economic Development - OECD, 2009 & 2012; Ricketts & Morgan, 2009). Together with many other countries, Australia has needed to become more competitive economically and educationally (OECD, 2011). From the 1980s therefore, teachers have become more accountable, with education policy makers focused on educating Australian students to be more competitive in a global market (Fink, 2016). The 2008 *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* acknowledges the need for improved student outcomes to underpin the country's social and economic prosperity (MCEETYA, 2008). As a member of the OECD, Australia continues to strive to strengthen its international test scores in comparative global assessments such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the

OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) (OECD, 2011). The search for a world-class education system remains an ongoing national and international undertaking.

Nearly 20 years ago, Baldwin and Martin (1999) noted that already the second wave of globalisation across the Twentieth Century had set the scene for rapid growth of a globalised education community. Recent research (AITSL 2012, 2014a; Jensen, et al., 2015; Dinham & Crowther, 2011; Dinham, 2008; Dempster, Lovett & Fluckiger, 2011) supports the observation that the school education landscape has continued to change dramatically and that this has substantial implications for the principal's role with its changes impacting on all aspects of education: curriculum, pedagogy, students, teachers and leadership.

Nationally, Australia's recent review of the Australian curriculum aimed to address the purpose of education across the nation (Australian Government Department of Education: AGDE, 2014). It sought to ensure the future delivery of education "to equal the best performing international systems" (AGDE, 2014 p. 6) so that Australia will continue to perform well in the international context as measured by PISA, Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). Global competitiveness in education now drives policy and practice in the majority of OECD nations.

The Australian Government Department of Education (2014) has advocated the need for, and importance of, national coherence and consistency – in curriculum, pedagogy and assessment to achieve these objectives. This national agenda has a flow-on effect to the states' education agendas which in turn flows down to the local principal. The impact of the NPM and globalisation onto principals has resulted in increased accountability and performance management for them. It follows that any investigation into the professional development needs of the experienced principal cannot be carried out devoid of the context within which these principals now work. The changing role of the principal requires an unprecedented acquisition (and sharing) of new skills, knowledge and capabilities in order to respond to the complexities of the Twenty-first

Century globalised community - the context within which these principals work (Bliss, 2005; Chapman, 2005).

This study was set within the context of the NSW public education system, and against the background of the influence of NPM and globalisation. The current systemic changes in NSW public education, are, according to the NSW Minister for Education at the time when the study was first considered, "the most far reaching reforms to school education in a century" (Piccolli, 2012). The state government's policy *Local Schools, Local Decisions* (LSLD) presented a "roadmap" for decentralisation and devolution in primary and secondary schools. This initiative closely aligns with national and global trends towards greater school autonomy, at least in managing the day-to-day affairs of the school, aimed at producing a more educated labour force (OECD, 2011), through the inclusion of market forces. Somewhat ironically this devolution is occurring simultaneously with increasingly centralised control at the national level in curriculum, assessment and teaching standards (ACARA, 2017; AITSL, 2017) including a standard for school principals (AITSL, 2014a).

Aim of the study

In light of these profound changes in the working lives of teachers and principals both globally and locally, and the need for principals to be responsive to them, this study sought to investigate the professional development (PD) needs of experienced principals. To achieve this, the study drew on the perceptions and experiences of mid and late-career (experienced) government school principals in NSW in relation to their participation and engagement in currently available professional development programs whether they be local, national or international. As noted above, these investigations were set against a time of rapid change in education both locally and globally.

There are at least three distinct stages in a principal's career trajectory: the early years' stage; the experienced (mid and late-career) stage; and the separation and retirement stage (Marks, 2012). Whilst a detailed exploration of the relevant literature revealed an abundance of research relating to the two earlier stages of recruitment, preparation and early career, there appeared to be a dearth of research relating to the third stage (the experienced stage) which incorporates both the mid and later-career stages. The paucity of research in this third stage suggested a need for more in-depth exploration into the professional development needs of experienced principals. Consequently, this study specifically sought to investigate the professional development experiences and needs of this group of principals. To achieve this, the study consciously sought the responses of a representative group of NSW government school principals in regard to their engagement in a variety of professional development programs ranging from locally developed and sourced to internationalised programs. This scenario, as outlined above, gave rise to the core question that guided this research study:

> *What kinds of professional development activities do principals in the experienced stage of their careers value as significant contributors to their professional learning in a Twenty-first Century globalised education community?*

For the purposes of this study, a "globalised education community" is defined as, "The increasing interconnection of countries politically, economically and educationally" (Power, 2000).

Structure of the study

To investigate the core research question, the study commenced with a review of the currently available educational literature as it related to a principal's career trajectory, and in particular, to the experienced principal (Chapter 2). As an outcome of the literature review, it was confirmed that there was a paucity of research available into the experienced stage of the principal's career.

Chapter 3 summarises the contributing research questions which arose from the literature review and then proceeds to outline the research design and methodology of the study. This chapter also covers the ethical considerations, permission to engage in the research and limitations of the study.

Chapter 4 describes the population sampling, data collection and data analysis of each of the three phases of the study - Phase 1: Exploratory Interviews; Phase 2: Online Questionnaire; Phase 3: Focused Interviews.

Chapter 5 reports on and discusses the findings of Phase 1 of the study - Exploratory Interviews. An analysis of the data that emerged from this phase provided the conceptual framework in the form of domains and categories for the design and development of a survey (online questionnaire) from which to gather the data in Phase 2 of the study. Chapter 6 then reports on and discusses the findings from this phase. The findings that emerged from Phases 1 and 2 are then reflected upon in Chapter 7.

Chapter 8 discusses the findings that emerged from analysis of the Phase 3 follow-up in-depth individual interviews, whilst Chapter 9 summarises and triangulates eight key research findings that were distilled from the initial 34 findings from the study. These key research findings are distilled further into "four big ideas" in Chapter 10.

Chapter 11, as a concluding chapter, discusses the overall findings and their implications and recommendations from this study for educational practice, policy and research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Chapter 2 now looks to understand the career trajectory of the principal with specific reference to the mid and late-career stages (the experienced stage). A review of the literature on the career trajectories of teachers sought to establish the relationship (if any) with the principal's career trajectory and to establish the need, if any at all, for further research into the career trajectory of the principal.

While this chapter discusses the stages of a principal's career, it also investigates the literature relevant to the context within which the study's representative group of principals' work - characterised as it is by neo-liberalism, New Public Management and the demands of a Twenty-first Century globalised education community.

The conceptual framework for this study resides predominantly in the research literature relating to the career trajectories of teachers and principals. It is noted from the literature base which follows, that while an abundance of literature exists in relation to the career trajectory of teachers generally, the career trajectory of principals appears to have been overlooked until more recently.

Career stages

TEACHER'S CAREER TRAJECTORY THEORY

As noted above, it is useful to site the career trajectories of principals in the broader framework of that relating to teachers generally to begin.

The seminal work of Huberman (1989) broadly describes teachers' careers as forming a continuum of stages: early career exploration; stabilisation; mid-career interrogation (or stock-

taking); late-career serenity; and finally, disengagement. Although the number and names of these stages have varied among researchers (Sikes et al., 1985; Huberman, 1993; Fessler & Christensen, 1992; Fessler, 1995; Day et al., 2006; Bayer & Brinkkjaer, 2009), researchers universally accept the overall concept of teachers' career stages.

Rather than simply a linear progression along a continuum as proposed by Sikes (1985) and Day, Sammons, Gu, Kington & Stobart, (2009), the movement through various stages may alternatively be cyclical or recursive in nature as proposed by Huberman (1989), Fessler (1995), Rolls & Plauborg (2009), Kelchtermans (2009) and Oplatka (2010). Additionally, the movement, progression or transition in and out of stages would seem to be impacted upon by a series of personal and professional factors.

FACTORS AFFECTING TEACHERS' CAREER STAGES

Factors impacting on teachers' career trajectories often referred to as, 'critical incidents' or 'critical phases', significantly influence teachers' career paths, identity and resilience (Measor, 1985; Sikes et al., 1985). Kelchtermans (2009) notes these incidents as professional (e.g. extrinsic policy changes directly impacting on the workplace; or intrinsic decisions impacting on career progression); or personal (e.g. marriage, divorce, childbirth, child rearing, death of a family member).

McCulla (2012) notes that the really pivotal times in a teacher's career appear when the personal and the professional lives of teachers collide. Such times often direct and redirect the teacher's career path. Managing these pivotal moments poses a significant challenge for teachers. A teacher's capacity to manage these critical intersections impacts significantly, either negatively or positively, on the nature of a teacher's work (Day & Gu, 2010). The decision to aspire to the principalship (or not) is a pivotal time (Lacey, 2003, 2004; Gronn, 2007; Barty et al., 2005; d'Arbon, 2007; Fink, 2010).

LINKING TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL CAREER TRAJECTORY THEORY

While early research on career trajectories focused predominantly on teachers (Lortie, 1975; Sikes et al., 1985; Huberman, 1993; Fessler & Christensen, 1992; Bayer & Brinkkjaer, 2009; Richter et al., 2011), some later research (Weindling, 1999; Earley & Weindling, 2007; Oplatka, 2004; 2007) instigates a discussion about the potential commonality between teachers' and principals' career paths.

Both teachers' and principals' career trajectory frameworks begin with the distinct preparation and induction stages (Kremer-Hayon & Fessler, 1992). However, later research identifies additional stages within the principalship (Oplatka, 2004; Mulford et al., 2007; and Earley & Weindling, 2007). Specifically, Oplatka (2004) identifies four non-linear stages – not linked to years in the principalship-whilst Earley and Weindling (2007) identify seven linear stages conversely linked by years in the principalship. Stevenson (2006) concludes that a need exists for a deeper understanding of career trajectories as teachers move into and through the principalship.

PRINCIPALS' CAREER TRAJECTORY

Research into the principal's career trajectory has escalated over recent years. Areas investigated include succession, recruitment, preparation and planning (Fink, 2010; Dempster, 2007); transitioning into the principalship (Lacey & Gronn, 2005; Stevenson, 2006; d'Arbon, 2007; McCulla & Degenhardt, 2015); the early years of the principalship (Stevenson, 2006; Weindling & Dimmock, 2006); and the existence of the discrete mid and late-career principalship (Oplatka, 2007, 2010; Marks, 2012).

This final phase, the late-career principal, seems a very interesting (and more controversial) stage of the principal's career trajectory. Earlier research (Weindling, 2004; and Earley & Weindling, 2007) proposed a "conventional wisdom" model that late-career principals tend to

enter a plateau path characterised by loss of interest and energy. Later research (Oplatka, 2007, 2010; Mulford et al., 2008; Marks, 2012) refutes the plateau path with findings indicating late-career principals can be highly motivated, energised and effective. The findings of Ehrlich and Simpson (1995), Pang (2007), Mulford et al. (2008), Oplatka (2010) and Marks (2012) would all suggest that the mid and late-career stages of the principalship remain under-researched and therefore in need of further investigation.

Peterson (2002), Oplatka (2007), Richter et al. (2011) and Zepeda et al. (2014) recognise both the existence of career stages within the principalship and the need to design professional development that specifically caters for each career stage.

Stages of the principalship

When discussing principals' career trajectories, researchers use a range of terms in an attempt to form a common language to describe the progression from preparation and appointment; to the early-years career or newly-appointed stage (NAS); to mid-career; to late-career; and finally, to separation or retirement. Consequently, the following terminology has been developed by the researcher for the purpose of this study to describe the movement from aspiration to retirement. A career trajectory continuum, as outlined in Figure 2.1 below, is provided to give an overarching framework for this study.

Figure 2.1: Stages of the principalship
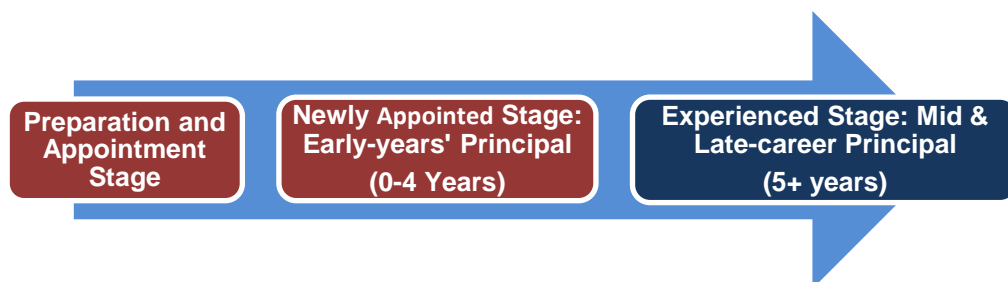
PREPARATION AND APPOINTMENT

An invitation to participate in formal leadership preparation as a component of an employing authority's succession planning strategy, or self-nomination, could result in a movement into the principalship (Fink, 2010; Gronn, 2007). Researchers continuously emphasise the importance within educational jurisdictions of preparation programs for the principalship (Fink, 2010; Fullan 2005, 2008, 2011; Guskey, 2002; Dinham, Anderson, Caldwell & Weldon, 2011; Hale & Moorman, 2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Harris, 2008). As a result, principal preparation programs have been available to a greater and lesser extent in most western cultures. The effective recruitment and development of school principals aims to ensure that schools deliver the highest quality education for their students. Research supports the notion that strong and effective educational leadership results in bringing about school improvements (Chapman, 2005; Robinson et al., 2008; Hallinger, 2011; Harris and Spillane, 2008; AITSL, 2011; Dinham, 2008; Hattie, 2009).

In Australia, an abundance of principal preparation and succession programs aim at enticing aspirants into the principalship (Dempster, 2007; Lovett et al., 2015). However, given that most jurisdictions implement a plethora of such succession programs, the reality of a diminishing pool of interested and qualified aspirants to the principalship (d'Arbon, 2007; Lacey & Gronn, 2005; Chapman, 2005; Fink, 2010), seems both contradictory and confusing.

Research into one such preparation program, the recently developed *Flagship Program* of the Association of Independent Schools in the state of New South Wales, Australia (Degenhardt, 2013) aimed to determine the views of aspirant principals to this particular preparation program. These participants felt that the intersection of both the personal and professional journeys underpinned the success of their preparation (McCulla & Degenhardt, 2015). A deeper understanding of the inner personal journey in relation to preparation (and subsequent professional development) program development may better prepare aspirants for the role. The

participants also observed that an emphasis on the importance of inclusion of one-to-one relationships with colleagues had relevance to both leadership preparation and development programs relevant to subsequent stages of the principalship.

Across the decade 2010 to 2020 the anticipated high retirement rate of a generation of "baby boomer" principals has exacerbated supply (Marks, 2012). Deputy principals, the natural replacement cohort that one would expect to replace retiring principals, are also retiring at a similar time to existing principals (Marks, 2012) creating a vacuum in the succession pipeline (Fink, 2010). Other researchers (Stevenson, 2006; Barty et al., 2005; Fink, 2010; Chapman, 2005; Fluckiger et al., 2014) suggest that changing social, economic and education conditions intersect with, and impact on, the principal's role resulting in a decline in the number of appropriate aspirants.

Depending on the context and circumstances, appointment to the principalship can occur at any point in the teacher's career, i.e. in relatively early, mid or late-career stages. However, early and late-career stages appear not to be times when teachers tend to aspire or move into the principalship (d'Arbon, 2007; Lacey, 2003; McKenzie, 2008; Gronn, 2007; Fink, 2010). Consequently, the years between these extremities (i.e. teachers' mid-career stage) provide opportunities for teachers to commence the movement into the principalship. Importantly, the available literature suggests that the movement from classroom teacher into the principalship signifies entry into a new principal career trajectory with its own distinct stages (Oplatka, 2004; Earley & Weindling, 2007; Weindling, 1999). This requires significant new learning through multi-phase and multi-process professional development programs as a number of studies have indicated (McCulla & Degenhardt, 2015).

THE NEWLY-APPOINTED STAGE (EARLY-YEARS' PRINCIPALS)

Successfully navigating the transition from a classroom teacher to a principal verifies the effectiveness of preparation and induction programs (Stevenson, 2006; Dempster, 2007;

McCulla & Degenhardt, 2015). In conceptualising the early years of the principalship, new appointees seem primarily concerned with a 'reality shock' which occurs when dealing for the first time with issues such as resource management (e.g. finances; budgets; and staffing); school culture (e.g. interpersonal relationships; staff collaboration; staff/community trust; staff welfare; and staff performance); school and community environment (e.g. buildings, resource management and the local community); teacher and leadership development (e.g. professional learning for staff); and devising a school vision (Weindling, 1999; Oplatka, 2010; Kremer-Hayon & Fessler, 1992; Earley & Weindling, 2007).

Across these first three to four years, principals report a movement from an idealistic and somewhat naïve perception of the role (in reality defined as a "survival stage") to a more comfortable, confident and realistic view of school leadership (Kremer-Hayon & Fessler, 1992). From a rather challenging beginning, effective principals begin to develop a greater sense of confidence, effectiveness and composure in the role (Earley & Weindling, 2007; Oplatka, 2007; Kremer-Hayon & Fessler, 1992). Principals then, ideally move into the experienced stage of their principalship with a sense of control, self-confidence, effectiveness, knowledge and self-efficacy (Oplatka, 2004 & 2007). There are interesting parallels here with new teacher development, suggesting in part that entry to, and progress within, the principalship is in itself a new professional career.

THE EXPERIENCED STAGE (MID & LATE-CAREER PRINCIPALS)

Consistent with the above descriptions of a principal's career trajectory, and for the purpose of this study, principals with five or more years in the role were classified as being in the experienced stage of the principalship (i.e. incorporating both mid and late-career, as outlined in Figure 2.1). Ramsey (2000) observed that the two pivotal moments in a teacher's career are the movement from neophyte into the practising profession, and from the classroom to the principal's role (Ramsay, 2000).

Existing research into mid-career principals views these years as a time of renewal (Oplatka, 2010), or consolidation (Earley & Weindling, 2007). However other research into late-career principals suggests that these late-career principals appeared rigid, autocratic and disenchanted; withdrawn from work; saw their career as having plateaued; and felt tired and trapped (Weindling, 1999). As noted above, Mulford et al. (2007) was among those who challenged this view finding that many late-career principals continued in their career as committed and motivated principals. Mulford et al. (2007) concluded, that more needed to be done for these principals in terms of support at this stage of their career paths:

> With education systems undergoing major and continuing change, while at the same time suffering potential shortages of effective school leaders, it is time to re-examine educational career structures, especially for those principals approaching retirement (Mulford et al., 2007, p.48).

Marks (2012) also challenges the disengagement hypothesis. He argues that many late-career principals do not see themselves as plateauing, and appear strongly motivated and enthusiastic, looking for new challenges despite longevity in the principalship. Creativity, a sense of greater professional competence, and a participative and considerate leadership style tend to characterise these principals. They did not support the "plateau path" concept as they saw themselves as highly effective and highly motivated, energetic, effective, committed, work-focused, passionate, collaborative, passionate and willing to change (Marks, 2012). The question is one therefore of how these principals attained such levels of resilience and engagement.

The abundance of research literature reporting on the aspirant and early stages of the principalship (Fink, 2010; Dempster, 2007; Lacey & Gronn, 2005; d'Arbon, 2007; Stevenson, 2006; Odhiambo, 2007; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Fullan, 2005; Gronn, 2007) stands in sharp contrast to the research available that is focused specifically on experienced (mid and late-career) principals (Oplatka, 2010; Marks, 2012). Knowledge about the professional development needs of principals once established in the role, therefore, remains scarce (Mulford et al., 2007).

A significant gap exists in the educational leadership research literature about this stage of the principalship (Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.2: Principalship research: the missing elements
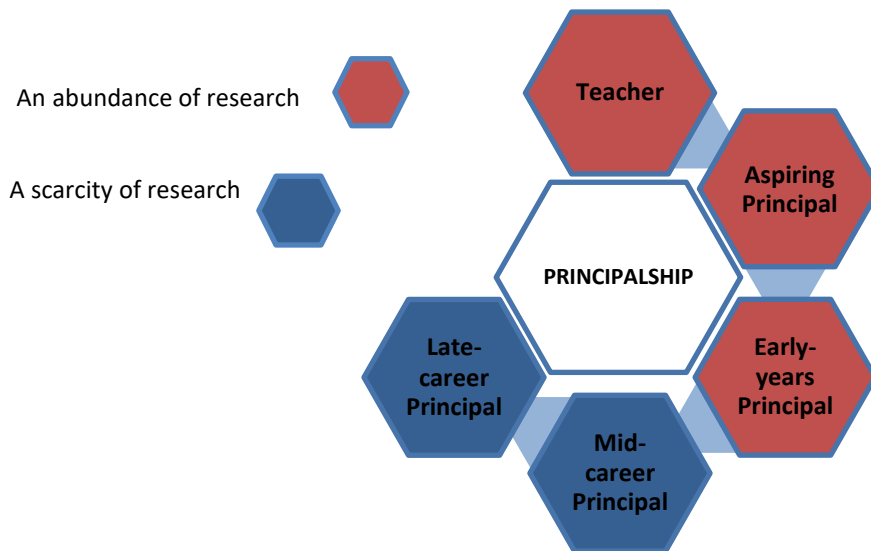
The principal's role

Designed for the industrial age, it could be argued that the long-accepted and perceived role of the principal remains relatively unchanged to deal with the complexities of the 21st Century. It remains focused on areas such as budget analysis; pedagogical leadership; facility management; community organisation; change agency; and education vision (Fluckiger et al., 2014). Rising levels of diversity, the changing nature of labour relations, the advance of technology, national and international competitiveness, performance-based accountability; together with a standardised curriculum, have all contributed to an ever increasingly complex role (Pollock, Hauseman & Wang, 2014; Dempster, Lovett & Fluckiger, 2011; OECD, 2011; Uhl-Bien, Marion & McKelvey, 2007).

When Twenty-first Century education (like many other components of society) developed globally, changes in educational practice also occurred globally (Usdan et al., 2000; Pang, 2007; Dempster, Lovett & Fluckiger, 2011). Our lives, now globally interconnected as never before, created a globally-connected education community. In this ever-developing globalised world

(Darling-Hammond, 2013), education matters and individuals' and nations' successes become intertwined with the quality of the education offered. A nation's education achievements, judged on an international stage, become part of the global education discussion (OECD, 2011). As a consequence, principals have come to experience more prescriptive and regulatory education reforms, with broad professional learning replaced by small-target in-service training on specific government priorities (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009).

The new face required for educational leadership and management characterised by these large-scale, global, cultural, technological, economic and political forces sits together with broad sweeping social and economic changes (Power, 2000; Bliss, 2005; Dinham, et al., 2011). We now live in an increasingly diverse, globalized, complex and media-saturated society. Emerging technologies and the resulting globalization provide unlimited possibilities for exciting new discoveries and developments. The education system, relatively stable since the 1950s, now finds itself amidst a time of unparalleled change (Dinham, 2008). Figure 2.3 reflects the impact of globalisation on school practice in the 21st Century.

Figure 2.3 The effect of globalisation of education on school practice
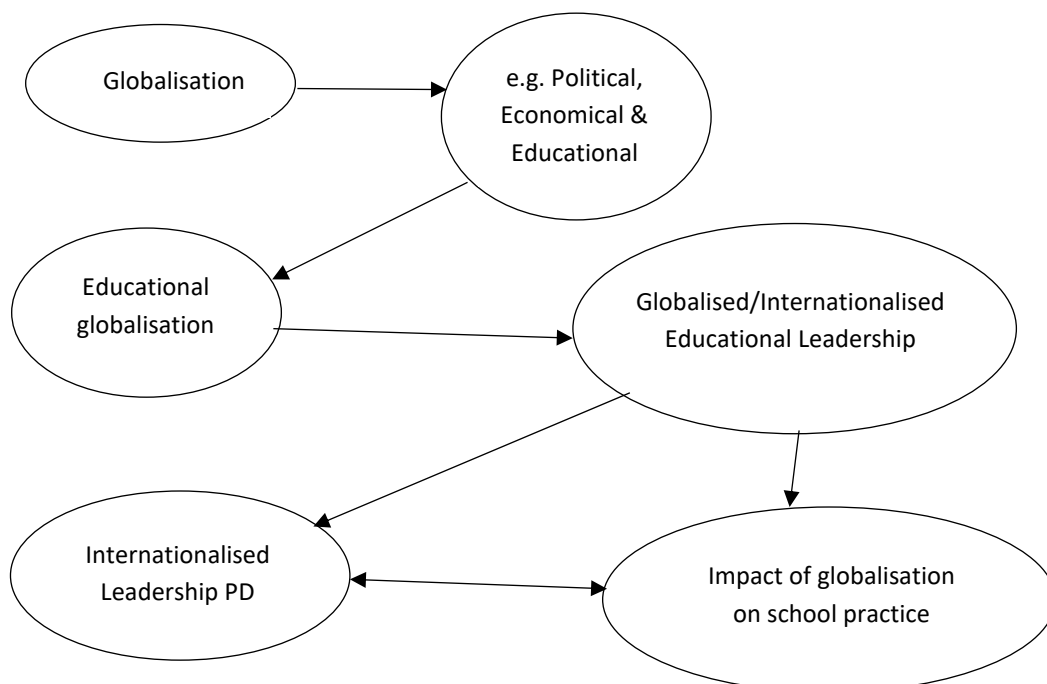
What has been termed a "global education reform movement" (GERM) has gradually evolved since the 1980s, with many countries (e.g. Australia, Canada, England, USA) adopting common elements of educational policies and practices in the name of education "reform" (Sahlberg, 2017). More recently the dialogue focusing on the effects of globalisation on schools has gained traction. Sahlberg (2006) has maintained that educators need now to re-think a range of issues in response to globalisation. The effects of globalisation on education are described as complex, impacting on how schools function at many levels, bringing in a competitiveness between schools at unprecedented levels.

Hargreaves and Shirley's (2009) analysis of the global movements in education across the Twentieth Century suggests that education is progressing through a number of 'ways', each characterised by specific philosophies and associated actions designed, at the time, to improve current education practices. The 'third way' has encompassed a competitiveness that has been driving educational change in many OECD countries.

Globally, this century is seeing politicians, researchers and educators sharing data, initiatives, and programs as never before (Power, 2000; Pang, 2007; OECD, 2011). The effect of these globalised influences on the principalship not only cascade down through the broader education community impacting on various aspects of the role but it also impacts directly on the role itself.

School effectiveness, high performing schools and high performing systems have been topics for discussion and research that compare education systems across OECD countries such as those in the USA, England, Canada, Australia and Finland (McIntyre, 2011). The focus has been on improving student outcomes, improving pedagogy and on increasing the quality and effectiveness of teachers and teaching. Researchers have investigated school effectiveness and school improvement by looking at 'what works best', comparing schools and countries, in an effort to 'improve standards' (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Creemers & Reezigt, 2005). The onus to 'improve standards' and discover 'what works best' has fallen on the principal.

Research over many years, "has highlighted the increasingly complex and multifaceted nature of the roles and responsibilities of the principal" (Chapman, 2005, p. 8). The realisation that "leadership matters" now underpins the unprecedented global focus on improving the quality of education through school leadership development (Eacott, 2013; Hallinger, 2011; Hattie, 2009; Robinson et al., 2008).

Globally, interactions with multicultural student and community bodies, the increasing use of technology, and immersion in international media issues all influence the principal's role on a daily basis (Pollock, Hauseman & Wang, 2014; Power, 2000). Together with an increase in their roles and responsibilities, principals have also experienced a shift towards greater decentralisation within school systems insofar as the management of schools is concerned (Day, 2000; Chapman, 2005; Pollock, Hauseman & Wang, 2014).

A recent (2014) survey of over 1,000 principals in Ontario, Canada, confirms the complex nature of principals' work as being now more demanding than ever. The principal's role is intensifying both in the areas of operational procedures (budgeting, facility management); and instructional leadership (pedagogy) (Ontario Principals' Council, 2016). The NSW Department of Education followed suit by instigating an investigation into the workload of principals in 2017.

At the time of writing each of the Australian states and territories was seeking to change their education landscape as a result of the imposition of a national agenda in the areas of curriculum, assessment and teacher and principal standards. Eacott (2013) has argued that this agenda focuses on the redefinition of the role of the principal – from leadership to political managerialism. These recent national and international trends in education have created a new environment for educational leaders. In NSW Government schools, the current major systemic change involving devolution within a centralized system under the *Local Schools Local Decisions* – (LSLD) policy) continues its implementation. A report on LSLD raises concerns over the principal's changing role with the implementation of this initiative (NSW DEC, 2012). It also

raises the question as to the extent to which experienced principals access appropriate professional development presently or throughout their career, that is designed to sustain them through this transition?

Principals' professional development by stage

Ongoing professional development is seen as essential for the improvement of the quality and effectiveness of school principals (Timperley, 2011).

When conducting research into the link between professional development and career stage, Richter et al. (2011) used Huberman's research (1989) as a theoretical framework. Richter's study concludes with the observation that teachers at the beginning of their careers had high participation rates in professional development activities. During the mid-career stage, teachers continue to pursue various professional development activities (at a high rate) in order to develop their instructional repertoire (Richter et al., 2011). However, in the late-career stage participation or engagement in professional development declines (Richter et al., 2011). The exceptions to this appear to be mid-career teachers who seek promotion to the principalship (Mok & Kwon, 1999), and experienced teachers whose motivation to keep developing professionally continued (Kwakman, 2003). These teachers appear to use learning opportunities more frequently than their peers to further their career.

The extensive research into the professional development needs of teachers (Guskey, 2002; Timperley, 2008; Bayer et al., 2009; Richter et al., 2011; Keltchermans, 2013;) and newly-appointed principals (Dempster, 2001; Peterson, 2002; Oplatka, 2004; Stevenson, 2006; Mathibe, 2007; Zepeda et al., 2014) appears to inform professional development providers for experienced principals.

ASPIRANT AND EARLY-CAREER PRINCIPALS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Newly appointed and early-career principals focus on engaging in professional development that provides them with the 'nuts and bolts' of the principalship. Their initial focus is on survival and learning about the principalship (Kremer-Hayon & Fessler, 1992; Oplatka, 2004; Bayer et al., 2009; Zepeda et al., 2014).

Internationally, specifically in Western countries, a significant amount of literature focuses on principal preparation, succession planning, and principal induction (Turnbull et al., 2015; Fink, 2010; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Harris, 2008; Fullan, 2008 & 2005; Dinham, 2008). The importance of developing future leaders, building capacity, acknowledging the need for coordinated succession planning, and the support provided for newly-appointed principals in their early years have all continued to gain attention from researchers (Harris, 2008; Fink, 2010; Dinham, 2008; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Fullan, 2005, 2008, 2008a, 2011; Robinson, 2006; Mulford et al., 2008; Stoll, 2009). The emphasis on the need for rapid promotion into the principalship, as noted above, resides in the wake of anticipated mass baby boomer retirements (Cooper, 2008; McCrindle, 2009; Marks, 2012). Consequently, there is a distinct focus on analysing and evaluating principal preparation programs as the primary focus in the career trajectory of principals. As one example, the 2008 OECD report *Improving School Leadership* aimed to provide an analysis of school leadership around the world. However, in a further example of the dominance of the principal preparation stage, this international report linked sustainability and building capacity in schools with strengthening leadership succession. A prime focus on leadership preparation and succession planning to the detriment of all other career stages of the principalship could be held to create an imbalance in the overall research literature in this field.

Professional development opportunities abound for aspiring school leaders and early years' principals as evidenced in Ontario (Canada), the United Kingdom, and in NSW (Australia).

Programs advertised on the Ontario Principals' Council (Canada) website under the heading of "experienced principal" state the specific targeted audience as "vice-principals; aspiring principals; principals; experienced principals; and supervisory officers" (OPC, 2015). While this website identifies "experienced principals" as the generic audience, a closer examination reveals the target audience includes both aspiring principals and vice principals. The site offers an abundance of programs for principals in general: *Aspiring School Leaders' Program; Mentoring/Coaching; Principal's Qualification Program; and the Principals Development Course 2012*. Although a generic labelling of the target audience as "experienced principals" is used, programs specifically targeting the experienced principal appear rare if not non-existent given that these programs exist primarily for aspiring principals.

Programs advertised by the National College for Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) in the United Kingdom target senior leaders. NCTL offer programs such as *Tomorrow's Heads; Future Leaders; Leadership Pathways; Middle Leadership Development Program; Teaching Leaders;* and *National Professional Qualification for Headship, 2012*. Once again, although using a descriptor such as "senior leaders", in reality these programs appear to ignore experienced Heads (principals). In contrast, a proliferation of professional development for middle leaders and aspiring leaders exists (NCTL, 2015).

 In 2012, the (then) NSW Department of Education and Communities' (DEC) Professional Learning and Leadership Development Directorate (PLLDD) website, offered a variety of programs, including: *Executive Leadership Development Program; Deputy Principal Induction; Principal's Preparation Program; Professional Mentoring for Leaders; and Principal Induction*. While the published target audience for these programs stated "experienced principals, principals, deputy principals and aspiring principals", no programs specifically targeting the experienced principal's professional learning needs emerged – only programs for aspirants and early years' principals. The NSW DEC (PLLDD) website closed in 2014 as a result of broad

sweeping systemic changes. The future of employer-provided professional development for NSW Government school principals, currently under review, remained uncertain at the commencement of this study in what is the largest school system in the southern hemisphere.

Recent research (Fluckiger et al., 2014) observed that individuals prefer to engage in system-supplied professional development in preference to shaping their own. Zepeda et al., (2014) suggested that professional development for principals tends to "be one size fits all" where system provision over-shadows individuals taking personal responsibility for their own learning (Lovett et al., 2015, p. 127). While it could be argued that leaders should take more responsibility for their professional learning, the research of Fluckiger et al., (2014) claims that they do not appear to do so.

MID AND LATE-CAREER PRINCIPALS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development designed and developed to support, engage and motivate experienced principals, must take into account and accommodate, "the unique features and context of the certain career stage" (Oplatka, 2004, p.43). A closer examination of the above-mentioned program descriptions discloses that they do not mention, or address, the specific professional learning needs of experienced principals. Professional development programs catering for the principal in the experienced career stage appear to remain, at best, elusive.

The well-known programs published on the Ontario, NCTL, UK, and NSW DEC websites seem to reflect an underlying assumption that mid and late-career principals no longer require professional development (Schultz & Adams, 2007). It is this assumption that requires further investigation.

While many educational jurisdictions appear to ignore or at least under-respond to the needs of mid and late-career principals, researchers are beginning to recognise the changing needs of this cohort characterised as it is by "baby boomer" principals. Baby boomers are living and working

longer than their predecessors. With life expectancy now close to 90 years of age (Denmark et al., 2007) an older workforce results (Oplatka, 2010), with working life now continuing into the 70's decade (Marks, 2012; Mackay, 2007; Gibbs, 2008). Retirement for NSW DEC principals (linked to their superannuation schemes), has traditionally occurred between 55 and 60 years of age. With a move to "stay on" past these traditional retirement dates (Marks, 2012; Hesketh & Griffin, 2010) principals are tending to work past these ages.

This resulting change is seeing an increase in the number of the more-experienced late-career principal cohort; one which may possess very different professional learning needs. The Twentieth Century concept of the older worker as being old, tired and ineffective transposed into a Twenty-first Century paradigm appears to be characterised by the more positive attributes of experience, expertise, wisdom, energy, knowledge and commitment (Mulford, 2008; Oplatka, 2010; Marks, 2012). Twenty-first Century late-career principals who stay connected with the workforce for longer than their predecessors are re-defining current principal career trajectory research (Marks, 2012) in the same way that older workers are currently redefining the commercial work place (Beehr & Bennett, 2007).

Given the changing (and aging) nature of the workforce, current research also suggests a lack of encouragement and support by employers to invest in older workers (Simpson et al., 2002; Greller, 2006; Schultz & Adams, 2007). Indeed, recent evidence suggests that older workers invest in their own careers given this lack of support from employers (Schultz & Adams, 2007). The necessity to acknowledge the specific learning needs of older adult workers (e.g. mid and late-career principals) and to provide them with appropriate professional learning opportunities has become more important than ever.

Employers' workforce-building capacity, as noted above, centres on attracting the next generation of principals, developing succession plans and professional development to support aspirants and new appointees. It would seem that the generational collide between this new

generation and the baby boomer principals, is providing employers with a golden opportunity to capitalise on the existing, and now extended, corporate knowledge, wisdom and experience of mid and late-career principals. Capturing and nurturing this experience would seem essential (Lambert et al., 2016).

The overview of previous research confirms that the provision of professional learning opportunities for experienced principals lacks attention and is therefore providing a fertile ground for research (Belmonte & Cranston, 2007; Odhiambo, 2007). There is much to be learnt from the present cohort of experienced principals that will have currency with new cohorts.

The exploration of the professional development available for and required by experienced principals, also suggests that special attention be given to the discipline of andragogy; that is, adult learning theory (Zepeda et al., 2014).

Principals' professional development strategies

ADULT LEARNING THEORY AND THE PRINCIPALSHIP

In reviewing the literature, the further question arose as to what insights could be gained through a consideration of adult learning theory in relation to the principals' roles. Alexander Kapp first recognised the specific learning needs of adults as early as 1833 (Knowles, 1973). Since then, researchers across almost two hundred years have investigated the ways in which children's learning (pedagogy) differs from adult learning (andragogy). Andragogy, as the formal study of adult learning, began in the 1950s. Malcolm Knowles developed the earlier research around adult learning into a theory of andragogy in the 1970s. In his seminal work, Knowles (1973) lists nine major characteristics of andragogy:

> …control of their learning; immediate utility; focus on issues that concern them; test their learning as they go; anticipate how they will use their learning; expect performance improvement; maximise available resources; require collaborative,

respectful, mutual and informal climate; and rely on information that is appropriate and developmentally placed (Zepeda et al., 2014).

While conducting research with 322 NSW public school principals, Scott (2003) found adult learning theory provided the basis for a most effective learning strategy for professional development for principals. Based on Knowles' principles, Scott (2003) concluded that, "…informal, ongoing sources and approaches to learning are critical influences in the development of principals" (p.45).

Supporting Scott's 2003 research, Hill et al., (2002), and O'Mahony & Barnett (2008) in Australia, and Earley & Weindling (2007) in the UK, all found that mentoring, coaching and shadowing provided the most effective professional development strategies for mid and late-career principals. These researchers brought the andragogy work of Knowles (1973) into the professional learning life of school principals with particular relevance for experienced principals.

Other research (Scott, 2003; Fink, 2010; McCulla, 2012), has indicated that the most effective vehicles for professional learning by principals includes combinations of mentoring, coaching, collegial networks, informal networks, engagement in reflective enquiry and networking, professional learning communities, collegiality and collaborative enquiry, and professional associations. While all are important, the relationships among these need to be better understood.

MENTORING, COACHING AND SHADOWING

Extensive research into mentoring has resulted in its extended implementation in professional learning programs across the last two decades (Dowling & Walkington, 2004). Programs for aspirant principals and for newly-appointed principals utilise mentoring, coaching and shadowing as core strategies. These strategies usually connect a more experienced practitioner with a less experienced one. However, while mid and late-career principals frequently act as

mentors, little evidence exists to suggest that they have had the opportunity to be mentored themselves (Lovett et al., 2015; Turnbull et al., 2015).

Major leadership development programs now include coaching as an integral component and viable strategy (Ferandino & Fafard, 2003; Fink, 2010). These trends exemplify the growing recognition of coaching (O'Mahony & Barnett, 2008). In delivering one of the most powerful approaches to professional development, coaching provides a critical friend who leads the coachee through challenges in search of developing solutions (Fenwick & Pierce, 2002). Mid and late-career principals frequently coach their less-experienced colleagues. Little evidence exists that these experienced principals have the opportunity to have a coach of their own. Experienced principals, often overlooked for needing personalised professional development, demonstrate that they too can benefit from coaching (O'Mahony & Barnett, 2008; Fink, 2010).

Succession strategies for aspiring principals often include shadowing (Simkins et al., 2009). Engaging in a shadowing relationship gives the follower a deeper knowledge and understanding of the principalship (Simkins et al., 2009). As an effective leadership development strategy, shadowing utilises reflection as a means for deepening understanding (Matthews & O'Mahony, 2003; Barnett, 2001; Polite et al., 1997; Simkins et al. 2009). When supported by coaching, this can also lead to powerful learning. While frequently shadowed themselves, little evidence exists showing that mid and late-career principals have engaged in their own shadowing experiences with a colleague by way of a peer-shadowing program.

NETWORKING AND REFLECTION

As active learners, reflective inquiry can result in a significant effect on the professional learning of leaders (Fenwick & Pierce, 2002). In educational leadership, the focus of reflective inquiry creates principals, "who are able to make informed reflective and self-critical judgements about their professional practice" (Fenwick & Pierce, 2002, p. 3). Developing school leaders with the

ability to reflect on their practice, explore new skills, and apply their new knowledge contextually at their own site, has culminated in effective leadership (Hallinger, 2011; Leithwood et al., 2004).

Research into the significance of self-reflection in an individual's professional learning is plentiful (Drago-Severson, 2012; Dalgic & Bakioglu, 2014; Evans, 2009; Piggott-Irvine, 2004; Day, 2000; Polite et al., 1997; Osterman & Kottkamp, 1993). Zepeda et al. (2014) believe in the importance of reflection in informal professional learning opportunities and claim that it requires additional research.

Networking, underpinned by a belief in collegial communication and support, also facilitates effective school leadership development (Fenwick & Pierce, 2002). It involves principals joining with colleagues to purposefully share knowledge, address problems, and pool resources across the network to facilitate improved student outcomes. These planned meetings organised by the principals themselves aim to provide professional learning opportunities to improve performance (Fenwick & Pierce, 2002).

Research has been published about networking within and between schools as a component of professional development activities for teachers and aspirational leaders (Muijs et al., 2011) and as a solution to the sense of isolation principals feel in the principalship (Kelchtermans et al., 2011; Piggott-Irvine, 2004).

Informal networking between principals has long been accepted as a strategy to combat the isolation of the role, providing collegiality and the opportunity to engage in shared-reflection on the complexities of the principalship. Engagement in reflection with principal colleagues "supports their own development, sustainability and renewal" (Drago-Severson, 2012 p. 2). Australian researchers and authors have recognised the need and importance of providing financial resources to facilitate the establishment of these networks (Dinham et al., 2011). Such

networks involve group professional learning to improve practice (Piggott-Irvine, 2006 underpinned by the notion of a professional learning community (Piggott-Irvine, 2006; Spanneut, 2012).

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

The term "professional learning community" (PLC) refers to a "mutually supportive group of people with a collaborative, reflective, and growth-oriented approach towards investigating and learning more about their practice in order to improve student learning" (Stoll, 2010, p. 151). An environment that fosters collegiality and trust, together with mutual cooperation achieves things that individuals alone can't achieve. It offers a safe environment for shared-reflective and critical thinking (Piggott-Irvine, 2006). This environment enables teachers to work together to make a difference for their students (Thessin & Starr, 2011). Principals' development of PLCs (with both principal colleagues and within school leaders) collaboratively leads to instructional improvement (Spanneut, 2012; Muijs et al., 2004; Harris, 2008). Research into the effectiveness of PLCs for teachers within the school setting abounds (Muijs et al., 2004; Stoll et al., 2006; Piggott-Irvine 2004, 2011; Thessin & Starr, 2011; Spanneut, 2012). Specific research into the effects of professional learning communities (and collaborative enquiry) for principals appears sporadic.

COLLEGIALITY AND COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY

Collaborative inquiry "as a dominant structure for educators' professional learning in the Twenty-first Century" (DeLuca et al., 2014 p.1) continues to emerge as a popular and effective professional learning strategy. Principals construct new knowledge through their collegial networking and ongoing discussion (Newman, 2003). This co-constructed knowledge generates a deeper personal understanding of educational practice and issues (DeLuca et al., 2014).

Learning in a community of peers supports the theory that learning done 'with' people generates a deeper understanding than learning imposed 'on' people (Byrne-Jimenez & Orr, 2007). The benefits of participation in the collaborative inquiry model include the development of pedagogical knowledge and skills, a learning community, and leadership. Importantly, research indicates that improved student outcomes can result from collaborative enquiry (DeLuca et al., 2014).

Collaborative inquiry cycles link personal practice and experiences with professional learning through the process of shared-reflection, discussion, and action (DeLuca et al., 2014). Open, honest and professional dialogue, provide the pre-requisites for collaborative enquiry resulting in a highly effective professional development strategy.

Professional development for Twenty-first Century principals

The current movement to nationalise the Australian curriculum, as well as teacher and principal standards (MCEETYA, 2008; AITSL, 2012) has underpinned the country's need to compete on a global stage both educationally and economically (Timperley, 2011). Indicators of the increasing globalisation of education can be seen through such things as the establishment of international schools; the inclusion of international students in universities and schools; and the current movement of the world's population as immigrants or refugees move from one country to another.

Research exists into international schools and international students attending educational institutions (OECD, 2012), and the benefits of students accessing international learning experiences (Ricketts & Morgan, 2009). The argument for internationalised experiences for students, has centred on, "…developing a more global knowledge of (student) leadership and world issues through well-planned and effective international leadership experiences…"

(Ricketts & Morgan, 2009, p. 31). As noted above, little such research of this nature exists for school leaders.

While recognition exists in current research of the context of the principalship in the Twenty-first Century, Ricketts and Morgan (2009) claim that enormous potential exists for future research into any internationalised leadership development stating that there is, "…a need for global leadership knowledge" (p.12). However, there is limited research into the implications or benefits for principals' engagement in internationalised professional development and leadership experiences and programs. Drawing on the work of the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), Figure 2.4 below summarises these relationships.

Figure 2.4: The principal in context (Source: AITSL, 2011 p. 3)
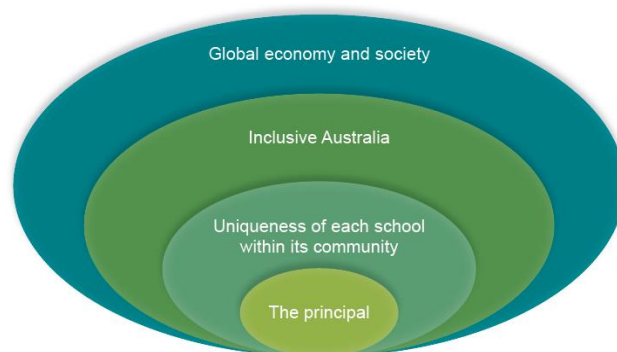
PRINCIPAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS

Research indicates a significant need exists for the provision of appropriate professional development for principals to:

1. systematically change beliefs, attitudes and practices that will result in significant and sustained educational improvements (Guskey, 2002);

2. enhance the role of the principal in school improvement and improving student outcomes (Hattie, 2009; Robinson et al., 2008; Hallinger, 2011); and

3. underpin school success which relies on rigorous principal preparation and continuous development (Fink, 2010).

The research clearly establishes the need for the provision of ongoing principal professional development in this area to focus on educational trends and issues beyond those of the immediate jurisdiction.

Professional associations & corporate entities

Globally, principals form professional groupings for mutual support and to act as advocates with employers and/or governments. These principals' associations exist (in some format) in most educational jurisdictions. Membership, usually optional, requires an annual registration/membership fee. Association membership emanates specifically from primary/elementary schools, secondary schools, or from special education schools. Some associations derive their membership from a cross section of school types. Each of these associations has varying platforms but usually provide welfare support, legal advice and professional development. The Ontario Principals' Council in Toronto (Canada) for instance, established on these pillars in 1997, operates as a world-recognised successful model of a principal association.

NSW Government school principals mainly join either the NSW Primary Principals' Association (NSW PPA) or the NSW Secondary Principals' Council (NSW SPC). Their major professional development activity, an annual conference, provides members with the opportunity to engage in networking on a broad basis together with access to nationally and internationally-recognised speakers. Additional professional development opportunities developed and provided to their members by these principals' associations give members access to additional professional development opportunities than those provided by their employing authority. The state associations are also represented at the national level through their representation on peak

groups such as the Australian Primary Principals' Association and the Australian Secondary Principals' Association.

Book publishers, corporate leadership development companies, and professional associations for teachers and principals, regularly offer conferences as their main professional development activity. Attendance at these conferences continues as a popular model of service delivery of professional development for principals. Topic themes, relevant to individual needs and school sites, draw large audiences. The addition of credible, noteworthy and challenging keynote speakers (increasingly from an international perspective) together with an interesting support network of presenters and workshops have guaranteed conference success. In the Australian context, the Australian Council for Educational Leaders (ACEL) and the Australian College of Educators (ACE) are both prominent associations that encourage voluntary cross-sectoral membership and provide conferences and professional development on a fee-for-service basis.

Government entities

Principal qualification programs have existed in some western countries (e.g. Canada; the UK) for some time. At the time of writing, access to the principalship in either Australia or New Zealand did not require specific principals' qualifications outside of the necessary teaching qualifications, teacher registration, and teaching experience. Additional accumulation of the appropriate level of experience, skills, knowledge and understandings to fulfil the principal role assists in promotion. The absence of any mandated professional development program to gain access to the principalship in Australia continued to be a subject for discussion throughout the study.

The introduction of the *National Professional Standard for Principals* (AITSL, 2011) provided a greater emphasis on principals' engagement in professional development during the principalship. The AITSL Standard for (Australian) principals, while designed to underpin

professionalism and excellence, also requires a considerable ongoing investment in professional learning and development.

As this study progressed a national professional learning framework was developed, to support school leaders' professional development. It provided an opportunity for principals to interact with the latest research about effective professional practice (AITSL, 2017). A principal's accreditation course was also developed. However, this remained optional professional development for principals, and aspiring principals, at the time of writing.

Summary: the significance of the study

Australian education, like jurisdictions everywhere, faces constant change in the early decades of the Twenty-first Century and the challenges associated with supporting principals in developing the knowledge, skills and understandings for their role.

This study, established to learn more about the professional development needs of experienced principals, initially arose from anecdotal evidence suggesting that, despite the plethora of activities described above, there was still perceived to be a lack of appropriate and relevant professional development for experienced principals. This observation is reinforced by the review of the literature which also indicates:

1. principals currently work in the context of an evolving globalised education community;

2. principals have access to a variety of professional development strategies and programs which may or may not be effective for the experienced principal;

3. the responsibility for sourcing professional development rests either with the employing authority or the principal themselves; and

4. that PD available to principals focuses almost exclusively on the needs of the aspirant principal and the early years' principal, with acknowledgement of the accumulated skills

and knowledge of experienced principals appearing limited in the development of their PD.

A need exists, therefore, for investigation into the PD experiences and the perceived professional development needs of mid and late-career principals. The four points listed above will guide the development of the exploratory interviews in the initial phase of data collection for this study.

Research into this area would:

- add to the literature on the career trajectory of the principal – specifically to the specific area of their professional development experiences and needs;
- benefit principals and their professional associations;
- inform education policy makers; and
- advise developers of professional development programs for principals.

Of perhaps greater significance, it would help to ensure that this cohort of principals reaches its potential in leading teacher and student learning in the globalised education community in which they now work. The question arises as to what then might best characterise effective professional development for this cohort of school leaders?

Chapter 3 which follows, explores approaches best suited to investigate this research problem.

CHAPTER 3

THE RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

This chapter provides detail on the design and development of the study. It adheres to all of the Macquarie University Ethics applications for the study and relevant educational authority approvals.

The study focuses on principals' professional development and their professional learning, set within the context of a Twenty-first Century globalised education community. It relies on the following important definitions as outlined in Table 4.1:

- Professional learning is defined as, "the changes in the capacity for practice and/or changes in actual practice" (Timperley, 2011 p. 4).

- Professional development is defined for the purpose of this study as "the activities that develop professional skills, knowledge and expertise" (Timperley, 2011 p. 4).

- Internationalised professional development is defined as PD that has a focus beyond the immediate national jurisdiction.

- A globalised education community is defined where countries are increasingly politically, economically and educationally interconnected (Power, 2000).

There is, therefore, a subtle but important difference between professional development and professional learning. The former (professional development) focuses on the acquisition of skills and knowledge (building expertise) whilst the latter (professional learning) focuses on changes in capacity and practice as a result of professional development. It is the former that resides as the core focus of this investigation into the professional development experiences of mid and late-career principals.

The research question

Drawing on the literature review outlined and discussed in Chapter 2, the following question underpins the research:

> *What kinds of professional development activities do principals in the experienced stage of their careers value as significant contributors to their professional learning in a Twenty-first Century globalised education community?*

In gathering the appropriate data to investigate this question, this study adopts the premise that advice relating to the type and nature of the PD most relevant to the needs of the experienced principal must come from the principals themselves. This investigation, therefore, sought to gather data through direct contact with an experienced principal cohort to determine their attitudes, beliefs, reflections and perceptions with regard to their professional development.

The following contributing questions were discerned from the literature to assist in the exploration of the research question:

1. *Which professional development activities do experienced principals value as effective contributors to their professional learning?*

2. *What professional learning experiences arising from professional development activities, do principals see as enhancing their school leadership?*

3. *What professional development would principals like to have access to in the experienced stage of their careers that will sustain them for current and future challenges to lead schools in the 21st Century?*

4. *How and in what ways, if at all, does engagement in any internationalised professional development experiences enhance the professional learning of the experienced principal?*

Investigation of the issues posed by these research questions suggested a research design that combines both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to explore in depth the experiences, observations and perceptions of principals individually and collectively. The research questions themselves suggested a design centred on interviews and a case study, while also tapping into the views of a larger group of principals through a questionnaire. Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies then, were utilised in this study.

Qualitative methodology

Qualitative methods gather data in real life situations, investigating real life experiences. They endeavour to gain an insight into the participant's world in order to understand their viewpoint. Qualitative methodologies involve gathering written or spoken word/data instead of numerical data. Interviews, observational field notes, document reviews and/or written responses in surveys can provide qualitative data (Polkinghorne, 2004; Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Participants' own experiences, when shared with and when explored intensively by, the researcher provide rich languaged data (Polkinghorne, 2004).

Analysis of the languaged data comprises "three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification" (Bazeley, 2013, p. 12). Qualitative research being cyclical in nature (Figure 3.1) continues during and after each data collection.

Figure 3.1: Component of data analysis: Miles and Huberman's (1994) interactive model
(Source: Bazeley, 2013, p. 12, Figure 1.1)
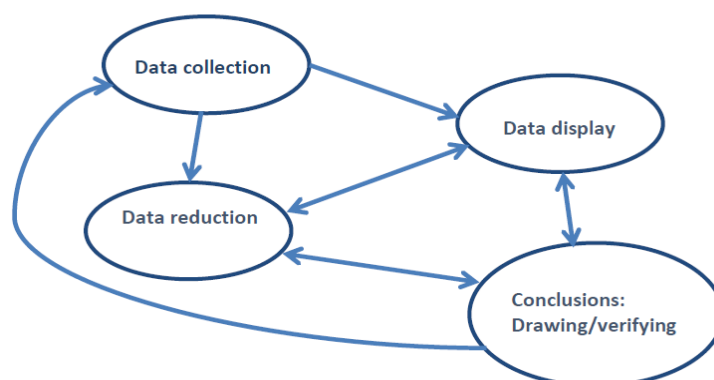
Qualitative research begins by collecting data in the field to find patterns and themes and sees human behaviour as dynamic, contextual and personal. It has a broad approach digging into phenomena to reveal, construct and describe what was discovered. It explains a little-known phenomenon coming up with new theories. The researcher reports data as words, images and categories (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

TYPES OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Qualitative research approaches fall into five different approaches: biography, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory and case study (Polkinghorne, 2004) (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Qualitative research methods (Source: Polkinghorne, 2004 p. 137)
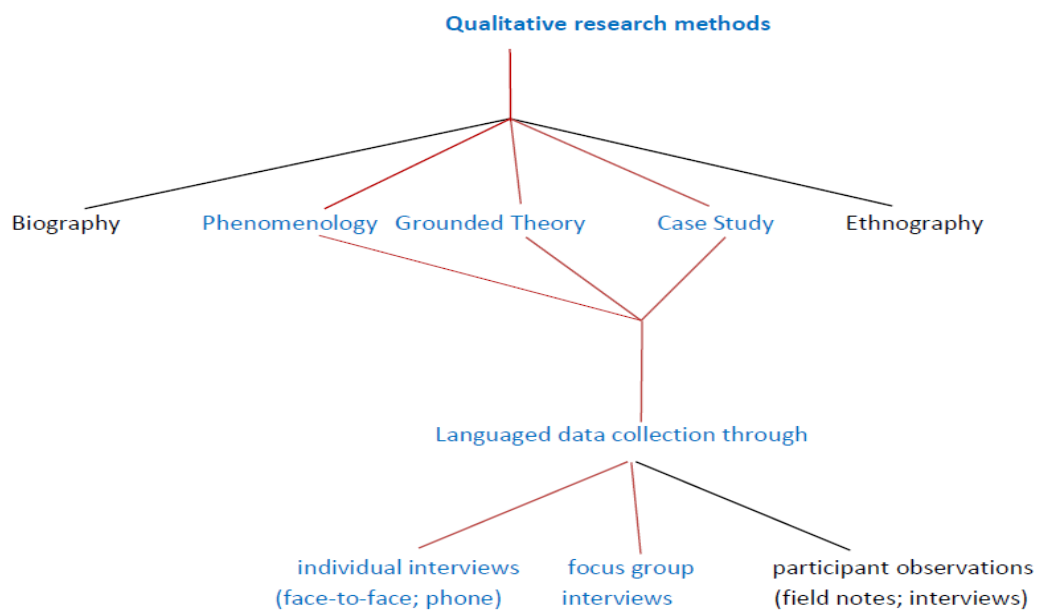
Ethnography focuses on culture, also including participant observation. Biography looks into people's lives with the researcher and participant co-constructing stories using narrative threads, tensions and plotlines (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 pp. 424-425).

This research focuses on principals' experiences of their own professional learning and development and so a phenomenological approach informs this research, rather than one of

ethnography or biography. Similarly, both grounded theory and case study approaches apply to this research as outlined in Table 3.1 below.

			Qualitative Research Approaches		
Dimension	**Phenomenology**	**Ethnography**	**Case Study**	**Grounded Theory**	**Biography**
Research purpose	Describes one or more individuals' experiences of a phenomenon	Describes cultural characteristics of a group of people and cultural scenes	Describes one or more cases in depth and addresses the research questions and issue	Inductively generates a grounded theory describing and explaining the phenomenon	Inquires into people's lives and told stories that can add to our understanding of people's experiences
Disciplinary origin	Philosophy	Anthropology	Multidisciplinary roots including business, law, social sciences, medicine and education	Sociology	Historically found in multiple human story telling disciplines
Primary data-collection method	In-depth interviews with 10-15 people	Participant observation over an extended period of time) e.g. 1 mo to 1 yr); interviews with informants	Multiple methods (e.g. interviews, observations, documents)	Interviews with 20-30 people. Observations frequently used	Multiple conversations (e.g. 3-5) with a participant and an inquiry into related artefacts and documents
Data analysis approach	List significant statements, determine meaning of statements and identify the essence of the phenomenon	Uses holistic description and search for cultural themes in data	Uses holistic description and searches for themes shedding light on the case. May also include cross-case analysis	Begins with open coding, then uses axial coding and ends with selective coding	Attends to place, time and relationships. Researcher and participant co-construct stories using narrative threads, tensions and plotlines
Narrative report focus	Rich description of the common characteristics of the experience	Rich description of context and cultural themes	Rich description of the context and operation of the case or cases; discussion of themes, issues and implications	Rich description of topic and people being studied; ends with a presentation of grounded theory. May also list propositions	Shows participants evolving and complex stories over time, relationships and place

Table 3.1 : Qualitative research approaches

(Source: Adapted from Johnson & Christensen, 20214 pp. 424-425)

PHENOMENOLOGY

A phenomenological approach facilitates in-depth interviews to gather data linking directly with the purpose of this research and the primary data collection method. These interviews are personal encounters, necessitating a rapport between the interviewer and interviewee (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Interviews

Interviews are underpinned by the assumption that the interviewees possess the skills to explicitly explain perspectives in a meaningful and comprehensible way (Patton, 2002). Face-to-face interviews are personal encounters that necessitate a rapport between the interviewer and interviewee (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Interviews conducted in a friendly manner, require the interviewer to remain impartial, neither reacting positively or negatively to any question responses. The interviewer in possessing a level of credibility and knowledge of the interviewees' roles facilitates the establishment of trust and rapport. The quality of the information obtained during the interviews depends on the skills of the interviewer and on the structure of the interview (Merriam, 1998). Confidentiality of responses is ensured by the utilisation of individual reference codes.

The table below (Table 3.2) shows how combining different interview approaches allows for the strengths of one approach to complement the weakness of another. The informal conservational interview approach allows the interviewer to gather information for the variables – which by definition would vary with each respondent. What could be construed as a weakness becomes a strength in this instance.

Type of Interview	Characteristics	Strengths	Weaknesses
Informal conservational interview	Questions emerge from the immediate context and are asked in the natural course of things; there is no predetermination of question topics or wording.	Increases salience and relevance of questions; the interview can be matched to individuals and circumstances.	Different information is collected from different people with different questions.
Interview guide approach	Topics and issues to be covered are specified in advance; interviewer decides sequence and working of questions during the course of the interview.	The outline increases the comprehensiveness of the data and makes data collection somewhat systemic for each respondent.	Important and salient topics may be inadvertently omitted. Interviewer flexibility in question wording may lead to substantially different responses reducing comparability of responses.
Standardised open-ended interview	The exact wording and sequence of questions are determined in advance. All interviewees are asked the same basic questions in the same order. Questions are worded in a completely open-ended format.	Respondents answer the same questions, this increasing comparability of responses. Reduces interviewer effects and bias when several interviewers are used. Facilitates organisation and analysis of the data.	Offers less flexibility in relating the interview to particular individuals and circumstances; standardised wording or questions may constrain and limit naturalness and relevance of questions and answers.

Table 3.2: Patton's classification of types of interviews

(Source: Adapted from Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 230)

GROUNDED THEORY

This study explores "the unknown" and not the "known facts". Strauss and Corbin (1990) believe

that in grounded theory, "one does not begin with a theory, and then prove it. Rather one begins

with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge" (p. 23). This study

investigates a phenomenon and accordingly, in interpreting lived experience, grounded theory

arises as the most appropriate process.

In grounded theory, the collected data, once analysed, builds on the theory developing, which in turns informs the next collection of data (Figure 3.3). Analysis of this set of data then clarifies, develops and validates the developing theory (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Figure 3.3: Grounded theory cycle
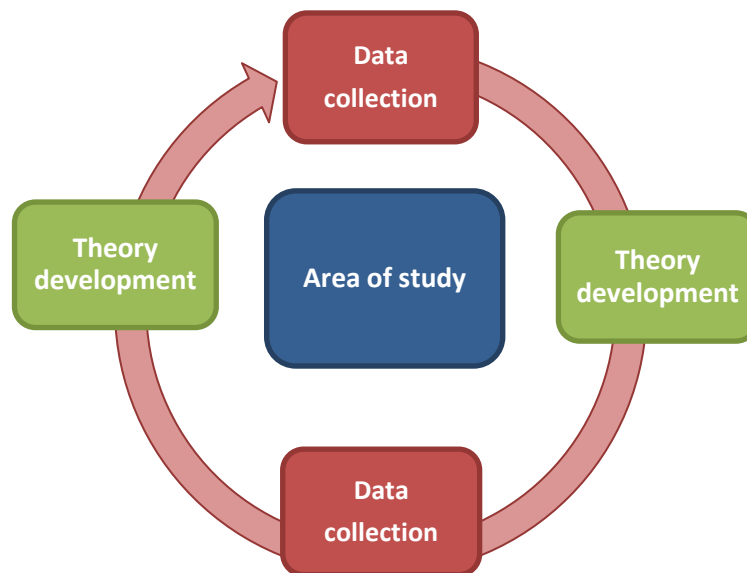
The constant comparative

Data analysis in grounded theory or the constant comparative method involves constant interplay among the researcher, the data, and the developing theory. The researcher needs theoretical sensitivity to think about what kinds of data need collecting and what aspects of the already collected data exist as the most important for the emerging theory (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 460).

Three stages of data analysis underpinned this methodology: open coding, axial coding and selective coding. Initial examination of the data results in naming and categorising discrete elements in the data. Axial coding follows this initial examination that develops the concepts into slightly more abstract categories and organises the categories. Exploration of possible relationships among the categories follows as the process unfolds. Selective coding follows, as

the finishing touches on the grounded theory for the research check to make sure that the data links with the theory. Finally, data analysis results in theoretical saturation when no new information or concepts emerge from the data (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 pp. 458-461).

Four characteristics of grounded theory

Four characteristics define grounded theory: fit, understanding, generality and control (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The first element "fit" indicates that the theory must correspond closely to the real-world data, and not to our personal wishes, biases or predetermined categories. The second element "understanding" suggests that the theory should be easily understandable to people working in the substantive area. Thirdly the theory should have "generality" which indicates that the conceptual level should not be so specific that the theory only applies to one small set of people, or to only one specific situation. The fourth element "control" indicates that those who use the theory should have enough control in everyday situations to make its application worthwhile (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

These four characteristics have provided a framework and continual points of reference, for this research study.

CASE STUDY RESEARCH

Case study research, given the focus of a cohort of principals in one jurisdiction, is also important in this study. A case study design facilitates an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation in a specific context (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). It obtains the data set from interviews, field observations and documents often producing a significant amount of data. The challenge is to manage and make sense of that data. The case record (data gathered) needs organisation and ready accessibility.

Case studies, while occurring in both quantitative and qualitative research, tend to be qualitative when researching in the area of education. Johnson & Christensen (2014) define case study

research as that which provides a detailed account and analysis of one or more cases, as with this research. A case contains a bounded system: seen as holistic entities that have parts and that act or operate in their environment.

Case study research focuses on providing a detailed account of one or more specific cases (Johnson & Christensen, 2014) and results in findings and recommendations applicable to the larger audience. Case studies provide particular relevance for studying educational innovations, for evaluating programs and for informing policy, to "focus on questions, issues and concerns broadly related to teaching and learning" (Merriam, 1998 p. 37).

Strengths and limitations of case study research

Case study research contains strengths and weaknesses (see Table 3.3). The sensitivity and integrity of the researcher or investigator limits case studies. As the primary instrument of data collection and analysis, the level of the researcher's interview and observation skills become crucial (Merriam, 1998). A further concern refers to "unusual problems of ethics" (Guba & Lincoln, 1981 p. 378). This refers to the selection of virtually any data that the researcher wishes to illustrate. Issues of reliability, validity and generalizability can provide further limitations and need to be addressed (Merriam, 1998).

Although not new, case study research developed during the late 1970's and 1980's resulting in its delineation as a specific type of research. Stake and Merriam, however, have more of a qualitative orientation while Yin has a more quantitative orientation (Stake, 1978; Yin, 1981; and Merriam, 1988 & 1998 cited in Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Case Study Research	
Strengths	**Limitations**
• Investigates complex social issues consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon.	• Time taken for rich, thick description and analysis of a phenomenon can be considerable. The final product

	may be too lengthy, too detailed or too involved for busy educators to read and use.
• Offers insights and illuminates meanings that expand reader's experiences.	• The level of the researcher's interview and observation skills.
• Proven particularly useful for studying educational processes, problems, programs and policies.	• Oversimplification or exaggeration of a situation may lead the reader to erroneous conclusions.
• Important in advancing field's knowledge base.	• The sensitivity and integrity of the investigator.
• Reveals understanding of humans as they engage in action and interaction within the contexts of situations and settings.	• Perceived lack of rigor in the research construction, data collection and analysis resulting in subjectivity of the researcher.
• Anchored in real-life situations.	• Perceived lack of representativeness.
• Provides a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon.	• Ethics issues: selection of data that the researcher wishes to illustrate.
• Resultant insights from this research can be construed as tentative hypotheses to help structure future research.	

Table 3.3: Strengths and limitations of case study research

(Source: Merriam, 1998 pp. 40-43)

The strengths of employing a case study approach in this research appeared to outweigh the limitations (Merriam, 1998).

The benefits (and limitations) of qualitative methods

While benefits and strengths in qualitative research exist, weaknesses or limitations also occur These are outlined in Table 3.4 below. Knowledge produced by this method of research might not generalise to other people or settings. Data collection takes large amounts of time requiring the researcher to possess refined interview skills. Personal biases often more easily influence the researcher when using this method (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

The elimination of bias and subjectivity becomes a challenge for the researcher. Objectivity remedies possible bias. Factual observation and rigor in the research through the quality of the observations and communication skills of the researcher also assists objectivity (Patton, 2002 p.

575). The addition of quantitative research methods and the triangulation of the data reduce the researcher's subjectivity - essential when conducting qualitative research design (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Qualitative Research	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- Data are based on the participants' own categories of meaning. - Is useful for describing complex phenomena. - Provides individual case information. - Provides understanding and description of people's personal experiences of phenomena. - Data are usually collected in naturalistic settings. - Qualitative data in the words and categories of participants lend themselves to exploring how and why phenomena occur. - The researcher can use the primarily qualitative method of grounded theory to generate inductively a tentative but explanatory theory about phenomena.	- Knowledge produced might not generalise to other people or settings. - It is difficult to make quantitative predictions. - Data analysis is time consuming. - Collecting data generally takes more time than with quantitative research. - The results are more easily influenced by the researcher's personal biases and idiosyncrasies. - The study might have less credibility with some administrators and commissioners of programs.

Table 3.4 : Strengths and weaknesses of qualitative research

(Adapted from Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 488)

Quantitative methodology

Coleman and Lumby (1999) believe that through quantitative empirical study, social reality and causality can be established when "the observer is independent of what is observed and the research is value free" (p.10). Adding quantitative research methods to qualitative methods provides precise, quantitative numerical data. The analysis takes relatively less time. The researcher remains relatively independent of the research and usually uses variables to describe the world. The relationship amongst these variables attempts to explain and predict aspects of the world (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Various types of variables exist: categorical; quantitative; independent; dependent; mediating; moderator; and extraneous.

TYPES OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS

Quantitative research characterised by either experimental or non-experimental method (Figure 3.4) facilitates the studying of large cohorts of numbers in addition to testing and validating already constructed theories about how and why phenomena occur (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Figure 3.4: Types of quantitative research

(Source: Johnson & Christensen, 2014)

Survey instruments (e.g. questionnaires) remain the most popular quantitative research method but quantitative research may also include experiments, correlation and regression analysis, and causal-comparative methods (Figure 3.5).

Figure 3.5: Quantitative research methods

(Source: http://research-methodology.net/research-methods/quantitative-research)
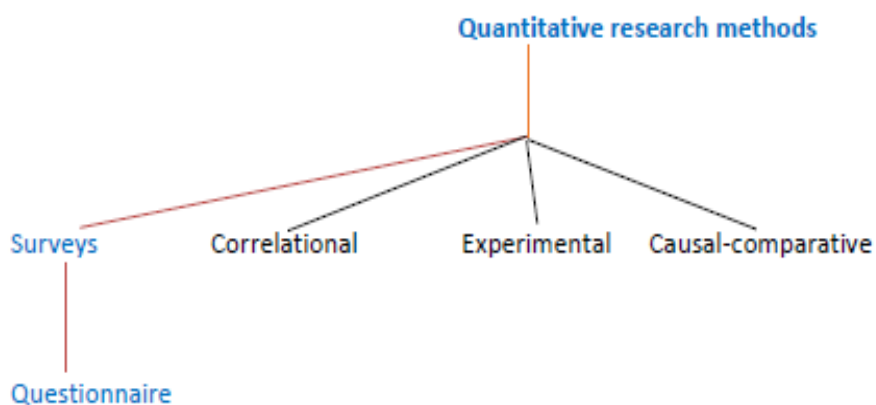
QUESTIONNAIRES

Quantitative questionnaires focus on getting participants to respond to standardized questions and ensure maximum comparison of responses (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 199). Most questionnaires employ a mixture of open-ended and closed questions. The use of open-ended questions allows participants to express their opinions and to give the researcher additional information (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 200).

According to Johnson & Christensen (2014, p. 191) "A questionnaire is a self-report data-collection instrument that each research participant fills out as part of a research study" As such, a questionnaire gathers information about the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, values and behavioural intentions of participants in the research (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). It can gather both qualitative and quantitative data depending on the inclusion of open and/or closed questions in its development.

The Johnson & Christensen (2014) guiding principles of questionnaire development were applied to the questionnaire designed for this research (Table 3.5).

Principles of Questionnaire Design	
Principle 1	Make sure the questionnaire items match your research objectives.
Principle 2	Understand your research participants.
Principle 3	Use natural and familiar language.
Principle 4	Write items that are clear, precise and relatively short.
Principle 5	Do not use "leading" or "loaded" questions.
Principle 6	Avoid double-barrelled questions.
Principle 7	Avoid double negatives.
Principle 8	Determine whether an open-ended or closed-ended question is needed.
Principle 9	Use mutually exclusive and exhaustive response categories for closed-ended questions.

Principle 10	Consider the different types of response categories available for closed-ended questionnaire items.
Principle 11	Use multiple items to measure abstract constructs.
Principle 12	Consider using multiple methods when measuring abstract constructs.
Principle 13	Use caution if you reverse the working in some of the items to prevent response sets in multi-item scales.
Principle 14	Develop a questionnaire that is properly organised and easy for the participant to use.
Principle 15	Always pilot test your questionnaire.

Table 3.5: Principles of questionnaire construction

(Adapted from Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 193)

The benefits (and limitations) of quantitative methods

Quantitative methods also have inherent weaknesses (Table 3.6). Questionnaires often fail to explain intangible and complex human interactions, producing statistical data only. Therefore, collection of data related to social and human phenomena becomes problematic when using this method alone. Stroh (2000) argues that although a questionnaire retains the strength of "exploring a large number of people's views…it would not allow (me) to follow up immediately on people's responses and to explore the contradictions and inconsistencies that are part of everyday life" (p. 197). These factors remain difficult to quantify or measure. Therefore, the sole-reliance (or an over-reliance) on quantitative methods in social research poses a potential weakness. Combining both quantitative methods with qualitative methods reduces the weaknesses in both methods.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Quantitative Research	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• Is useful for testing and validating already constructed theories about how and why phenomena occur.	• The researcher's categories might not reflect local constituencies' understandings.

• One can generalise a research finding when it has been replicated on many different populations and subpopulations. • Is useful in determining nomothetic causation. • Provides precise, quantitative, numerical data. • Data analysis is relatively less time-consuming (using statistical software). • Is useful for studying large numbers of people. • Study may have more credibility with many people in power. • The research results are relatively independent of the researcher (e.g. statistically significant). • The researcher may construct a situation that eliminated the confounding influence of many variable, allowing one more credibly to establish cause-and-effect relationships.	• The researcher's theories might not reflect local constituencies' understandings. • The researcher might miss observing phenomena because of a focus on theory or hypothesis testing rather than on theory or hypothesis generation. • Knowledge produced might be too abstract and general for direct application to specific local situations, contexts and individuals.

Table 3.6: Strengths and weaknesses of quantitative research

(Adapted from Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 487)

Researchers using quantitative data to describe the world do so by using variables. Variables provide the means to attempt to explain and predict the world by showing "the relationships among the variables" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 38). Variables take on different values or categories (Table 3.7).

Variable Type	Key Characteristic	Example
Categorical variable	A variable that is made up of different types or categories of a phenomenon.	The variable *gender* is made up of the categories of male and female. School setting is another example.
Quantitative variable	A variable that varies in degree or amount of phenomenon.	The variable *annual income* varies from zero to a very high income level. Age and school size are other examples.
Dependent variable (DV)	A variable that changes because of another variable; the effect or outcome variable.	Amount of studying (IV) affects test grades (DV).
Independent variable (IV)	A variable that is presumed to cause changes to occur in	Amount of studying (IV) affects test grades (DV).

	another variable; a causable variable.	

Table 3.7: Common types of variables

(Source: Adapted from Johnson & Christensen, 2014 pp.38-39)

Mixed methods research

Mixed methods research contains multiple and complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses. This reduces the likelihood of missing something important or making a mistake during the research process (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

The three research methods (qualitative, quantitative and mixed) can be viewed as falling on a research continuum (Figure 3.6): with qualitative research on the left side and quantitative research on the right, and mixed methods sitting in the centre. Research occurs as fully qualitative or fully quantitative; or mixed with either a balance or an emphasis on qualitative or quantitative method.

Figure 3.6: Research paradigms

(Source: Johnson & Christensen, 2014)

```
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
       Qualitative               Mixed Methods                Quantitative
        Research                   Research                     Research
```
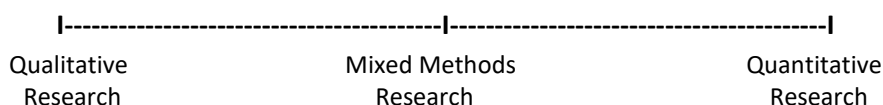
The fundamental principle of mixed research lies in its ability to collect multiple sets of data in such a way that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Mixed methods may, or may not, have an emphasis on either one or the other component. In the latter part of the 20th century Egon Guba initiated the paradigm discussion between quantitative and the "new" research paradigm of qualitative research (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 31). Until then quantitative research methods predominated.

Researchers today access a growing number of research methods – particularly in the social/applied sciences (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). The application of various philosophical and

theoretical perspectives onto qualitative research over the past century results in the classification of those perspectives into phases: the traditional period prior to World War II; the modernist phase up to the 1970s; the blurred genres phase from 1970 - 1986; a phase of crisis of representation; the fifth moment; and finally, the current post-experimental phase (Patton, 2002 pp. 79-80).

Mixed methods researchers often adhere to the philosophy of pragmatism which mixes the research components in a way that works best for the particular "research problem, research question and research circumstance" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 489).

MIXED METHODS FOR THIS STUDY

To offset any limitations of a single methodology the researcher deliberately selected a mixed method approach. Quantitative data gathering (e.g. questionnaires) does not always reflect complex human interactions. Adding qualitative methods (e.g. interviews), often seen as a constructive solution to this problem, offered an understanding of human processes and perspectives that evolve in natural settings (Firestone, 1993). The interrelationship of these two dominant research paradigms is discussed in greater detail in the sections that follow.

Research, often described as a "systematic investigation or inquiry whereby data are collected, analysed and interpreted", assists researchers to "understand, describe, predict or control an educational or psychological phenomenon" (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006 p. 2). The researcher's theoretical framework guides, directs and influences the way we interpret and study knowledge. A number of frameworks or paradigms exist: positivist (and post-positivist); constructivist; interpretivist; transformative; emancipatory; critical; pragmatism; and de-constructivist (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Both positivist (quantitative) and interpretative (qualitative) paradigms underpin the research methods utilised in this study. Table 3.8 summarizes their respective characteristics below.

Positivist Paradigm (Quantitative approach)	Interpretive Paradigm (Qualitative approach)
• The world is external and objective and can be measured by objective methods.	• The world is socially constructed and is based on the subjective realities of individuals.
• Generally, laws explain the nature of social reality through empirical research.	• Social researchers construe and interpret the meanings of phenomena and experiences.
• The researcher is independent of what is being studied and observed.	• The researcher is part of what is being studied and observed.
• Science is value free and fact finding independent of human bias.	• Science is value laden and driven by human interests.
• The emphasis is on objective facts and figures derived from calculations.	• The emphasis is on subjective and individual perceptions, meanings and interpretations
• The researcher searches for interactions, relations and causality between elements.	• The researcher searches for what is happening and evolving in human and social context.
• There is a reduction to the simplest elements or components of independent existence.	• There is a focus on the wholeness and totality of the natural situation.
• Theories or concepts are formulated from data measured mathematically.	• There is an application of multiple methods and data to secure different views of the phenomena.
• Large number of samples are used to establish principles.	• Small number of samples are used for in-depth case study over long period of time.

Table 3.8 **:** Positivist and interpretive paradigms

(Source: Adapted from Easterby-Smith et al.,1994 p. 80).

Combining quantitative and qualitative research creates a new paradigm referred to as a "mixed methods" approach.

SEQUENTIAL MIXED METHODS

Options for collecting data through a mixed method approach include either concurrent or sequential data collection. In sequential studies the data collected in the first stage of a study are interpreted before moving on to the second phase. This second set of data are in turn interpreted prior to commencing the third collection of data (Johnson & Christensen, 20214).

Greene et al. (1989) reviewed 57 mixed-method studies and concluded that the sequential approach (Figure 3.7) assists the research process as the results of the first method informs the sampling process for the second method. A qualitative-to-quantitative-to-qualitative design uses nested sequential sampling (Johnson & Christensen 2014).

Figure 3.7: Sequential mixed methods approach

(Source: Adapted from Miles & Huberman, 1994 p. 41)

QUAL ⟶ QUANT ⟶ QUAL

(exploration) (survey: questionnaire) (deepen; test findings)
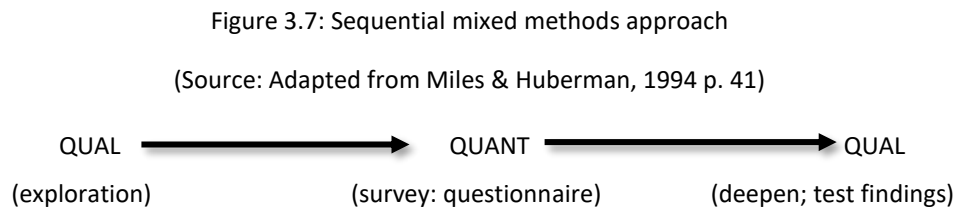
It is important to note that, for a truly mixed study, the inferences or conclusions must build on or sequentially integrate the quantitative and qualitative findings. The building of the mixed study and the inferences made at each stage underpins the validity of the research (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

SEQUENTIAL MIXED METHODS FOR THIS STUDY

This iterative research unfolded as the collected data guided the investigation. The research employed a sequential mixed method design with the qualitative component (exploratory individual interviews) deliberately conducted first. The exploratory interviews (Phase 1) provided data that guided the design and development of the second phase: the quantitative component (online questionnaire). The questionnaire informed the next phase (Phase 3) of the research (individual in-depth interviews). The research validated the key findings through analyst triangulation (Patton, 2002).

The benefits (and limitations) of mixed methods

Combining two or more methods with different strengths and weaknesses (Table 3.9) strengthens the methodology through data collection by multiple research methods where, "the whole…is greater than the sum of the parts" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 53).

Mixed Methods	
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
- Words pictures and narrative can be used to add meaning to numbers. - Numbers can be used to add precision to words, pictures and narrative. - Can strategically combine quantitative and qualitative research strengths in a single study to cover a s ingle purpose better or to cover multiple purposes will in a single study: complementary strengths. - A researcher can use the strengths of an additional method to overcome the weaknesses in another method by using both in a research study: non-overlapping weaknesses. - A researcher can generate and test mixed methods grounded theory. - Can answer a broader and more complete range of research questions because the researcher is not confined to a single method or research approach. - Can provide stronger evidence for a conclusion through convergence and corroboration of findings: triangulation. - Can provide fuller, deeper, more meaningful answers to a single research question.	- It is more expensive. - It is more time-consuming. - Some of the details of mixed methods remain to be worked out fully by research methodologists. - The researcher has to learn about multiple methods and approaches and understand how to mix them appropriately. - It can be difficult for a single researcher to carry out both qualitative and quantitative research, especially if two or more approaches are expected to be done concurrently.

Table 3.9: Strengths and weaknesses in mixed methods

(Adapted from Johnson & Christensen, 2014 pp. 491-492)

Miles and Huberman (1994) note:

> Careful measurement, generalizable samples, experimental control, and statistical tools of good quantitative studies are precious assets. When they are combined with the up-close, deep, credible understandings of complex real-world contexts that characterise good qualitative studies, we have a very powerful mix (p. 42).

Triangulation

Linking qualitative and quantitative data not only enables confirmation and corroboration of each other via triangulation but also elaborates or develops analysis, providing richer detail (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

"By combining multiple observers, theories, methods and data sources [researchers] can hope to overcome the intrinsic bias that comes from single-methods, single-observer and single-theory studies" (Denzin, 1989 cited in Patton, 2002 p. 555). Triangulating the findings in conjunction with mixed methods research seeks to overcome intrinsic bias, strengthens reliability and contributes to the authentication of the findings (Merriam, 1998 p. 207). There are a number of ways a researcher can test the internal validity of their research. Patton (2002) claims that there are four ways in which to triangulate the data that can contribute to its validation and verification:

1. "Methods triangulation – checking the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods.

2. Triangulation of sources – checking the consistency of different data sources within the same method.

3. Analyst triangulation – using multiple analysts to review the findings.

4. Theory/perspective triangulation – using multiple perspectives or theories to interpret the data" (p. 556).

Merriam (1998) maintains that triangulation is just one method of enhancing internal validity. Other strategies include member checks, long-term observation, peer examination, participatory or collaborative modes of research and clarifying the researcher's bias at the outset of the project (pp. 204-205).

TRIANGULATION PROCESS FOR THIS STUDY

The use of a triangulation process in addition to a mixed methods approach, in this study, provided an additional layer of validation of the data that emerged from the combination of the two processes of data collection. It can be argued that using a mixed method approach to answer the research question does, in itself, validate the data collected both qualitatively and quantitatively (Greene & McClintock, 1985). It uses more than one method to collect data on

the same topic. It involves different sample types and methods of data collection (Kulkami, 2013). Triangulation in this study (Figure 3.8) involved:

1. Member checks (Merriam, 1998): checking the data and initial findings that emerged from the exploratory interviews (Phase 1) with a larger cohort (Phase 2); then finally re-checking the data with in-depth interviews (Phase 3 data collection).

2. Analyst Triangulation (Patton, 2002): checking the final key findings with experts in the field of educational leadership – in particular, in principals' PD

Figure 3.8: The triangulation process

(Adapted from: http://www.sdsresearch.com/index.html)
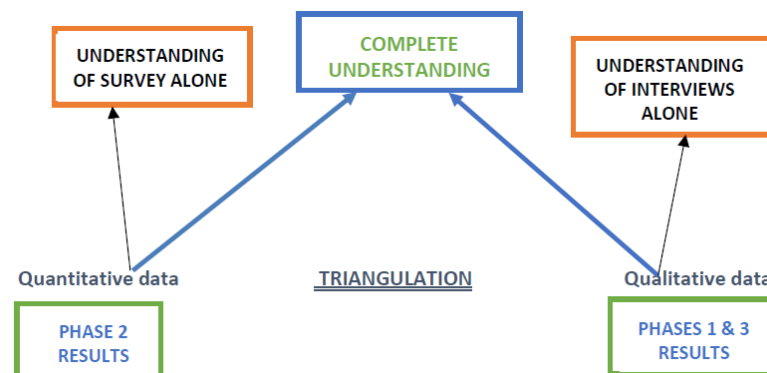
INTERNAL VALIDITY OR CREDIBILITY

Internal validity questions the truth of the findings (Merriam, 1998): do they make sense? Are they credible to the participants of the study? Are they authentic (Patton, 2002)? Is there, "a causal relationship…between the independent and dependent variables being investigated" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 281)?

What is being observed (in qualitative research) or heard in an interview are participants' constructions of reality (Merriam, 1998). The data that has been gathered, therefore, needs to be interpreted or translated. Its internal validity could then be enhanced using such things as

triangulation, member checks and declaring researcher bias at the outset (Merriam, 1998). Triangulation may involve multiple investigators to pool their judgements, or it may use multiple methods of data gathering. Member checks involve checking the findings with research participants throughout the course of the study. Researcher bias needed to be taken into consideration in this qualitative case study given that the researcher was the primary gatherer of the data.

Research stance

OBJECTIVITY

Mixed methods research requires us to understand *subjective* (individual), *intersubjective* (language-based, discursive, cultural) and *objective* (material and causal) realities in our world (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Researchers must not influence or show bias in their observations. Quantitative researchers assume objectivity, reducing data to numbers, keeping their distance from the subjects under study.

Qualitative researchers generally agree that "reality is socially constructed" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 36) and gather data through such things as interviews and observations. They gather words not numbers and therefore remain much closer to the subjects under study. The issue of keeping objectivity in this instance remained of central importance to the study if participants' meanings and viewpoints were to be authentic. Reducing subjectivity and ensuring that the research remains as objective as possible are vitally important to a study such as this.

VALIDITY

External validity is a weakness of qualitative research (Johnson & Christensen, 2014) with knowledge produced by qualitative research on its own tending not to be able to be reproduced. Random selection of a study cohort is essential for generalisations in external validity. Selection

isn't usually random when collecting data in qualitative research (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). This weakness means that external validity can be problematic. Qualitative research can be used, however, in conjunction with quantitative research data collection to drill down into the data collected from a case study to gather rich and detailed data: mixed methods.

Descriptive and interpretive validity remained central to qualitative phases of the research. Descriptive validity, the factual accuracy of the data gathering process by the researcher, remained very important (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Description, a major objective of qualitative research, required more than simple interviewing and observing. Qualitative research requires that the researcher interprets the beliefs and behaviours of the participants (Patton, 2002, p. 477). Analysing this data for interpretive validity ensures the accurate portrayal of the meanings attached to the participants' responses.

Permission to engage in the study

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY ETHICS APPROVALS

All data gathering in this study involved interactions with other human beings. Therefore, critically important ethical issues existed: professional competence; integrity; professional, scientific and scholarly responsibility; respect for people's rights; and social responsibility (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). Prior written approval from the Ethics Review Committee (Human Research) of Macquarie University preceded the commencement of this study. Applicants had the opportunity to read and conform to the Guidelines for *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research:* http://www.nhmrc.gov.au at the outset.

Recursive Ethics Approvals for this study occurred, with applications approved on 29th May, 2013 (#5201300326) (Appendix 4.3); 3rd March, 2014 (#5201400075) (Appendix 4.4); and on 18th May, 2015 (#5201500162) (Appendix 4.6). The researcher addressed the issues raised by the Ethics Committee within the allocated timeframes and fulfilled the Committee's requests.

The initial Ethics Approval covered the research proposal, the intended methodology, and the Phase 1 data collection. The second application sought approval for Phase 2 data collection i.e. through an online questionnaire. The third approval requested permission to conduct the Phase 3 interviews. These phases are described in detail in Chapter 4 which follows.

EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITY

The research opportunity on which the study was founded, and which is also outlined in greater detail in the chapters which follow, centred on primary and secondary principals in the NSW Government school system within which the NSW Department of Education is the employing authority. The (then) NSW Department of Education and Communities underwent a name change in 2015 to become the NSW Department of Education (www.dec.nsw.gov.au). Communication with the NSW DE before the study commenced resulted in approval given by the DE without the need to formally submit a request by way of the State Education Research Applications Process (SERAP) application (Appendix 4.2). Approval to conduct the research with NSW DE principals occurred on 17th April, 2013. Publicity surrounding the research and invitation to participate occurred not through NSW DE channels, but through the two peak principals' professional associations (the NSW Primary Principals' Association – PPA; and the NSW Secondary Principals' Council - SPC) as well as through facilitators of internationalised professional development programs for principals (Korean Cultural Exchange; China Program; and Leading Educators Around the Planet - LEAP).

Limitations

This study collected data from one sector of education providers in NSW: the NSW DE. The researcher, as a recently retired NSW DE principal, had some measure of pre-existing collegial rapport with many NSW DE principals across the state, the facilitators of the internationalised

professional development programs, and with the two, peak principals' professional associations. This suggested a measure of trust in both the purpose and integrity of the research.

This research sought to gather the perceptions of experienced public, school principals with regard to their professional development, so their subjectivity was not seen as a limitation, but rather, as the essence of this research (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 446).

It is unknown whether or not experienced principals in the Independent and Catholic school sectors in NSW, or principals elsewhere, experience similar issues in this or in other jurisdictions. International literature (Oplatka, 2010; Dempster, 2001; Dempster, Lovett & Fluckiger, 2011; Zepeda et al., 2014) on the professional development of principals would suggest that the issue of the provision of relevant and appropriate professional development related to career stage is relevant to principals around the world – independent of jurisdiction or country.

Finally, the researcher has a personal association with one of the internationalised professional development providers (LEAP). In an attempt to offset any personal bias that may exist with this connection, the researcher ensured multiple participants in different internationalised professional development programs provided input into the research. Additionally, employment of a mixed methods approach aimed to minimise any possible researcher bias.

Administration

ANONYMITY

Coding (Appendix 3.1) applied to all principals engaging in the study. This ensured their anonymity at all times. When completing the Phase 2 questionnaire, participants could choose to complete it anonymously. Respondents willing to volunteer to be interviewed in the follow-up individual interviews, however, needed to provide their name and contact details.

The participants' Information Form (Appendix 4.5) clearly outlined participants' anonymity in the research. In all written reports (including articles and thesis) and all oral reports (presentations, keynotes) the coding system allocated to individual principals protects their identity.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The researcher treated the identity and school location of all respondents with total confidentiality. Password protected email communication provided secure electronic communication and ensured access limited to only the researcher. All email communications sent as a "blind copy" guaranteed no individual participant's name appearing on any email. All hard copies (emails, consent forms, expressions of interest) remain held securely in a locked filing cabinet. At the conclusion of the study the researcher will de-identify all the data analysis materials (including tapes, audio recordings and transcripts). Interviewees' confidentiality remained of paramount importance at all times.

Voluntary participation underpinned this research, with the option for withdrawal at any time from the study. The researcher gave this assurance both in writing, and by spoken word at the point of interview.

At the conclusion of the study the researcher will distribute the key findings to all major stakeholders according to the established protocols.

TRUST AND CREDIBILITY

The level of trust and credibility between the researcher and the participants appeared as a positive aspect of the researcher's closeness to the field. This association may have contributed to the response rates outlined below, especially with regard to the interviews in Phase 1 and 3.:

1. Phase 1 exploratory interview response: 100% of purposively selected group participated (i.e. 10 respondents from 10 purposively selected)

2. Phase 2 online questionnaire return rate: 10% of NSW DEC experienced principals (i.e. 148 respondents from 1,477 available)

3. Phase 3 in-depth interview volunteer rate: 45% of Phase 2 participants (30 purposively selected from the 60 who volunteered)

PRINCIPALS' PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

As noted before, two major, voluntary professional associations for government school principals exist in NSW: the Primary Principals' Association (www.nswppa.org.au) and the Secondary Principals' Council (www.nswspc.org.au).

The researcher held discussions with these two major principals' professional associations in 2013. The NSW PPA published the invitation to participate in the research on 05/08/2013 (Appendix 3.2), in their newsletter, *What's Hot?* The NSW SPC President emailed support (Appendix 3.3) for the research on 02/07/2013, with a view to advertise the project in the associations' regularly published news bulletins to principals (Appendix 3.4). The critical support of the professional associations ensured the ongoing development of credibility and trust with experienced principals across NSW. The ongoing support for development of the research by the associations over the past four years demonstrated this.

INTERNATIONALISED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPAL NETWORKS

Three major networks that provide internationalised PD to government school principals supported this research:

- The Korean Cultural Exchange (Appendix 3.5);
- The China Program (Appendix 3.6); and

- Leading Educators Around the Planet (LEAP) (Appendix 3.7).

When approached about the opportunity to participate in this research, the facilitators of these programs agreed to advertise the study to both present and past participants. These electronically distributed communications to volunteers facilitated their communication directly with the researcher for inclusion in the research.

Summary

The researchable question and contributing questions (outlined at the beginning of this chapter) that guided the development of this study underpinned the overall design and methodologies of this study. Three phases of data collection eventuated with each phase informing the phase which followed. Analysing and triangulating the data for interpretive validity ensured the accurate portrayal of the meanings attached to the participants' responses. In this research, as a retired principal, the researcher possessed the necessary experiences and understanding of the principal role to understand the participants' "inner words" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014, p. 300). However, particular people in particular contexts construct meaning and interpret experiences differently (Johnson & Christensen, 2014) when recollecting past experiences. Their individual perceptions of previous PD experiences provided the data for this study.

Chapter 4 which follows gives further detail with regard to the overall research opportunity and the phases of the study.

CHAPTER 4

THE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY AND DESIGN

The NSW Department of Education (NSW DE) is the largest school system in the southern hemisphere with over 2200 schools. As the case study chosen for this research, it provides a cohort of experienced principals.

The cohort provided the researcher with first-hand insights into the phenomena under study. A need existed therefore for extreme consciousness by the researcher, given her own experiences as a principal, to retain distance, objectivity, impartiality and neutrality to ensure that the data emanating from this research provided the basis for the research findings and not the researcher's personal experiences, opinions or projections. Utilising a mixed methods approach and triangulating data sources was seen as a means of working towards eliminating any perceived bias.

This chapter provides further details of the research design followed by a discussion of the population sampling, data collection and analysis used within the initial three phases of the study.

Design Overview

The research design centred on five phases:

1. <u>Phase 1:</u> Open-ended exploratory interviews with a purposively selected small group of NSW DE experienced government school principals in the mid and late-stages of their career.

2. <u>Phase 2</u>: An online questionnaire informed both by the literature review and the data analysed from Phase 1. This was designed, piloted and implemented. Analysis utilised

SurveyMonkey software and IBM SPSS Version 22.0 for Windows 7 (Quantitative data collection and analysis).

3. Phase 3: In-depth face-to-face follow-up individual interviews with purposively selected sub-groups from within the total group of Phase 2 volunteers who participated in the online questionnaire and data analysis (Qualitative data collection).

4. Phase 4: Analysis of key findings in each phase and the triangulation of those findings.

5. Phase 5: Summary of findings, implications and recommendations.

During the course of the research project the researcher regularly maintained a diary for planning and reflecting on the journey being undertaken (Appendix 4.1) tracking and recording the process and phases as they unfolded. Figure 4.1 below presents a diagrammatic representation of these phases.

Figure 4.1: Research design overview
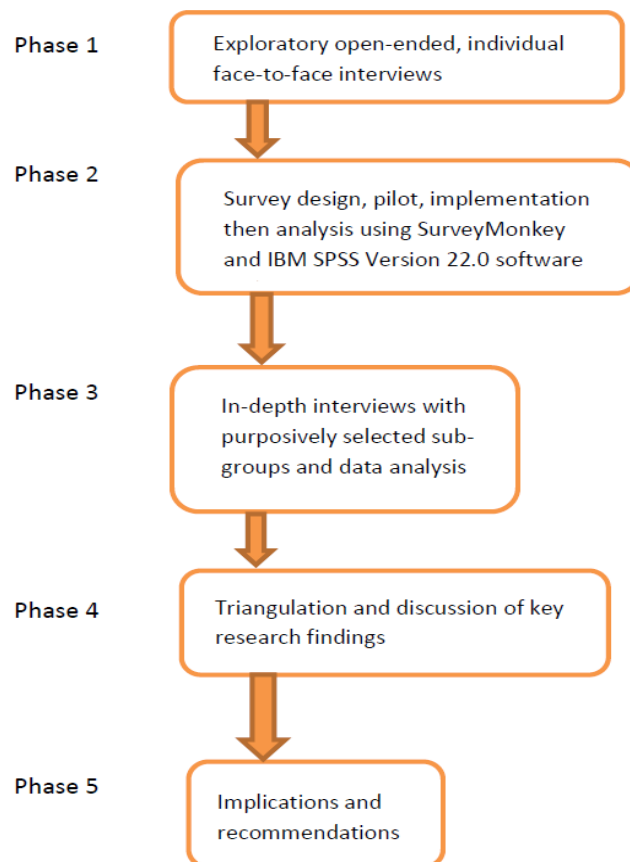
Definitions used in this study

Definitions of the terms used throughout this study are defined in Table 4.1 below.

Concept	Definition
Coaching	A process by which principals reflect on their strengths and identify obstacles to their growth and development. Principals' professional development is guided through the setting and achieving of professional goals. Participants need to have a growth mindset and a willingness to engage in dialogue around leadership improvement (O'Mahony & Barnett, 2008).
Counsellor	Someone who gives guidance on personal and professional issues.
Critical friend	Someone who supports a principal through reflection on practice, "critically focusing on those areas which give cause or professional concern, with the aim of bringing about specific improvement in practice" (Holden, 1997 p. 442).
Experienced or Established Principal	The *experienced* or *established principal* is one who is beyond the novice/neophyte stage. This term is not linked to the age of the principal. This principalship period of time is between the end of the novice/neophyte stage and retirement or separation from the role. Mid and late-career varies from principal to principal. It will depend on the age at the point of entry into the principalship, and possibly the country and jurisdiction within which the principal works. However, the late-career principal is generally seen as a core component of the experienced stage.
Globalised education community	The increasing interconnection of countries politically, economically and educationally (Power, 2000).
Internationalised PD	PD that occurs beyond the employing authority and jurisdiction and that is embedded in the context of another national jurisdiction which serves as a basis for comparison and reflection.
Late-career Principal	"Late-career" refers to those few years just prior to retirement, generally accepted as five years.
Mentoring	The process of learning and reflection that requires principals working closely with leadership mentors in authentic site-based

	experiences to develop confidence and leadership. It involves carefully constructed mentoring experiences that includes reflective discussions and goal setting (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004).
Mid-career Principal	"Mid-career" is less easy to define, given the length of an individual principal's career. It recognises that this stage of the principalship can encompass principals in their 30s, 40s, 50s and beyond, and is linked more to the point of retirement or separation from the teaching profession.
Networking	Encompasses networks (the structure) and networking (the process) together in the belief that "a set of features underpins them both" (Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2012 p. 215)
Novice/neophyte/early years/newly-appointed principal	These interchangeable labels refer to the years of the principalship from induction to 5 years of experience in the role.
Paradigm	For the purposes of this study, a framework or model.
Peer shadowing	The process by which principals follow their colleagues, recording events and activities on site throughout the visit and then engage in shared-reflective discussions about the day's activities with each other (Barnett, 1990).
Phenomenon	A fact or situation that is observed to exist or happen, especially one whose cause or explanation is in question (Oxford Dictionary, 2017)
Professional Companion	An experienced leader or principal who uses their knowledge, experience and wisdom to walk alongside colleagues and emerging principals in support of their professional development (Degenhardt, 2013).
Professional Development (PD)	"The activities that develop professional skills, knowledge and expertise" (Timperley, 2011 p. 4).
Professional Learning (PL)	"The changes in the capacity for practice and/or changes in actual practice" (Timperley, 2011 p.4).
Research paradigm	The generally accepted perspective of a particular research discipline e.g. positivist, interpretative

Table 4.1: Definition of terms to be used throughout the study

Population sampling

PHASE 1

Permission to conduct the study was sought from the NSW DE. As the proposed recruitment would be through the two main principals' associations, the completion of a SERAP application was deemed unnecessary (Appendix 4.2). This had the added advantage in that the study would less likely be seen as employer-driven.

Pursuant to the initial ethics approval (Appendix 4.3) a purposively selected group of experienced principals engaged in face-to-face individual exploratory interviews. Purposive selection (Johnson & Christensen, 2014) instead of random sampling worked towards eliminating bias as random sampling can deal the researcher a decidedly biased hand when dealing with such a small number (Miles & Huberman, 1994). These interviews used principals' perceptions, "the way in which the individual creates, modifies and interprets the world" (Cohen & Mansion, 1994 p. 8) in gathering data. Easterby-Smith et al., (1994) also notes "the world and its reality are not objective and exterior, but they are socially constructed and given meaning by people" (p. 78).

Purposive selection meant that selection could take into consideration gender, geographic location and school classification (primary or secondary). This interview group therefore provided a cross section of volunteers purposively selected and invited by the researcher to participate. The group of principals was known to the researcher and were available for interview. As Phase 1 was designed, therefore, to identify and to open up areas for further investigation, purposive sampling seemed well suited to the task.

PHASE 2

Government school principals across NSW received an invitation to take part in this study through their principals' associations after the second successful ethics application (Appendix

4.4). The advertisement, which contained an invitation for principals with 5+ years of experience in the principalship to participate, was published in their regular newsletters. The respondents to the invitation each received a Participant Information and Consent Form (Appendix 4.5). Those who consented to participate in the study represented a sample of mainstream principals as no principals from schools for specific purposes chose to participate. Schools for specific purposes are …

PHASE 3

Phase 3 involved follow-up, in-depth, individual, face-to-face interviews that were designed to dig deeper into the questionnaire data after the successful third ethics application (Appendix 4.6). As a result of Phase 2 participants' completion of the questionnaire, principals had the opportunity to volunteer to participate in the follow-up interviews. Collation of the details of these volunteers facilitated the purposive selection of a group of principals to engage in this final phase of data collection.

Data collection

INTERVIEWS (PHASES 1 & 3)

Audio recording of all interviews (with the permission of the interviewee) facilitated data collection and allowed the interviewer/researcher to concentrate on the interviewees' responses. Audio recordings, later revisited, allowed the researcher to transcribe the content for analysis. The transcriptions provided the option to summarise the data and to use exact words/quotes when relevant. Transcription summaries provided a point of reference to back-track to the original transcription, and as a means of capturing specific words and phrases (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Open-ended questioning techniques employed for both the Phase 1 and the Phase 3 interviews provided the interviewee with opportunities for deep discussion around each question.

Designed to develop some deep discussion, these questions enabled the interviewee to respond individually according to their personal experiences (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The reflective nature of interview Questions #1 to #7 in the Phase 1 interviews facilitated each respondent's retrospective meaning constructed from their experiences across a variety of professional learning activities (Maxwell, 2005). The categorisation and collation of the interview responses for the first phase of the data collection appear in Appendix 4.7.

An interview recording sheet guided interviews in both phases (Appendices 4.8 and 4.9) and supported the researcher in maintaining a consistent approach to each interview. The recording sheet facilitated the sequencing of the interview questions and provided a record of additional probing questions and "memoing". The use of memoing allowed the researcher to note reflections and follow-up actions as a result of the conversation (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The opportunity to ask probing questions during the in-depth interviews allowed the researcher to seek clarity or additional information in a response (Patton, 2002). Both sets of interviews utilised semi-structured formats.

The Phase 3 in-depth follow-up interviews contained eight questions developed from five emergent themes from Phase 2 (See Appendix 4.10). Participants received the interview questions prior to the interview. This gave principals time to consider the proposed questions and prepare responses as needed.

The collation of the dimensions and categories into emerging themes from Phase 2 (Appendix 4.11) facilitated the development of the Phase 3 interview questions, linking them to the dimensions, categories, themes and item numbers (Appendix 4.12).

The Phase 3 interviews, conducted "in the field" (i.e. the principal's office) facilitated a naturalist inquiry that contrasts with controlled experimental designs. In a real-world setting such as this, the researcher gives control of the study conditions over to the participant. Set in the principal's

office the interview potentially could experience disruptions from elsewhere in the school at any point in time. This real-world setting for the interview provided, therefore, some comfortable and familiar conditions for the participant (Patton, 2002).

To make sense out of the interview responses, manual identification, coding, categorising, classification and labelling of the words occurred. This facilitated the emergence of patterns and themes that then became organised into tables. This manual collation of information maintained the integrity of the responses by ensuring that the "words" remained intact while simultaneously allowing the researcher intimate knowledge of the data through its constant manipulation.

No statistical significance exists within qualitative data, so the significance of these findings needed to be established in another way. Validation through triangulation to cross-check findings occurred at the conclusion of the Phase 3 data analysis. Triangulation, it was noted, "seeks convergence, correspondence and corroboration of results from different methods" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 502).

SURVEY (PHASE 2)

An initial pilot online questionnaire allowed the researcher to adjust and refine the reliability and validity of the instrument and to identify potential problems (Johnson & Christensen, 2014) in the administration of the survey instrument. Five experienced principals completed the pilot on-line questionnaire (Appendix 4.13) on 4th March, 2014 responding to the researcher with regard to its format, style and administration. Feedback from these principals informed the final composition of the study and administration process. The pilot study resulted in the revision of the format and items to ensure a logical, clear and concise instrument.

The final questionnaire (Appendix 4.14), distributed via a link embedded within an email (Appendix 4.15), contained a statement of purpose, completion instructions, and a restatement

of the guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality. Those respondents, who completed the survey through the link provided in news bulletins from the NSW Primary Principals Association (PPA) and the NSW Secondary Principals Council (SPC) maintained their confidentiality through an alternate individualised accession route.

The software used for the management, collation, indexing and searching of the data in this phase of the study was the online questionnaire SurveyMonkey.

Data analysis

INTERVIEWS (PHASES 1 & 3)

Analysis framework

Stake's (1995) data analysis framework included five stages: (1) categorical aggregation; (2) direct interpretation; (3) pattern discovery; (4) naturalistic generalizations; and (5) triangulation. Operating concurrently with this framework the researcher adopted Miles and Huberman's (1994) specific framework strategies which define qualitative analysis as three concurrent flows of activity:

1. *data reduction* which "refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data" (p. 10) from the transcripts;

2. *data display* which "includes many types of matrices, graphs, charts and networks" (p. 11); and

3. *conclusion drawing/verification* which involves "noting regularities, patterns, explanations, possible configurations, casual flows, and propositions. The competent researcher holds these conclusions lightly, maintaining openness and scepticism, but the conclusions are still there, inchoate and vague at first, then increasingly explicit and grounded…" (p. 11).

Reducing the data by selecting, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the transcribed notes occurred continuously throughout the analysis of the Phase 1 data. Collation of the colour coded data, displayed in table form, allowed the researcher to work intimately with the participants "words" as seen in Appendices 4.16 and 4.23 to 4.33.

The qualitative data analysis model of this research drew from the above two frameworks (i.e. Stake, 1995; and Miles & Huberman, 1994) and was also encapsulated in Johnson and Christensen's (2014) model of "Data Analysis in Qualitative Research" (p. 589) (Figure 4.2):

Figure 4.2: Data analysis in qualitative research

(Source: *Data Analysis in Qualitative Research*, Johnson & Christensen (2014) p. 589)
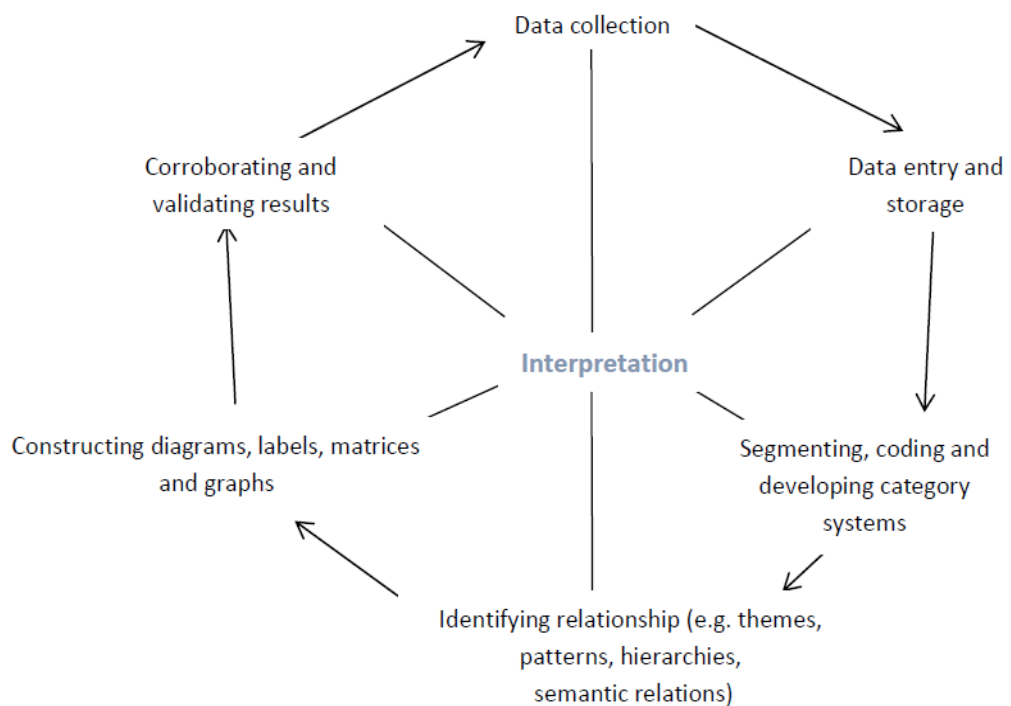
The framework for analysing the data began with the initial text created from the interviews. Mapping the framework (Figure 4.3) organised the steps undertaken. Carney (1990), cited in Miles & Huberman (1994), refers to this mapping exercise as a "ladder of analytical abstraction" (p. 91). The ladder commences with the text, then moves, trying out coding to identifying themes, testing hypotheses and finally to integrating the data into an explanatory framework.

The information therefore develops into "condensed, clustered, sorted and linked" data over the course of the research study (Miles & Huberman, 1994 p. 91)

Figure 4.3 Mapping the framework - "The Ladder of Analytical Abstraction"
(Source: Carney (1990), cited in Miles & Huberman (1994) p. 91)

LEVELS

3 Developing and testing propositions to construct an explanatory framework

2 Repackaging and aggregating the data

1 Summarising and packaging the data

Create a working text

Try out coding categories to see what fits

Identify themes and trends in the data overall

Test hypotheses and reduce bulk of data for analysis of trends

Delineate the deep structure

Synthesis: integrating the data into one framework

Cross-checking tentative findings. Matrix analysis of major themes in data

Searching for relationships in the data: writing analytical memos
Finding out where the emphases and gaps are in the data

Coding of data. Writing of analytical notes on linkages to various frameworks of interpretation

Transcription of interviews
Synopses of individual interviews

Interview transcripts, summaries and interview notes' proformas facilitated the data analysis. Patton (2002) believes:

> …raw field notes and verbatim transcripts constitute the undigested complexity of reality. Simplifying and making sense out of that complexity constitutes the challenge of content analysis. Developing some manageable classification or coding system is the first step of analysis. Without classification, there is chaos and confusion (p. 463).

The interview analysis aimed to work totally from the words of the respondents. The words once assembled, sub-clustered and categorized then organized allowed for contrasting, comparing, analysing and patterning. Therefore, although the words of the respondents needed

transcription and summarising, an emphasis on the original form of the words kept the authenticity of the response. This allowed the researcher to constantly re-visit the interview in its original natural setting: to hear the inflection; to reflect on the context; and to listen to the feelings behind the words. Miles and Huberman (1994) believe that "findings from qualitative studies have a quality of 'undeniability'. Words, especially organized into incidents or stories, have a concrete, vivid, meaningful flavour that often proves far more convincing to a reader - another researcher, a policymaker, a practitioner - than pages of summarized numbers" (p.1).

Data analysis

Open, axial and selective coding grouped the data from both interview phases. Upon completion of the initial coding the researcher returned to the transcripts revisiting the principals' responses. This ensured the capturing of all possible codes. Although this process consumed considerable amounts of time, the constant revisiting of the raw/original data followed by further recording and coding guards against the danger of moving too quickly into naming a pattern (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The researcher relied on manually coding the data collected from both Phase 1 and Phase 3 interviews. The principles of the analytical process remained the same whether utilising a software package or whether the researcher manually worked with the data (Patton, 2002). This researcher felt that additional familiarity with the data to internalise the trends and themes more closely assisted in effectively analysing the data. Hence the more traditional method of interview coding occurred.

Throughout the research project the researcher made regular use of a reflective journal (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). This journal diarised the research journey facilitating the self-reflection process. It assisted in unpacking experiences, reviewing literature, planning the research, and considering available strategies for the project. Over the course of the research

the compilation of four journals allowed for ongoing reflection over the years on the analysis of the data, and for the design to gradually unfold. Both qualitative and quantitative methodology dissection became the central focus for reflection in Journal #1 (see Appendix 4.1).

This reflective process admitted the researcher into the picture (Wenn, 2005). It allowed the researcher, potentially, to construct meaning from the data. Data read, interpreted and reflected upon by the researcher, from which themes emerged, informed subsequent data gathering phases.

Coding of data

Initially segmenting the data into meaningful analytical units provided the basis for the analysis. Colour coding these units and categorising them according to concept, facilitated their recording in spread sheet form. Johnson and Christensen (2014) say, "segmenting and coding go hand in hand because segmenting involves locating meaningful segments of data and coding involves marking or labelling those segments with codes or categories" (p. 592).

Out of a collation of the coded data emerged four dimensions: Individual profile; PD processes; PD program experiences; and Change. These dimensions provided the framework for the design of the second phase of data collection.

Displaying the qualitative data using Miles and Huberman's (1994) "conceptually clustered matrix (which) has its rows and columns arranged to bring together items that belong together" (p. 127) readily illustrated the developing categories.

Coding the Phase 1 interview responses easily showed the research variables: gender (male or female); school setting (primary or secondary); and geographical location (city, urban or rural). Appendices 4.17 to 4.22 illustrate the colour coding used with the elimination of the names guaranteeing confidentiality and anonymity and show the response matrices developed: Appendix 4.17 (principal preparation stage); Appendix 4.18 (newly appointed or early years'

stage); Appendix 4.19 (experienced principal stage); Appendix 4.20 (challenges faced); and Appendix 4.21 (PD preparation for those challenges). Appendix 4.22 illustrates the categorised data for professional development.

The use of codes empowered and sped up analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Phases 1 and 3 followed the same procedures of working totally from the words of the respondents during the analysis of the data.

The structured recording sheet used for the Phase 3 interviews (Appendix 4.9) facilitated the recording of responses in addition to the audio recording. The categorisation and collation of the interview responses presented in Appendices 4.23 to 4.33 provided the colour coded collation of responses according to the themes as they emerged from this phase. While closely aligned, the themes emerging at this stage of the research differed slightly from those that emerged from Phase 2 (Appendix 4.34). The data driving the theory (Grounded Theory) resulted in the theory evolving throughout the study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014; Maxwell, 2005; Merriam, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Meaningful phrases, coded and categorised, resulted from the qualitative data gathered from the open-ended questions. This reduction of the data, displayed in graphs and tables, evolved into a series of numbered findings. Listed, these findings again became categorised, colour coded and organised into thematic groupings. These groupings developed into five themes (Appendix 4.34) informing the Phase 3 follow-up interview design and development.

Participants were also coded to protect their identity as displayed in Table 4.2 below.

Code	Explanation
MPU1	Male Primary Principal: Urban school
FPU1	Female Primary Principal: Urban school
MSU1	Male Secondary Principal: Urban school

FSU1	Female secondary Principal: Urban school
MSR1	Male Secondary Principal: Rural school
FSR1	Female Secondary Principal: Rural school
MPC1	Male Primary Principal: City school
FPC1	Female Primary Principal: City school
MSC1	Male Secondary Principal: City school
FSC1	Female Secondary Principal: City school
MCR1	Male Central Principal: Rural school
FCR1	Female Central Principal: Rural school

Table 4 2: Exploratory interview participant coding excerpt

Definitions

The qualitative data analysis design developed for this component of this study utilised the following definitions in relation to coding, categorising and clarifying data (Table 4.2).

Dimension	Topic section
Category	Topic sub-section
Free category	Topic sub-section (not aligned)
Transcriptions	Transfer of audio-taped interviews into word-processing format
Transcription summaries	Abbreviated form of transcription in word-processing format
Variable coding (by letter)	M=Male; F=Female P=Primary; S=Secondary; C=Central C=City; U=Urban; R=Rural Y=Participation in an i18N program; N=Non-participation in an i18N program
Track coding (by number)	MCRY1; MCR2
Matrix	The horizontal and vertical recording structure
Vertical axis	Dimension/category (item and question)
Horizontal axis	Individual respondents
Colour codes	Similar individual responses (according to open, axial and selective coding)

Open codes	Initial categorizing of data
Axial codes	Organization of categories according to concepts
Selective codes	Emergence of story line (and theory)
Findings	Repeated similar responses
Themes	Synthesis of findings into generic position, reaction or belief
Cross-classification	Simultaneous comparison of all variables (sample; school level; gender; location)

Table 4.3: Qualitative data analysis definitions

(Adapted from: Marks, 2012)

QUESTIONNAIRE (PHASE 2)

Data analysis

The management, searching, indexing and collating of the questionnaire data included both the SurveyMonkey the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS Statistics, Version 22.0 for Windows 7) software.

The SurveyMonkey software facilitated the development of figures and graphs that represented collated principals' responses to the questions. The software capabilities also enabled deeper investigation of the data providing additional figures and graphs.

The statistical analysis of the data collected in this phase appears in Appendix 4.35. Relevant statistical techniques analysed the data collected and identified the relationship between the variables. Descriptive statistics (describing, summarising or making sense of the data) strategies facilitated the analysis of the data. Factor analysis (using SPSS Version 22.0 software) analysed the correlation among the items (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Coding of the data

Participants' questionnaires' responses were coded in line with the coding system used in Phase 1. The Phase 2 codes had an additional letter included. Based on the data collected from the questionnaires, the inclusion of a letter to signify participation in internationalised professional development (Y), or no participation (N) was added to the original sequence of coding letters (Appendix 4.36).

Relevant statistical SurveyMonkey software techniques were used to collate and present the closed and scaled responses to facilitate the researcher's analysis of the responses.

Analysis of the qualitative data derived from the open-ended responses in the Phase 2 online questionnaire used the same coding pattern as discussed earlier and used on the data collected from Phases 1 and 3.

The Phase 2 questionnaire (Appendix 4.14) contained 38 questions coded as sequentially numbered items to facilitate analysis (Chapter 6 provides an analysis of each question or item). Appendix 4.37 provides the detail of the domains, categories and data analysis together with relevant SPSS statistical significant data from the online questionnaire.

Summary

This chapter has discussed the design of the study in some detail, unpacking the three phases of the research with regard to the participants involved in those phases and the ways in which data was collected and analysed. The following chapters deal in depth with the nature and findings of Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the study respectively.

CHAPTER 5

PHASE 1: EXPLORATORY INTERVIEWS, INITIAL FINDINGS AND

DISCUSSION

Phase 1 of the research consisted of open-ended exploratory interviews with a purposively selected group of NSW DE experienced government school principals in the mid or late-stages of their career. This chapter outlines the individual, face-to-face exploratory interview process (hereinafter referred to as 'exploratory interviews') and discusses the initial findings.

The chapter is arranged in the following format:

1. a brief description of each dimension and associated items within the interview process;

2. identification of the initial findings;

3. an analysis of the data which led to the findings; and

4. comment on the initial findings, including the identification of any initial themes considered worthy of deeper investigation.

The intention of Phase 1 of the study was to guide and inform the design and development of the Phase 2 questionnaire building on the review of relevant literature.

The Phase 1 interviews occurred after phone and email contact was made by the researcher who invited principals to participate having explained the purpose of the research. All interviews, conducted in jointly agreed locations, occurred during mutually-agreed time schedules. A total of ten interviews were held. Due to some geographical constraints, only eight of these interviews occurred in the field (e.g. in the principal's office). They provided good insights into participants' everyday life situations (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Two were

conducted offsite and took place at an agreed venue in Sydney – with both researcher and volunteer travelling to the agreed meeting place.

While allocating an hour for each interview, the discussions usually went for up to two hours, with many principals indicating that they valued the opportunity to sit down, reflect on and discuss their professional learning experiences and PD needs.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERVIEW

Interrogation of the available literature on interviews shaped the questions for these exploratory interviews.

The exploratory interviews involved questions designed to unpack the thoughts and perceptions of experienced principals, and to gather their stories about their ongoing professional learning and development. An interview recording sheet (Appendix 4.8) guided each interview thus ensuring that standardised, open-ended questions would characterise each interview.

The interview questions centred on four "dimensions":

1. Individual profile

2. Professional development processes

3. Professional development program experiences

4. Change

Across those four dimensions, the interviews each comprised seven items, with the first item gathering personal information on age, gender, school setting/classification and geographical location. Item two concentrated on the principal's professional profile and gathered data related to the principal's career pathway and their school setting. The remainder of the interview sought information on principals' recollections of their professional development during principal

preparation; their perceptions of previous and current professional development experiences; and their needs during their mid and late-career years.

THE INTERVIEW

Prior to the commencement of the interview, interviewees received:

- an explanation of the focus of the interview; and

- a request from the interviewer to audio record each interview (Appendix 5.1).

During the interview, the interviewer:

- used probes and follow-up questions to gain clarification or additional depth of responses;

- used reflective listening techniques as integral components of the interview process; and

- paid particular attention to maintaining a respect for the interviewee's valuable time (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

The interview questions (Appendix 5.2) were organised into four related groups or "dimensions", thus providing an initial framework for a data collection. From here, the interview moved into the guided approach exploring specific topics and asking pre-determined open-ended questions. The same general questions remained constant throughout all of the interviews.

The interview recording sheet centred on the exact wording and sequence of open-ended questions. These were determined in advance. This document enabled the researcher to also record any probes used to obtain clarity as well as the answers to the questions in the same order which facilitated the comparison of responses. This also reduced the interviewer effects

and any bias across the interviews as well as facilitating the organisation and analysis of the data (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

During the interviews, the need to remain neutral toward the interviewees' responses prevailed. The researcher ensured that the interviewee did most of the talking, providing sufficient time for the interview while maintaining a respect for the valuable time being given to it by the interviewee. The interviewer used probes as appropriate; and utilised audio and written recording of each interview, all of which supported the interview process (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

While using pre-determined, open-ended questions to standardise the interview component, provision also existed for informal conversational interview questions. These questions emerged from the immediate context and occurred in the natural course of discussion as preliminary questions or probes without predetermination of question wording (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

The main component of the interview consisted of the standardised interview component which utilised the more formal predetermined questions and wording. These are included as Appendix 5.2.

The data was collected, coded and analysed as explained in Chapter 4 with associated appendices. Colour coding applied to all item responses and facilitated analysis assisting in tracking emerging themes across each phase of the data collection. Variable coding occurred according to gender (Male/Female); school setting (Primary/Secondary); geographical location (City, Urban, Rural); with consecutive numbers indicating additional principals meeting that particular coding sequence, as shown in Table 4.1.

Dimension 1: Individual profile

Dimension 1 contained two questions. Question 1 provided information on the participants' personal profile: their contact details, their year of birth (providing generational information which may or may not be significant when analysing the data); gender; current school (indicating the setting and the size plus the geographical location as rural, urban or city); and the date of the interview.

Question 2 provided data on interviewees' teaching career and professional background. Interviewees also outlined their teaching careers with regard to promotions and positions held, during those years. Their current school and tenure; the nature of their school – its programs, enrolments, staff, socioeconomic status, funding sources; and the length of their overall principalship, including previous school principalships, all added to the information collected in this initial stage.

ANALYSIS

Analysis of the data showed that each interviewee began their career as a classroom teacher (CT) and then progressed through formal leadership roles existing in the NSW DEC system at that time. These pathways into the principalship also underpinned the development of the principal prior to taking up his or her role. The middle executive leadership roles of (Executive Teacher (ET) and/or Assistant Principal (AP) in the Primary school or Head Teacher (HT) in the Secondary school), were common positions held by each participant. Some 90% of interviewed principals had held the position of Deputy Principal (DP) at some stage in their career. The remaining principal had a significant period of time, while an AP, as a Relieving Principal (Rel P). The position of Deputy Principal, frequently sees the deputy in the relieving principal role, as the second in command of the school.

Comment

Interviewees' profiles, with regard to the variables of gender and geographical location of their schools showed that the sample for the interviews included 60% males and 40% females. The geographic locations of the schools in this phase consisted of mainly urban areas (70%) while 30% constituted rural and city-based schools.

Appendix 5.3 provides further detail of the sample group of principals with regard to school settings, principal career stage and geographical location.

Dimension 2: Professional development processes – across stages

It will be recalled that "professional development" was defined for the purpose of this study as the activities principals engaged in that were designed to develop their professional skills, knowledge and expertise. "Professional development processes", in this study, refers to the actions or strategies that principals engage in, within those activities or tasks.

Dimension 2 in the interview contained two questions which focused on the principals' professional development across their career-paths from beginning teacher; through the promotions path to middle managerial positions (executive teacher, assistant principal/head teacher or deputy principal), to their early years in the principalship, and finally in their current principal career stage as established or experienced principals.

ANALYSIS

Reflecting on the professional development undertaken during the preparation stage of their career, and in the early years of their principalship, these principals quantified, as a percentage, the professional development they sourced. Principals appeared to reflect easily on their professional learning as an early years' principal – revisiting and chatting about the professional development available to them and in which they participated. Recalling professional

development that prepared them for the principalship and that sustained them in the early years of the role provided no difficulty at all.

The following kinds of PD were identified as being important as the respondents discussed their transition from preparation through neophyte to more experienced stages of the principalship: networking, mentoring, self-reflection, taking responsibility for accessing PD, active learning and engagement in formal PD programs. These further defined the term "PD processes" in this study. Figure 5.1 provides a summary

Figure 5.1: Professional development processes by career stage

Number of principals accessing PD Processes by career stage
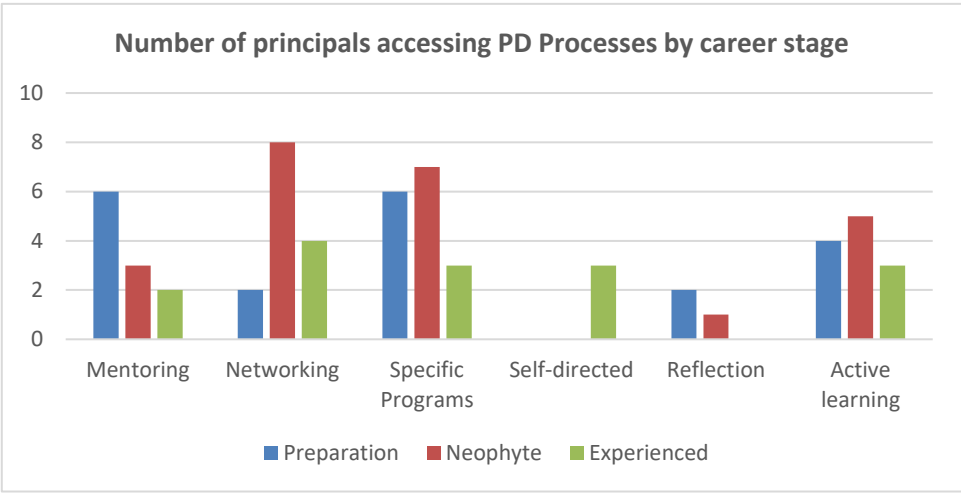
Networking

When reflecting on their preparation for the principalship, networking with colleagues as a part of that preparation did not appear significant. Possibly, as middle executive, limited opportunities existed to access formal networks with their peers. However, as early years' principals, engaging in networking had far greater significance and rates as the highest of the PD processes valued at this stage. At this stage of the research, the data also indicated that these experienced principals valued networking ahead of the other professional development processes listed.

Mentoring

When asked to reflect on the preparation for their principalship, mentoring and specific professional development programs stood out as having had the greatest impact on their principalship and their career outside of actually relieving in the position. However, this group of experienced principals saw mentoring as less useful at this stage of their careers.

Specific PD programs

When questioned about the kinds of PD that were useful during both the preparation and early years of the principalship, numerous respondents named specific principal preparation programs such as the *NSW DEC Executive Leadership Development Program* and the *NSW DEC Targeted Principal Preparation Program;* together with the engagement in other professional development programs such as Masters Degrees; the *NSW DEC Priority Schools Project;* and the *NSW DEC Certificate of School Leadership and Management.*

As a newly-appointed (or early years') principal, interviewees also cited involvement in specific employer-convened programs as one of the most effective professional development processes. Programs cited included the *NSW DEC Illawarra and South-East Region's (ISER) Consultant Leaders' Program; Country Area Programs; NSW DEC Induction Program; NSW DEC ISER Leadership Strategy; Leading Educators Around the Planet (LEAP); Covey's Seven Habits of Highly Effective People;* and the *Leading Australian Schools Project*.

Principals also observed that access to specific programs lessened with experience in the principalship.

Sourcing professional development

While professional development can be seen as both a personal and organisational responsibility (Cardno & Youngs, 2013), principals in this case study reported that they take

more responsibility for sourcing their professional development as experienced principals than they did in their earlier years in the principalship. Initially, more were inclined to source professional development from their employer so as to learn the "nuts and bolts" of the principalship during their early years as a newly- appointed principal (NAP). Principals however became more discerning regarding the sourcing and content of that PD as an experienced principal (EP) (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2: Taking responsibility for sourcing professional development
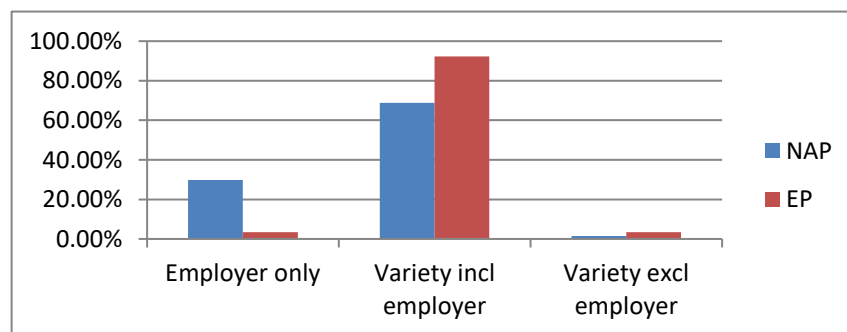
Self-reflection

Reflection on practice in the principalship during the preparation and early years' stages appeared minimal with experienced principals reporting low engagement during these times. At this stage of the research, this group of experienced principals did not refer to "reflection" in their responses concerning their professional development in the early years of the principalship.

Active learning

Principals reflected that active learning which included learning on the job, action research projects, experiencing the relieving-principal role, and collaborative discussions provided them with significant learning in their early years.

Three of the interviewed principals encountered supervisors/principals during their career who gave them informal leadership roles. All principals reflected that the opportunity to relieve in

the principal role (even if only for a day at a time) provided some effective preparation for their principalship.

As experienced principals, "active learning processes" included collaborative discussions, visiting colleagues in situ to see and share good practice, engagement in action research projects, and involvement in local area principal professional learning communities.

Comment

Six categories and some initial themes emerged from Dimension 2: PD Processes. Table 5.1 provides a summary.

Dimension	Category	Initial Theme
2. PD Processes	1. Networking	Networking appears to be more important in the early years' stage than in preparation.
	2. Mentoring	Mentoring appears to become less important as the career progressed.
	3. Self-reflection	Self-reflection appears as a component of principal preparation.
	4. Self-directed Sourcing of PD	Experienced principals appear to search for their own professional development more than early years' principals
	5. Active learning	Types of active learning vary across career stages.
	6. Specific PD programs	Specific formal, structured programs appear to be more relevant in the earlier career stage.

Table 5.1: Dimension 2 (PD processes) categories and initial themes

Summary of initial findings - Dimension 2

1. *Networking; mentoring; self-reflection; responsibility for sourcing PD; active learning; and participation in specific programs, all emerged as important PD processes.*

2. *The professional development processes used by principals during preparation, early-years, mid and late-career stages varied.*

Dimension 3: Professional development program experiences – across stages

In this dimension, "professional development program experiences" related to investigating those specific PD activities or programs that resulted in, and impacted on, their professional learning.

Dimension 3 contained two questions structured to determine the impact of PD programs on principals' professional learning. These items sought to establish respondents' perceptions of, (a) the perceived usefulness of participation in local and/or national professional development programs; and (b) the extent of the impact, if any at all, from participation in international professional development programs.

The first question sought to engage the experienced principal in a discussion about professional development programs they found significant for them during this stage of their career. It focused on programs they valued and which they saw as providing them with significant professional learning.

The second question specifically related to participation in internationalised professional development programs. The question focused on professional learning that occurred either:

1. through participation in a specific professional development program involving time spent in another country;

2. attendance at an international conference held overseas; or

3. professional development that occurred by joining a group study tour that had an international educational program giving them access to overseas educators and schools.

ANALYSIS

Articulation of PD that works

When reflecting on engagement in successful programs principals clearly articulated "what didn't work for me" in their professional development. They included topics not relevant to them at the time; employer-delivered and "mandatory" compliance training sessions; and perceived politically-driven professional development experiences. On the other hand, when reflecting in more detail about successful professional development, the analysis of "what worked for me", seemed more problematic with respondents sometimes "lost for words".

This issue seemed worthy of further investigation. It raised the question as to why experienced school principals, who have the responsibility of ensuring that their staffs access effective, relevant and up-to-date professional development, tended to resist employer-sponsored training especially where compliance and regulation are involved, yet, on the other hand, also had difficulty in articulating their own professional development needs and what worked best for them in addressing these needs.

At this stage of their career, these experienced principals appeared to access what could be termed as a "portfolio" of professional development experiences for their professional learning. Figure 5.3 below provides details.

Figure 5.3: Professional development useful for experienced principals

Number of experienced principals accessing a portfolio of PD they found useful
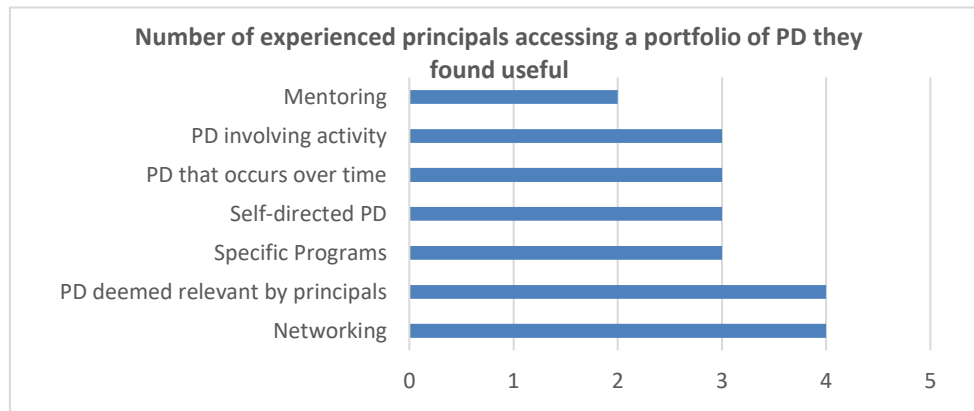
Responses indicated that experienced principals tended to look for active professional development; that is, professional development that occurred over time, that included a relational component, and that was seen by them to be "relevant", site-based, ongoing and that provided powerful learning.

Evaluation of PD program experiences

These experienced principals accessed networking and specific programs as major sources of professional development both in their current career stage and in their early years of the principalship. However, when questioned about the specific programs they engaged in, experienced principals described the type of useful professional development as opposed to naming actual programs or strategies. Terms such as "over time", "self-directed", "relevant" and "active" dominated responses. Of some interest, specific processes such as "networking" or "mentoring", and "specific programs", did not rate as high with this experienced cohort. This appeared to be an important point of differentiation to the earlier stages of the principalship.

Reflecting on their accumulation of professional development experiences, these principals rarely cited specific programs that impacted on their learning – unlike the recollection of early years' experiences (See Figures 5.4 and 5.5).

Figure 5.4: Newly – appointed and experienced principals taking responsibility for sourcing professional development
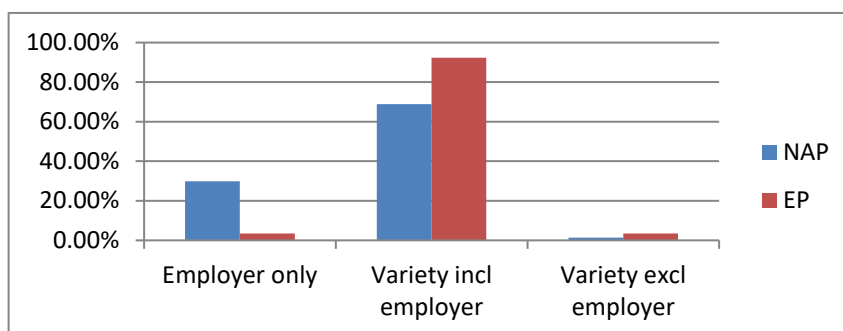
Figure 5.5: PL found useful by experienced/established principals in the Phase 1 interviews
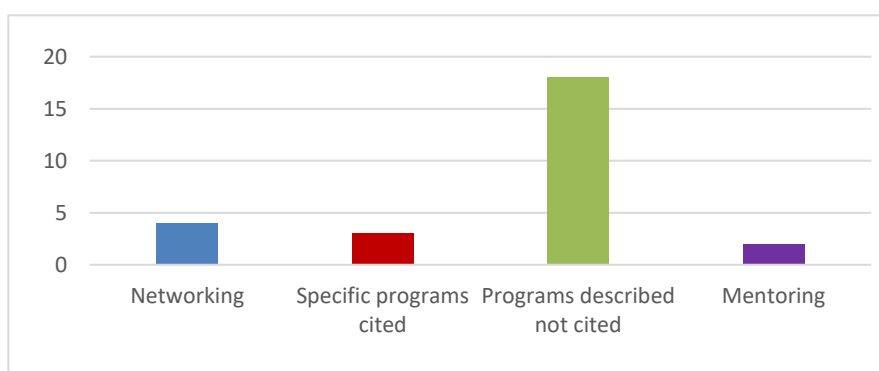
Three specific programs however, were mentioned by these interviewed principals*: Leading Educators Around the Planet - LEAP*; NSW DEC *Team Leadership for School Improvement - TLSIP*; and the opportunity to receive a NSW DEC or NSW PPA/SPC Leadership Fellowship to undertake specific inquiry-based projects.

Preferred professional learning models

Although this group of experienced principals valued meeting with their peers and networking, they didn't value employer scheduled local school group meetings aimed at compliance and management skills training and not targeted to, or acknowledging, the audience's broad spectrum of experiences. According to this group, the least preferred professional development for experienced principals included Powerpoint presentations, PD courses in which the content

is not considered relevant, politically-driven professional development, and PD that could be classified as 'one-day wonders' with no follow-up or substance (Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.6: Least preferred PD by percentage as acknowledged by interviewed principals
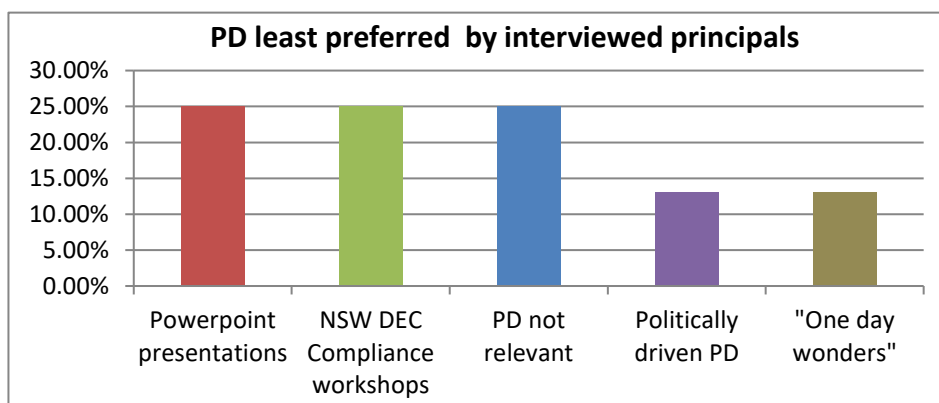
Of some considerable interest, these experienced principals indicated that they felt "forgotten" during this stage of their career. They perceived that professional development providers appeared to design and develop programs for preparation and for the early years' stages of the principalship, ignoring the accumulated knowledge, skills and experiences that this cohort had developed over an extended period of time.

Participation in internationalised professional development existed as a subset of specific professional development programs and as one element within the professional development portfolio that experienced principals were describing. Of the experienced principals interviewed, 7 had participated in professional development that involved international travel to engage in professional development. Approximately 85% of those who participated in internationalised professional development reported involvement in more than just one type of professional development experience of this nature (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.7: Number of interviewed principals who have been engaged in internationalised PD programs
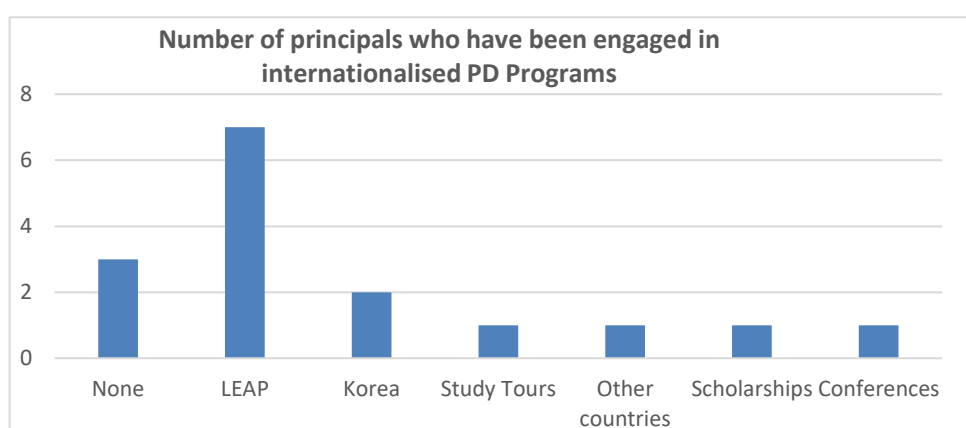
Comment

Three categories and some initial themes emerged from the data gathering within Dimension 3: articulation of PD that works; evaluation of professional development experiences; and the professional development experiences themselves informing preferred PL models (Table 5.2).

Dimension	Category	Initial Theme
3. PD Program Experiences	1. Articulation of PD that works	The capacity to articulate what works in principals' professional learning, is linked to the amount and variety of PD programs already experienced.
	2. Evaluation of PD experiences	Experienced principals describe program content and impact rather than cite specific programs when reflecting on their professional development experiences.
	3. Preferred Professional learning models	Experienced principals' previous PD experiences inform their preferred model of PD service delivery.

Table 5.2: Dimension 3 (PD program experiences) categories and initial themes

Summary of initial findings - Dimension 3

3. *Principals clearly articulated "what didn't work for them" in their professional learning. They found it difficult, however, to articulate the effective components or strategies that would define a successful program.*

4. *Experienced principals engaged in internationalised professional development programs and experiences.*

Dimension 4: Change

As observed from the available literature in Chapter 2, we now live in an increasingly diverse, globalised, complex and media-saturated society characterised by change. Dimension 4 contained only one question which encompassed a number of aspects related to change. This question asked participants about the challenges they currently saw in their principalship in the current climate of change. These challenges also included those that they foresaw for principals in the near future and included principals' access to appropriate and relevant professional development designed to equip them with the skills, knowledge and understandings to meet those challenges.

ANALYSIS

Principals defined the biggest challenge facing them today as centred on managing the current systemic change. The new reform agenda for NSW DEC schools centred on greater authority in their local governance albeit within centralised regulatory frameworks (*NSW DEC Local Schools Local Decisions (LSLD),* 2012). The details of that change rated next highest on their list of challenges. Those interviewed, however, observed that the main challenge for their principal colleagues in the future included not only the LSLD reform agenda, but also generational issues. Demographic changes in their staff; societal expectations of the next generation of school students and their parents; and the exodus of "baby boomer" principals who take with them

their vast accumulation of knowledge, skills and experiences, were all seen as challenges as principals retired from active service.

Principals reflected on whether they felt that their professional development programs and professional learning prepared them to effectively implement the changes currently imposed on them and across the next few years. Of those interviewed, 7 felt unprepared; 2 felt that somewhat prepared; and one replied that change provided an opportunity to be creative and embrace the changes.

Comment

A lack of knowledge about the details of the new reform agenda coupled with new technologies and accounting systems added to principals' concerns. The need for professional development, not only during this major administrative shift, but also in its ongoing implementation, concerned them. The key issue for these experienced principals centred on the structure of the professional development currently available to them to support change management.

Five initial themes emerged from Dimension 4: change management; the new NSW DE administrative model; the perceived politicisation of education; Twenty-first Century education; and change evaluation (Table 5.3).

Dimension	Category	Initial Theme
4. Change	1. Change management	Managing change is a current challenge for NSW DEC principals.
	2. New systemic model	Understanding the reasons for and support for the implementation of LSLD is an issue for principals.
	3. Politicisation of education	Principals perceived PD needs were very much shaped by the current policies and reform agenda of the employing authority (NSW DEC) and that these reflected political goals.

	4. 21st Century education	Current changes in NSW DEC schools appeared to be based on global movements in education.
	5. Preparedness to meet current changes	Experienced principals do not feel their PD has prepared them for the current changes.

Table 5.3: Dimension 4 (Change) categories and initial themes

Summary of initial findings - Dimension 4

Given the timing of the discussions (in the early stages of the NSW DEC broad sweeping systemic changes – also known as the NSW DE Functional Realignment), principals also reflected on what current challenges faced them.

> *6. Principals voiced a concern about managing the change within their schools in a climate of uncertainty.*

Discussion on findings emerging from Phase 1 of the study

The responses from the small number of principals involved in the initial phase of the study (Phase 1) served to provide a direction for the development of Phase 2 of the study. Analysis of the data gathered informed the further development of the broad domains of inquiry that were established from the literature review. The categories of responses that were developed in each domain further contributed to the framework.

Of some interest, principals interviewed in this exploratory Phase 1 of the study also reported the reflective interview experience as "cathartic" and a "beneficial" process. It helped them organise their thoughts and experiences concerning their work and careers in the context of broader developments impacting on their schools. Discussions on their career trajectory from beginning teacher, through the promotions path to middle managerial positions (Executive Teacher, Assistant Principal/Head Teacher or Deputy Principal), into the principalship and finally

to the current stage of their career also provided data for this phase. Throughout the interview the focus centred on their career path trajectories through the lens of their professional development.

Summary

Phase 1 of this research was exploratory in nature and sought to gather data from which some emergent and initial themes could be developed. During the interviews experienced principals reflected on:

- their principalship (the preparation early years' and current stages of their career);

- the professional development programs or activities that stood out as valuable;

- professional development processes that had a positive impact on their principalship and their career; and

- professional development they currently engaged in and that they felt had some, little or no impact for them.

Throughout the interview process the researcher continuously sought to identify emerging themes and findings emanating from the data.

Analysis of the responses to the Phase 1 interviews resulted in the design and development of an initial conceptual framework of domains, categories and themes. It also informed the design and development of a questionnaire seeking the views of a wider cross-section of experienced principals. This is outlined and discussed in Chapter 6 which follows.

CHAPTER 6

PHASE 2: ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter provides the details of an online questionnaire that was designed as an outcome of Phase 1 of the study and made available to Government school principals throughout New South Wales. The chapter is divided into 4 parts. Each part specifically focuses on the questionnaire domains individually. It provides an analysis of the data contributed by experienced principals with regard to their perceptions of their PD needs and experiences. The chapter is set out in sections, each structured on a Dimension followed by the Categories as per the tables in Chapter 5. For ease of referencing, the findings are summarised at the beginning of each section and then elaborated upon by means of an analysis of the data and a discussion of the finding(s),

The initial ethics approval (Appendix 4.3) allowed for the publication of advertisements seeking participation in the research. The availability of the questionnaire was advertised through the link provided in news bulletins from both the NSW PPA and NSW SPC (Appendix 3.4).

The resultant expressions of interest to participate provided the researcher with the pool of principals for Phase 2 of the study. After the second ethics approval (Appendix 4.4), which focused on the questionnaire itself, respondents accessed an online questionnaire across a two-month period (March and April, 2014). Principals accessed the questionnaire via an email with a direct link. Active consent (Johnson & Christensen, 2014) to the questionnaire was acquired in the initial question (see Appendix 6.1).

With the questionnaire's focus on the experienced principal, a calculation was needed on the number of principals with five years or more experience in the principalship (Table 6.1). While the NSW DE does not keep specific records pertaining to the experienced principal group, records exist of the number of first-time principals appointed annually (Appendix 6.2). In determining the number of experienced principals, the number of newly-appointed principals

(*x*) was subtracted from the total number of principals (N) as at January 2010. As this study commenced in 2013, principals in the years 2010 - 2013 had less than five years principalship experience.

Summary of experienced principals (EP) as at April, 2014					
School Level	Total no. Schools (N)	** No. First-time principals appointed (*x*)	No. Experienced Principals (N - *x*)	% Experienced principals	10% Experienced principals (N-*x*) / 10
Central	1,696	466	1,230	72.5%	123.0
Primary					
Secondary	398	151	247	62.0%	24.7
Total	**2,094***	**617**	**1,477**	**70.5%**	**147.7**

Table 6.1: Calculation of the sample population

(First-time Principals source: NSW DEC email: 15th November, 2013 – Appendix 4.16; Number of schools source: http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-us/how-we-operate/annual-reports 20/10/14)

*Note: Schools for Specific Purposes (SSP) have been excluded from this particular research study

**Note: Principals appointed prior to January 2010 have 5+ years of experience

From the total number of NSW DE principals (2,207) those with 5+ years' experience (1,477) qualified to register their interest in the research. This constituted 70.4% of the total principalship across the NSW DE at the time of the study. This would seem a significant body of principals to target for research.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire design

The content scaffolding for the questionnaire emanated from the analysis of the data gathered from the Phase 1 exploratory interviews in addition to the review conducted of the current

relevant literature relating to principal leadership development set in the context of a Twenty-first Century globalised education community. The questionnaire sought direct responses from participants in relation to their PD needs and experiences both in their early years of the principalship and in their current experienced stage. The questionnaire instrument used a combination of closed, scaled and open response questions as described by Verma and Mallick (1999) as being essential principles in the construction of a questionnaire. The questionnaire is included as Appendix 4.14.

Questionnaire content

The online questionnaire sought responses to the following questions that arose from the initial findings/themes in Phase 1:

1. From where do principals source their professional development?

2. In relation to professional development, how do the principals feel about the importance of networking? Mentoring? Self-reflection?

3. To what extent, if at all, do visitations to colleagues' schools impact on their professional learning?

4. What impact, if any, has the participation in action learning/research had on their professional development?

5. How useful has the participation in structured, formal PD programs been in their professional development?

6. What types of PD do experienced principals prefer to engage in?

7. Which types of PD have experienced principals found work best for them?

8. Which types of professional development do experienced principals now look for?

9. What are experienced principals' preferred professional learning models?

10. What are experienced principals' current professional development needs?

11. How prepared do experienced NSW DE principals feel about addressing the "unprecedented" systemic changes currently occurring in the system?

12. How adequate do principals view their professional learning in this time of change?

13. In which areas (local and global) would experienced principals like to broaden/deepen their knowledge and understanding?

14. Living in the 21st century, in a time of globalisation, to what extent, if at all, has the principal's role been impacted on?

15. To what extent, if at all, have principals engaged in internationalised professional development?

16. To what extent, if at all, do experienced principals perceive any politicisation of the education agenda?

17. Has principals' professional development prepared them for the current broad reaching systemic changes?

The questionnaire was divided into four dimensions. These dimensions and their content are outlined below.

Dimension 1 (Individual profile): The first item required the participant's consent to participate in the study and the second item (optional) requested the participant's name. The request to participate did not form part of the analysis. The following mandatory nine items in this dimension provided information regarding gender, age bracket, years of experience in the principalship, years spent in their current school, principalship of the number of schools, anticipated retirement, number of years in the teaching profession, the school classification and the geographic location of their school.

Dimension 2 (Professional development processes): There were 15 items in this dimension. For each item principals were asked to reflect on the issue with regard to the early years of their principalship then as it related t their current career stage. These items (networking, mentoring,

self-reflection, sourcing PD, school visitations, action learning and structured, formal PD programs) were closed questions based on the categories and emergent themes which emanated from the Phase 1 exploratory interviews.

Dimension 3 (Professional development program experiences): There were four items in this dimension. Two items were open-ended questions about which PD experienced principals found worked best for them. The third item was a closed question. The fourth item was a scaled question.

Dimension 4 (Change): There were nine items in this dimension. These items included scaled and open-ended questions.

Questionnaire pilot study

A pilot questionnaire (Appendix 4.13) allowed the researcher to adjust and refine the instrument and to identify potential problems in the administration of the survey instrument (Johnson & Christensen, 2014).

Five experienced principals completed the pilot on-line questionnaire on 4th March, 2014 responding to the researcher with regard to its format, style and administration. Feedback from these principals informed the final composition of the study and administration process. The pilot study resulted in the revision of the format and items to ensure a logical, clear and concise instrument. The final questionnaire (Appendix 4.13), distributed via a link embedded within an email (Appendix 4.15), contained a statement of purpose; completion instructions; and a restatement of the guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality. Those respondents, who completed the survey through the link provided in news bulletins from the NSW Primary Principals Association (PPA) and the NSW Secondary Principals Council (SPC), maintained their confidentiality through an alternate individualised accession route.

Data collection and analysis

The questionnaire was distributed as outlined in Chapter 4. Data collection was by online computerised survey (http://www.surveymonkey.com). Data analysis, including any statements of statistical significance, was carried out as outlined in Chapter 4.

Summary

This section of Chapter 6 has established the framework for the online questionnaire. The following four sections consider each of the domains in turn. As noted above, findings are presented then validated by an analysis and discussion of the data collected.

Domain 1- Individual profile

The sample group for this research with regards to variables for gender and school classification, reflected the total NSW DE state principal population (in percentage distribution terms). This enhanced the relevance of the sample group findings in relation to the total population.

The first dimension of this questionnaire gathered data on a variety of variables.

Question 1 (optional) requested the participant's name. The questionnaire also identified those volunteering to be involved in the Phase 3 follow-up interviews.

Questions 2 and 3 (personal profile) and questions 4 - 10 (teaching/professional profile) provided the researcher with detailed information for participant identification purposes and also provided a number of additional variables for statistical analysis (e.g. years in the principalship; length of time in current school; retirement plans; length of career; and generation).

The analysis of the data in Dimension 1 centred on three main variables: gender (Question 2); school setting (Question 9); and geographical location (Question 10). Each of these three

variables selected for analysis closely mirrored the percentage distribution of the total state principal population. This is illustrated in Table 6.2 below.

Variable	Variable constant	NSWDEC total principal population	Case Study: Experienced Principals
Gender	Male	45.4%	43.54%
	Female	54.6%	56.46%
Geographical Location	City		40.82%
	Urban		40.82%
	Rural		18.37%
School Setting	Primary	80.89 %	77.55%
	Secondary	19.11 %	22.45%

Table 6.2: Respondents by location, gender and school level/classification

(Source: http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-us/how-we-operate/annual-reports, October, 2014)

Determining comparative statistics for geographical location became problematic due to a lack of relevant NSW DE data given that the location of Government schools is described by NSW DE in regions. This research, as noted above, defined "City" locations as lying within 50km from the Sydney General Post Office (GPO); "Urban" locations between 50km and 250km from the Sydney GPO; and "Rural" locations as greater than 250km from the Sydney GPO.

In Table 6.3 below, the more experienced principals (20+ years' experience) tended to work in city schools (11.67%); however, a greater number of principals with 15+ years' experience reside in the rural schools (37.04%).

Experienced (15+ years') male principals (28.13%) have greater representation than experienced (15+ years') females (18.07%) in this research cohort.

Variable	Variable constant	Case Study: Experienced Principals	5 – 9 years' experience	10 – 14 years' experience	15 – 19 years' experience	20+ years' experience
Gender	Male	43.54%	31.25%	40.63%	18.75%	9.38%
	Female	56.46%	43.37%	38.55%	9.64%	8.43%
Geographical Location	City	40.82%	33.33%	50.00%	5.00%	11.67%
	Urban	40.82%	41.67%	36.67%	15.00%	6.67%
	Rural	18.37%	40.74%	22.22%	29.63%	7.41%
School Setting	Primary	77.55%	37.84%	40.54%	11.71%	9.91%
	Secondary	22.45%	39.39%	39.39%	15.15%	6.06%

Table 6.3: Case study cohort: respondents' years of experience in the principalship

Summary

Part 1 of this chapter provided information about the participant volunteers in this study. It established the fact that the case study group was representative of the NSW DE whole group.

Dimension 2- Professional development processes

CATEGORY 1: NETWORKING

Findings

1. *In the experienced stage of their principalship, principals perceived networking as very important/important irrespective of the stage of the principalship with only a small fall off in level of importance across their career.*

2. *Experienced principals acknowledged the importance of networking with their colleagues as a source of professional learning and to reduce their sense of isolation.*

Analysis

Respondents, having reflected on their time as an early years' or newly-appointed principal (NAP), recorded the importance of networking with their colleagues at that time. The majority (81.28%) valued networking as "very important" during those early years, and 16.08% rated it as "important" (Table 6.4). Overall 97.36% identified networking as an important element of their professional development.

Participants responded to the perceived degree of importance of networking with their colleagues during this experienced stage of the principalship. While there was a reduction in the number of respondents thinking it to be "very important" (68.06%), 26.39% also found it to be "important" so the combined response rate increased to 94.45% – less than the 97.36% in early years.

With over 90% of principals finding networking both very important or important, they were saying that they still highly value networking. Networking would then seem to be considered an essential element in the development of any professional development program designed for experienced principals.

Networking		
Rating	**NAP**	**EP**
Very important	81.28%	68.06%
Important	16.08%	26.39%
Less Important	2.10%	4.86%
Not important	0%	0.69%

Table 6.4: Principals' perception of the importance of networking

(NAP: newly-appointed principals in their early years. EP: experienced principals)

When drilling down into the experienced principalship data, networking appeared to still be very important and only marginally less important as principals gained more experience. Figure 6.1 below illustrates.

Figure 6.1: The importance of networking across the mid and late-career stages of the principalship

(NB = important)

Importance of networking for experienced principals by years' experience
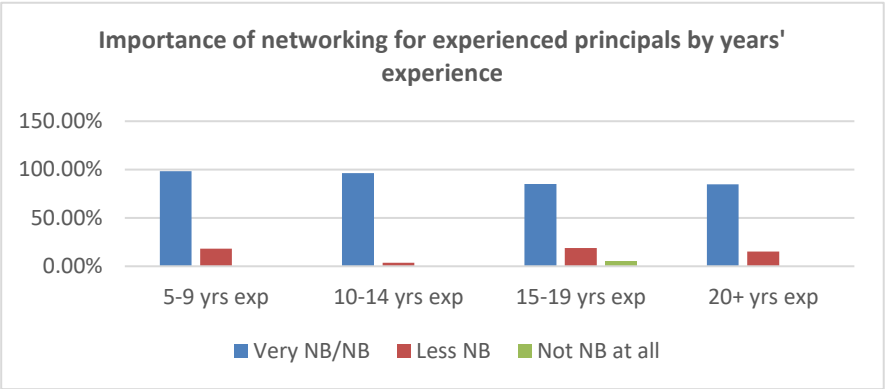
CATEGORY 2: MENTORING

Findings

3. *The more experienced the principal, the less useful they found mentoring with almost twice as many finding mentoring only "somewhat" useful at the experienced stage, than in the early years.*

4. *More primary principals perceived mentoring as very useful at this stage of their career than do their secondary colleagues.*

5. *Secondary principals reported that they were less likely to engage in mentoring across their career: either as mentor or mentee.*

Analysis

Respondents reflected on their time as an early years' principal and recalled the importance of their mentoring experiences at that time. Half of the respondents (50.00%) felt mentoring to be "very useful" during those early years, while almost a quarter (23.24%) rated it as only

"somewhat useful". Nearly a quarter (21.83%) of these principals however did not see themselves as engaging in any mentoring – either formal or informal – in those early years of the principalship (Table 6.5).

Mentoring		
Rating	NAP	EP
Very useful	50.00%	37.50%
Somewhat useful	23.24%	40.28%
Not useful	4.93%	6.94%
Did not access any mentoring – either formal or informal	0%	N/A
Not applicable to me at this stage of my career	N/A	15.28%

Table 6.5: Usefulness of mentoring for principals

Respondents were also asked about the usefulness of mentoring, during this experienced stage of the principalship. Although a reduction in the number of respondents reported that it was very useful (37.50%), 40.28% still found it "somewhat useful" (Figure 6.2). Just over three quarters of experienced principals reported engaging in some form of mentoring, finding it useful to varying degrees.

Figure 6.2: Comparison of engagement in mentoring for newly-appointed (NAP) and experienced principals (EP)

135
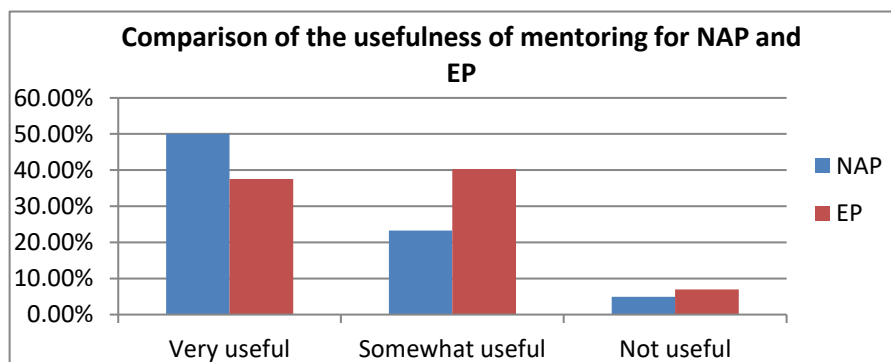
Drilling down into the data for experienced principals it was found that the majority of principals engaged in mentoring activities across their career, while the degree of usefulness appeared to decrease with added years in the principalship (Figure 6.3). However, 26.78% principals with 10-14 years of experience appeared to find mentoring either not useful or not applicable at this stage of their career.

Figure 6.3: Comparison of mentoring experiences with years' experience in the principalship
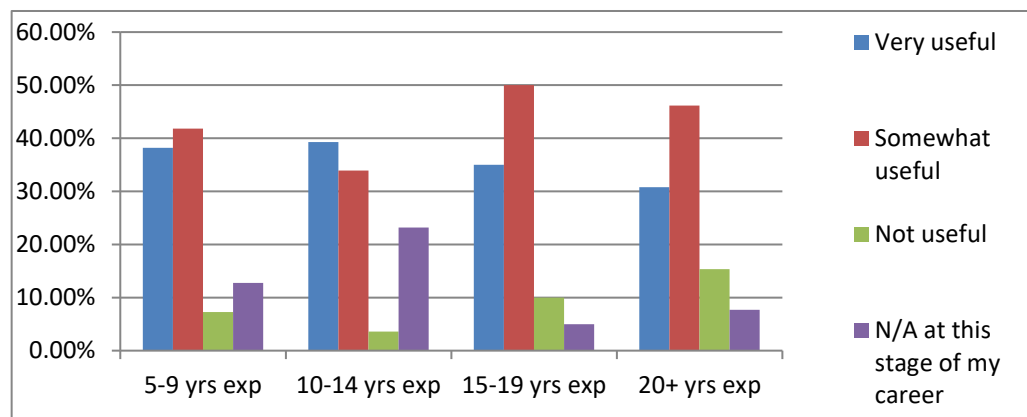
A significantly different result came from the comparison between primary and secondary principals with 63.63% of secondary principals and 83.34% of primary principals finding mentoring useful to some degree. A significant number of secondary principals (13.89%) reported not engaging in mentoring at this stage of their career. Overall 86.12% of primary and 78.78% of secondary principals had engaged in mentoring experiences – although they rated the degree of usefulness differently (Figure 6.4). This data tells us that while experienced secondary principals remained interested in engaging in mentoring, 27.27% found it "*very useful*"; and almost twice as many (41.67%) experienced primary principals found it "*very useful*". Their engagement as a mentor or mentee (or both) in the mentoring process remained unknown at this stage.

Figure 6.4: Usefulness of mentoring experiences for secondary and primary principals

Usefulness of mentoring for secondary and primary principals

[Bar chart showing usefulness of mentoring for Secondary (blue) and Primary (red) principals across four categories:
- Very useful: Secondary ~27%, Primary ~41%
- Somewhat useful: Secondary ~36%, Primary ~41%
- Not useful: Secondary ~15%, Primary ~3%
- N/A at this stage of my career: Secondary ~21%, Primary ~14%
Y-axis ranges from 0.00% to 45.00%]
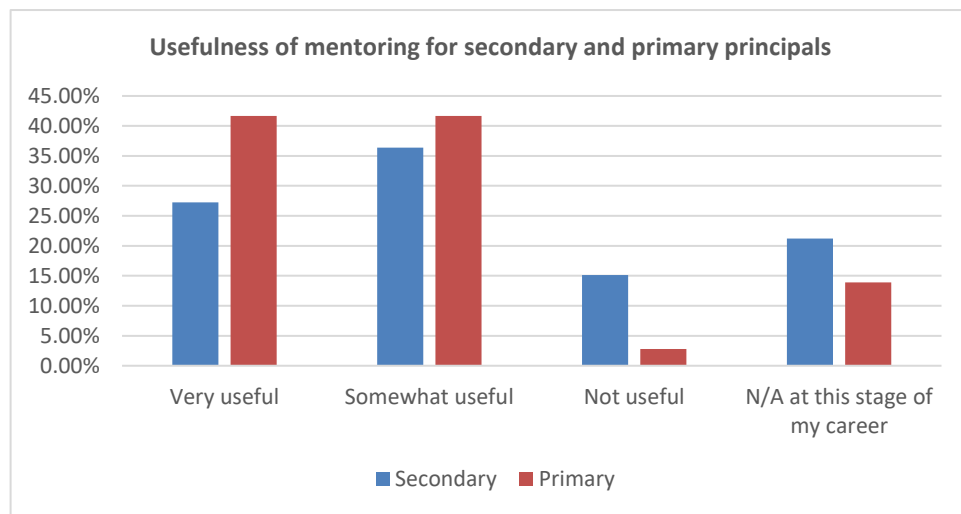
Variables

Statistical significance existed for mentoring experiences between secondary and primary principals with the latter reporting the experience significantly more useful. Why was it that primary principals consider engagement in mentoring to be considerably more useful than their secondary colleagues did? This was flagged as an area to be investigated in the Phase 3 follow-up interviews.

CATEGORY 3: SELF-REFLECTION

Findings

6. *Principals engagement in self-reflection increased as they moved through their career.*

Analysis

Respondents reflected on their time as an early years' principal and recalled how regularly they used self-reflection during those initial years. Over three quarters of the principals (76.92%) used

self-reflection regularly as a part of their role, at that time, while almost a fifth (18.88%) used this strategy occasionally (Table 6.6).

Self-reflection		
Rating	NAP	EP
Use regularly as a part of my role	76.92%	92.25%
Use occasionally as part of my role	18.88%	7.75%
Never	2.10%	0%
Did not see it as a useful tool	2.10%	N/A
Do not see it as a useful tool at this stage of my career	N/A	0%

Table 6.6: Self-reflection during the principalship

During this experienced stage of their principalship respondents commented on the regular use of self-reflection as a part of their role. Over 90% of the experienced principals responded in the affirmative (92.25%) to this question (Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5: Comparison of engagement in self-reflection for NAP and EP
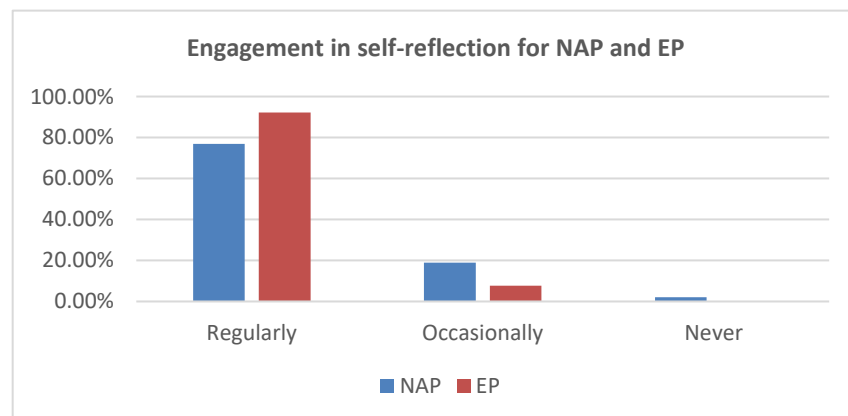
While evidence of the importance of self-reflection existed, this research did not investigate in any depth what that self-reflection "looked like", nor did it seek to find out the degree to which self-reflection had impacted on their roles.

CATEGORY 4: SOURCING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Finding

7. *Principals appeared less reliant on their employer (NSW DE) to provide their*
   professional development as they moved through their mid and late-career stages
   by also looking outside the NSW DE to access professional development.

Respondents reflected on their time as an early years' principal and recalled how they sourced their PD during those years. Over a quarter (29.79%) sourced it solely from their employer (NSW DE), while an additional 68.79% sourced their PD from a variety of sources including their employer (Figure 6.6).

Figure 6.6: Comparison of the sourcing of PD for NAP and EP
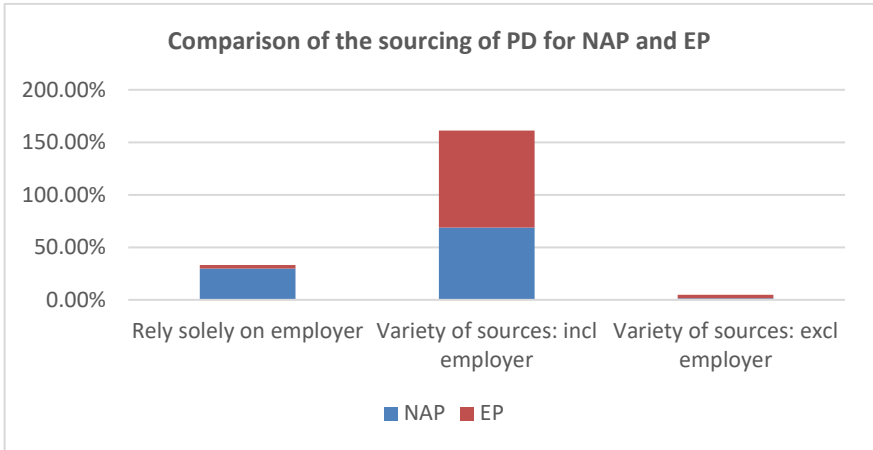
Analysis

Respondents also commented on how they sourced their PD during this experienced stage. The reliance on the employer as the sole provider of their PD drastically reduced to less than 4% (3.50%). Over 90% (92.31%) of experienced principals sourced their PD from a variety of sources including their employer. Drilling down into the data, experienced principals continuously relied on a variety of sources to find their professional development (Figure 6.7).

Figure 6.7: Sourcing PD across the mid and late-career stages
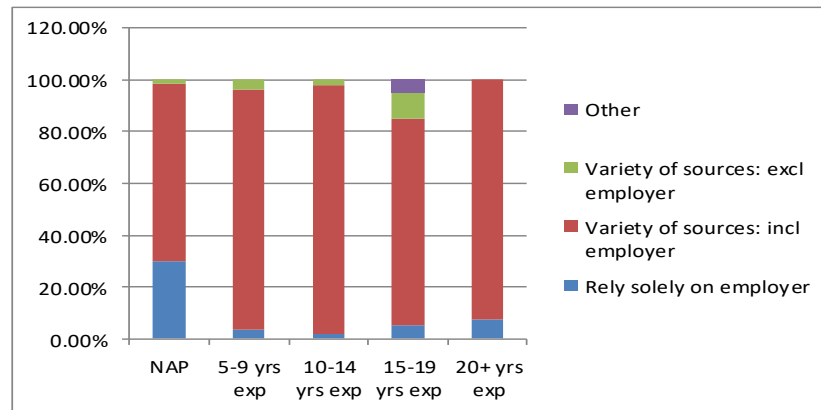
Variables

Statistical significance existed for school classification/setting. Experienced secondary principals appeared more likely to exclude their employer when sourcing their professional development (Figure 6.8). This variance between primary and secondary principals was flagged as an area for further investigation in the next phase of the study.

Figure 6.8: Secondary vs primary principals sourcing professional development
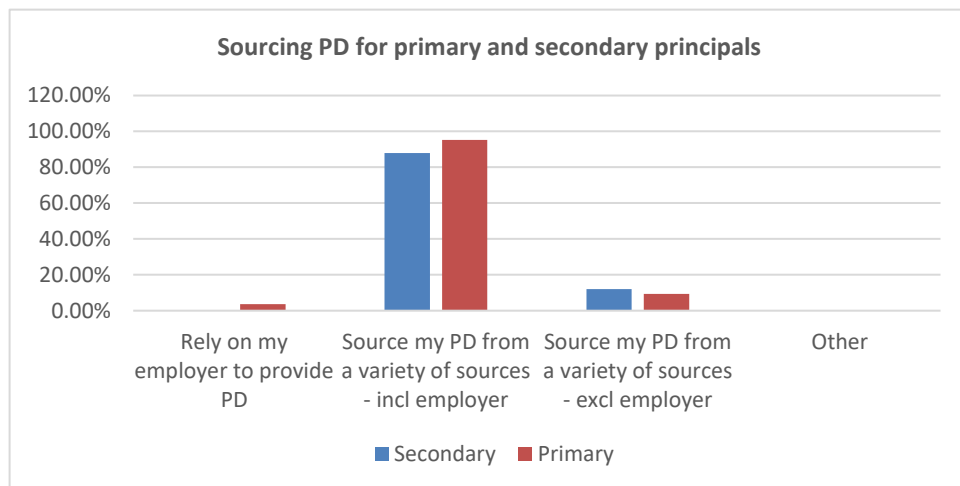
CATEGORY 5: ACTIVE LEARNING

Findings

8. *Principals increased their participation in action research/action learning in their experienced years.*

9. *School visitations were seen to still provide significant, appropriate and relevant professional development for principals.*

Analysis

Upon reflection of their early years in the role, half (50.35%) of the principals reported visiting colleagues' schools as providing very beneficial professional development. This finding doesn't vary significantly from their current experiences (51.75%). However, principals appeared nearly twice as likely (40.56% to 23.08%) to participate in action research/learning projects in the mid and late-career stages of the principalship (Figure 6.9).

Figure 6.9: Comparison of active learning for newly-appointed (NAP) and experienced principals (EP)
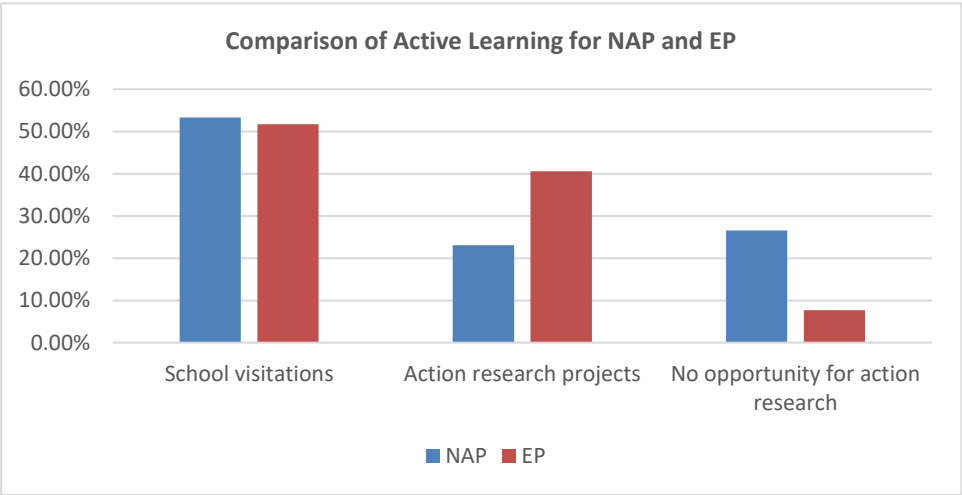
CATEGORY 6: STRUCTURED, FORMAL PD PROGRAMS

Finding

> 10. *Experienced principals appeared less satisfied with structured, formal professional development programs at this stage of their career than they did as early years' principals.*

Analysis

While experienced principals engaged in structured, formal programs (97.20%) at almost the same rate as the newly-appointed principal in their early years (94.37%), the satisfaction rate based on usefulness of the programs, varied greatly (Figure 6.10).

Figure 6.10: Comparison of the usefulness of structured, formal PD programs for NAP and EP
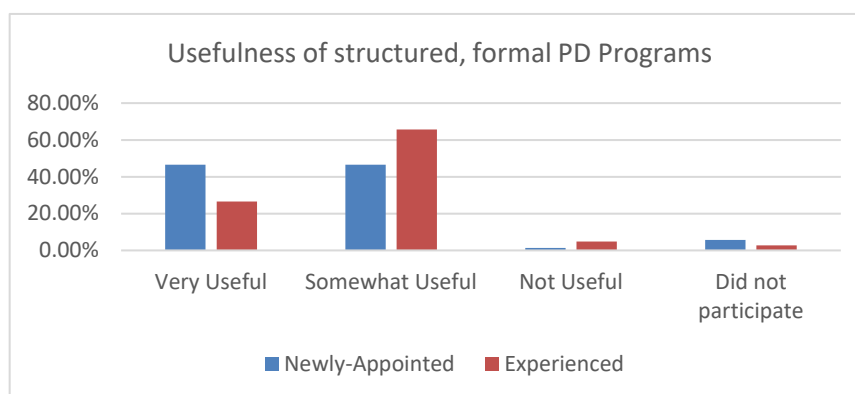
As experienced principals moved though their career they found participation in structured, formal PD programs less useful. When drilling down through the data for experience in the principalship, 0% of principals with 20+ years of experience found participation in these programs "very useful". However, 84.62% of these very experienced principals found participation only "somewhat useful" (Figure 6.11). Interrogation of the other bands of principal experience revealed similar patterns. Participation in structured, formal PD programs, revealed the fact that more principals found them only "somewhat useful" rather than "very useful".

Figure 6.11: Usefulness rates of engagement in structured, formal PD programs – by years of experience in the principalship

Usefulness of Structured, Formal PD Programs for Principals by Years in the Principalship
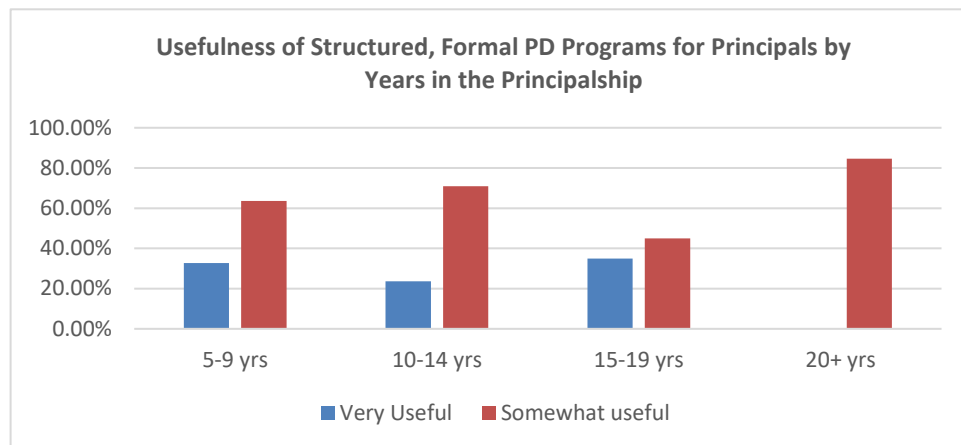
Findings

11. *The more experienced the principal, the harder it appeared to find effective structured, formal professional development programs.*

12. *The most experienced of the principals in this study reported that as they became more experienced, sourcing formal PD programs became more of an issue.*

13. *Principals seemed less likely to source their professional development locally/regionally as they moved through the principalship.*

14. *Participation in internationalised professional development programs increased as principals became more experienced.*

15. *Principals with 20+ years of experience appeared more likely to look for professional development that is personally relevant and met their particular needs at the time.*

16. *Principals with 10-14 years of experience seemed "out of step" with the trends of the 5-9, 15-19 and 20+ years cohorts, in participation in internationalised professional development sourcing professional development locally/regionally; and in "hard to find" structured, formal professional development programs.*

Analysis

In an attempt to further investigate the usefulness and participation in structured, formal professional development programs, principals reported on (i) the difficulty (if any) in sourcing these programs; (ii) the geographical location of the programs; (iii) sourcing their professional development through internationalised professional development experiences; (iv) the program relevance, i.e. "meets my needs"; and (v) finding it easy to source professional development that met their needs at any time (Table 6.7).

Professional Development Programs	
Rating	**EP**
i. Hard to find structured, formal PD	38.46%
ii. Sourced locally/regionally	44.76%
iii. Sourced some PD through internationalised programs	27.27%
iv. Look for PD that meets my needs	83.22%
v. Don't have any trouble sourcing PD to meet my needs at the time	13.99%

Table 6.7: Sourcing Professional Development programs during the experienced stage

i.   The overall response rate indicated that 38.46% of experienced principals found it hard to source structured, formal professional development programs that met their needs (Findings #11 and #12). Interrogation of the data, with regard to length of principalship revealed that the rate increased with the length of experience (Figure 6.12). However, the 10-14 years' cohort appeared "out of step" with this upward trend. The projected trend would anticipate that the responses would be lower than the 15-19 years' cohort, not higher. Almost half of experienced principals appeared to find difficulty in sourcing this type of professional development across varying stages of their careers.

Figure 6.12: Length of principalship and difficulty in finding structured, formal PD Programs

Principals who find it hard to source formal PD by years in the principalship
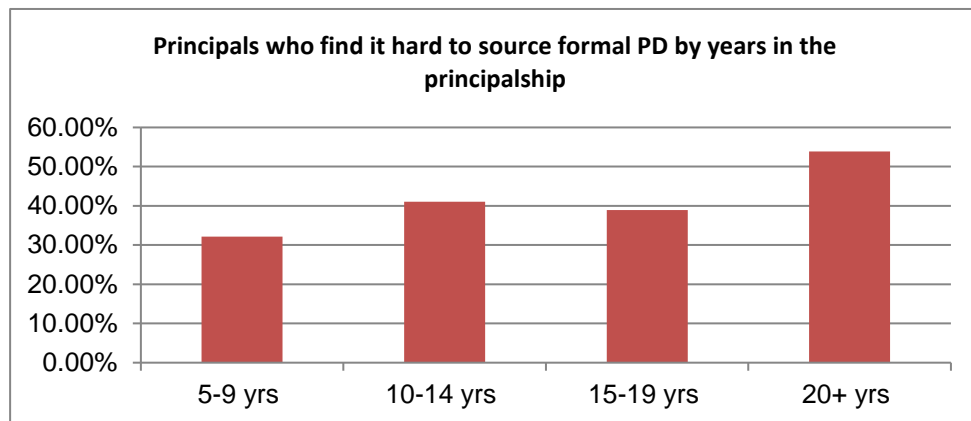
ii.   Principals appeared less likely to source most of their PD locally or regionally as they became more experienced (Finding #13). Again, the 10-14 years' cohort seemed "out of step" with the trend – greater than the 5-9 years' cohort instead of less (Figure 6.13). Overall (44.76%), less than half of the experienced principals reported sourcing their PD locally/regionally.

Figure 6.13: Principals sourcing most of the PD locally/regionally

Principals sourcing most PD locally/regionally
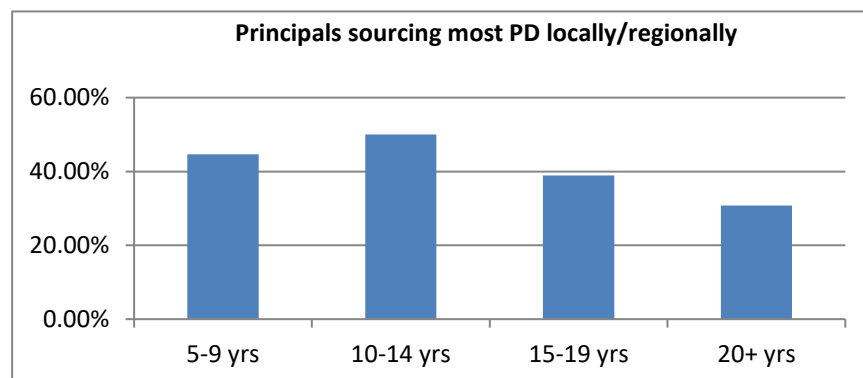
iii.   21.43% of principals with 5-9 years' experience reported participation in internationalised professional development programs. This rose to 26.09% at the 10-14 years' period (the same time that nearly half (41.07%) of these principals reported structured, formal professional development as hard to find). Some 33.33% principals with 15-19 years' experience reported sourcing PD through internationalised programs.

While each successive cohort's participation rate increases, it trends down to only 28.57% for principals with 20+ years of experience (Figure 6.14). This result may be linked to the small number (8.84% of the case study) of principals with 20+ years' experience. Principals with greater experience appeared more inclined to source some of their professional development overseas (Finding #14).

Figure 6.14*: Principals who participated in internationalised PD – by years in the principalship*
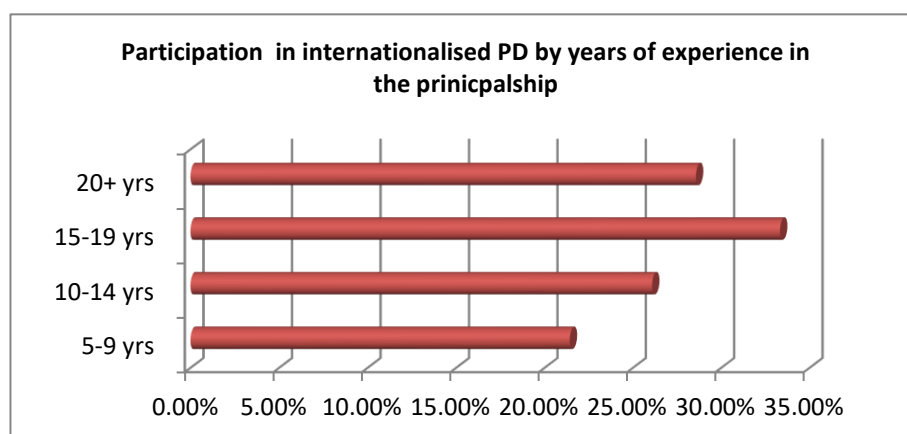
iv.   Only 83.22% of principals overall looked for relevant, up-to-date professional development that met their particular needs. Based on the literature reviewed, an expectation existed that that figure should be 100%. When interrogating the data for the years in the principalship, it appeared that relevance seemed less important between 10-19 years of experience. It raised the question as to whether experienced principals were making ad hoc choices in their professional development based on what appeared to be the more attractive option at the time.

That trend ceased when principals have 20+ years in the principalship (Figure 6.15); a dramatic increase in the importance of the relevance of the professional development needing to meet principals' needs at this time in their career (Finding #15). This time the 20+ years cohort appeared "out of step" with the data trend. It appeared that principals

with extensive experience remained more discerning in sourcing their PD: "looking for professional development that is relevant and meets their needs".

Figure 6.15: Importance of "relevance" of PD to meet principals' needs as they progress through their career

Importance of "relevance of PD to meet my particular needs at the time" for principals by years of experience in the principalship
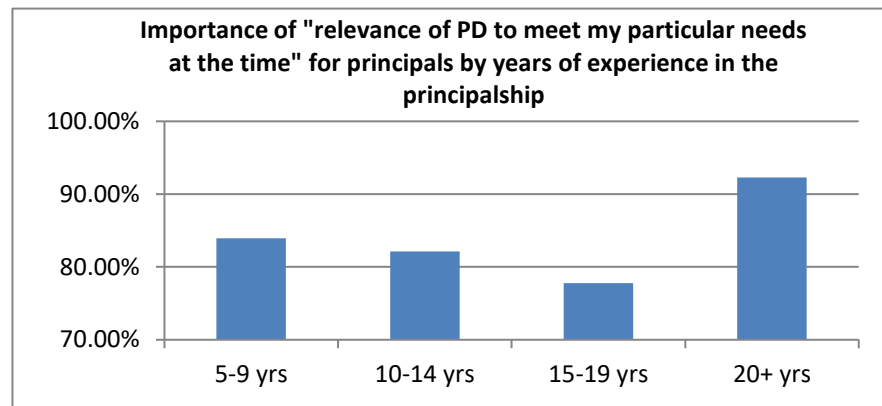
v. With only 7.69% of principals with 20+ years' experience having "no trouble" sourcing PD to meet their particular needs, it would appear that 92.31% of this cohort in sharp contrast, had significant trouble sourcing relevant professional development that met their needs (Finding #16). It would appear problematic for experienced principals generally, to find professional development to meet their particular needs, given that such low numbers reported "no trouble". The 20+ years cohort seemed "out of step" (Finding #16) with the trend of data in this question (Figure 6.16).

Figure 6.16: Principals having no trouble sourcing PD to meet their particular needs during their principalship

Principals having difdficulty sourcing PD by years in the principalship

147
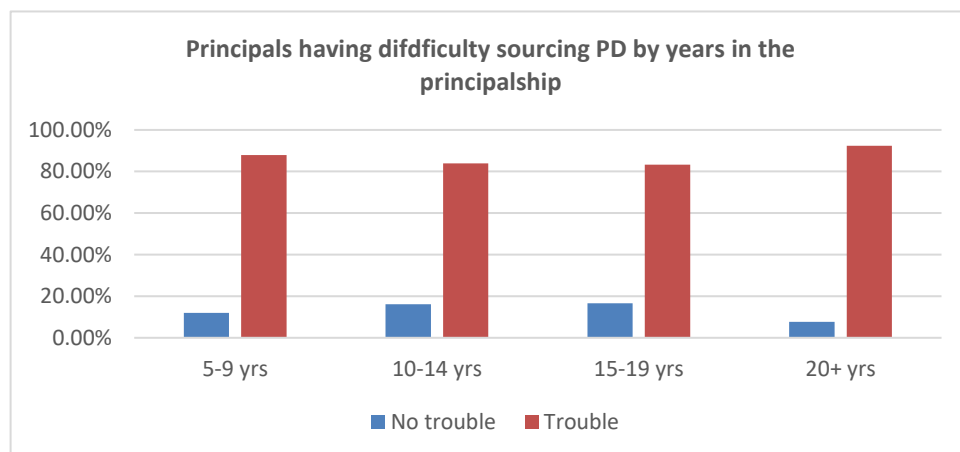
Of some interest, male principals found participation in structured, formal professional development programs less useful than their female colleagues (Figure 6.17).

Figure 6.17: Principals' gender and their perceived usefulness of engagement in structured, formal PD programs
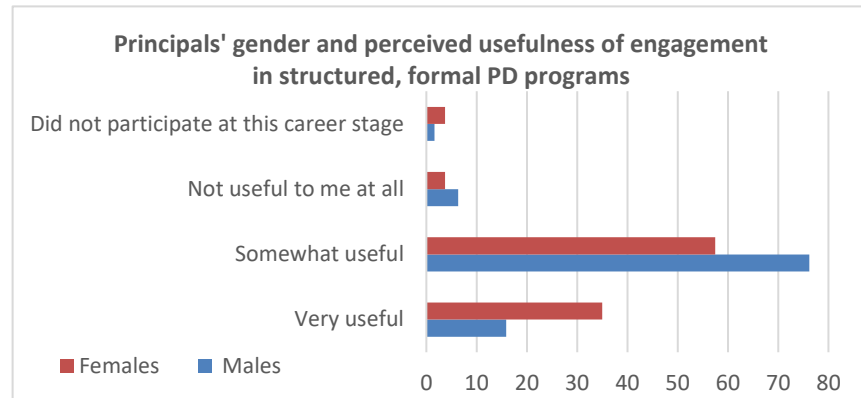
Variables

Statistical significance existed for gender. Overall, experienced female principals, more than their male colleagues, found participation in available structured, formal PD programs, "very useful" (Figure 6.18).

Figure 6.18: Principals perceived usefulness of structured, formal PD according to gender
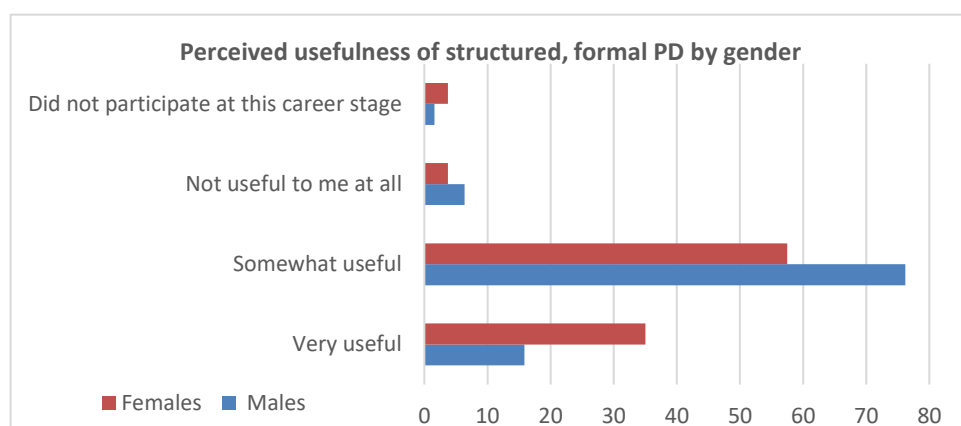
Statistical significance also existed here where experienced male principals found it harder to source structured, formal professional development programs (Figure 6.19) than did their female colleagues.

Figure 6.19: Sourcing structured, formal PD by gender

Hard to find structured, formal PD programs to meet my needs by gender
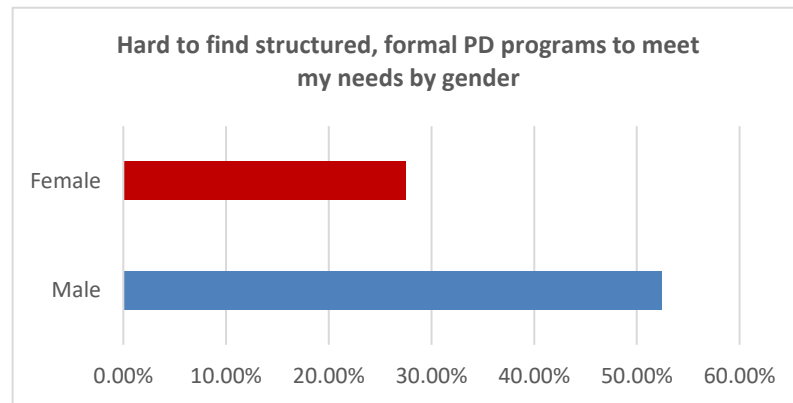
Summary

This part of the chapter presented an analysis of the data collected across the categories within Dimension 2 (PD processes) of the questionnaire. Experienced principals have reported that Networking is highly valued while engagement in mentoring was found to be less useful in their mid and late-career stages. This study found that the use of reflection regularly as a part of their role was significantly greater in the experienced stage of their career. It also found that experienced principals had more difficulty in sourcing relevant structured, formal PD programs that met their needs as they moved through their career. Engagement in internationalised professional development was discovered as being significant in their PD portfolio as were school visitations to colleagues' sites.

Domain 3 – Professional development program experiences

The third part of this chapter analyses and discusses the domain specifically focusing on professional development program experiences.

CATEGORY 1: ARICULATION OF PD THAT WORKS

Findings

17. *Experienced principals reported that conferences and networking provided the best professional development.*

18. *Experienced principals sought leadership development through conferences, networking, structured programs and internationalised professional development opportunities.*

19. *Experienced principals sought networking and research-based PL strategies ahead of conferences and structured PD programs.*

Analysis

This category investigated principals' reflections on previous professional development experiences – and what worked best for them. Based on their prior experiences, principals considered what types of professional development they now looked for.

55.0% of principals recounted that conference attendance worked best for them, while 44.29% reported engaging in networking and 31.43% reported participation in structured, formal professional development programs worked best (Figure 6.20).

Figure 6.20: PD that experienced principals deem has worked best for them
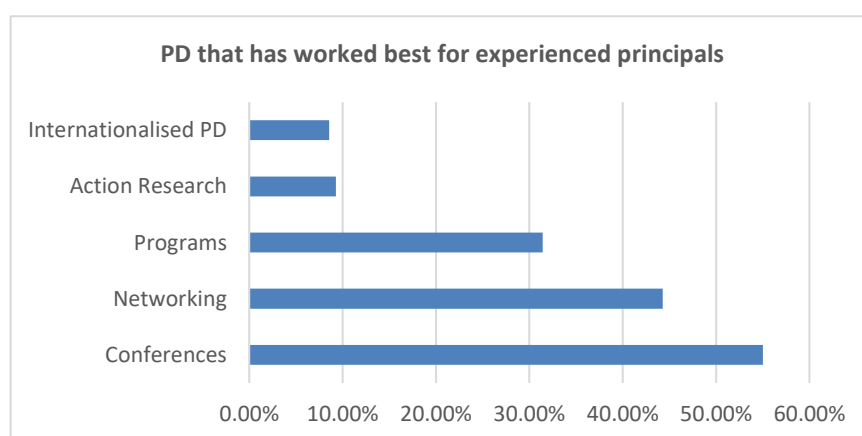
When considering the types of PD that they were now looking for, principals prioritised networking and research-based professional development (Figure 6.21).

Figure 6.21: Types of professional development sought by experienced principals
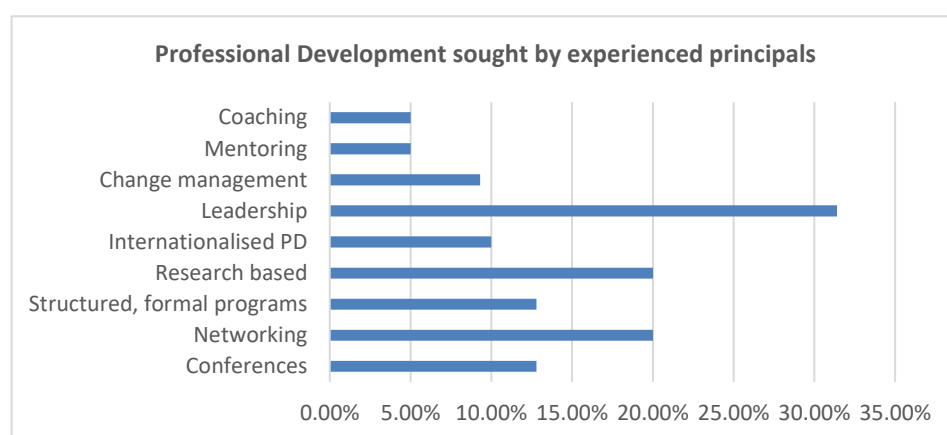
Based on their responses to this question experienced principals sought leadership development as their main priority, accessed through specific professional development strategies – networking; research-based professional development; structured, formal professional development programs; and conference attendance (Figures 6.21 and 6.22).

Figure 6.22: Leadership development for experienced principals
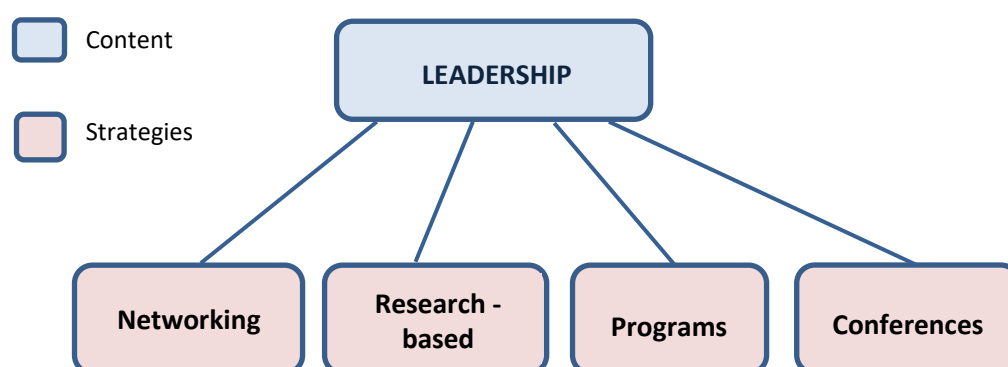
CATEGORY 2: EVALUATION OF PD EXPERIENCES

Finding

20. Experienced principals continued to find it problematic to explain the types of professional development they wished to access.

Analysis

When asked how they described their professional development, 62.14% of experienced principals used descriptive terms such as "powerful", "purposeful" and "motivating" while only 37.86% cited specific programs that were either available of that they had participated in (Figure 6.23).

Figure 6.23: Experienced principals described their professional development by
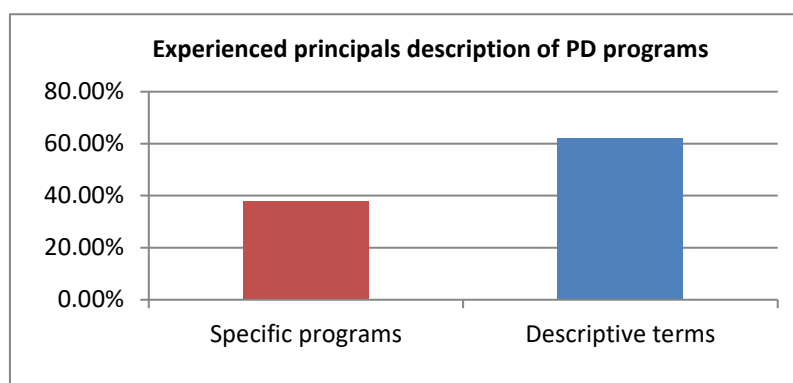
CATEGORY 3: PREFERRED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING MODELS

Findings

21. *Relationship-based professional development experiences rated highest as preferred PL models among experienced principals.*

22. *Online modules/learning consistently ranked as the least preferred PL model for these principals. PL via online modules occurred without face-to-face relationship development.*

Analysis

Seven options in the questionnaire provided respondents with the opportunity to prioritise their preferred professional learning models. All responses, in addition to all variables tested, showed the same average ranking i.e. first was networking; then, self-directed learning; with

relationship-based professional learning experiences, ranked third. Principals consistently ranked online modules/learning as the least preferred model of professional learning (Figure 6.24).

Figure 6.24: Professional learning models preferred by experienced principals

Prioritised PL models preferred by experienced principals

Model	Value
Online modules/learning	~2
Shadowing	~2.8
Relationship-based PL	~4.2
Mentoring/Coaching	~4.3
PL based on self-...	~4.3
Self-directed learning	~4.8
Networking	~5.6
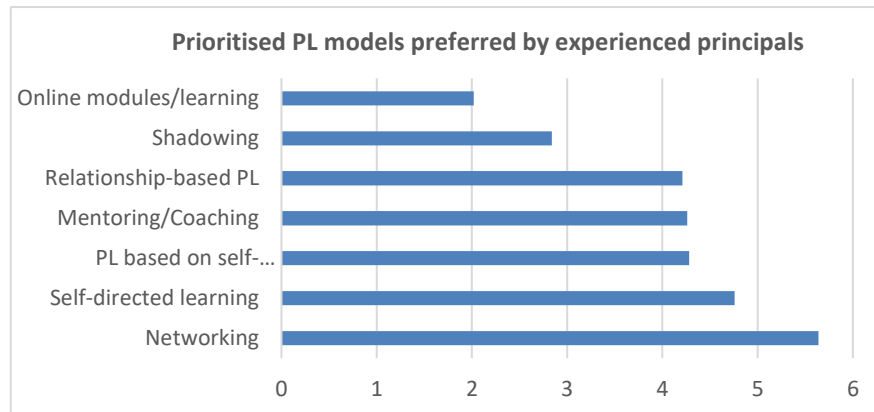
Variables

Statistical significance existed for experienced principals with 10+ years' in the principalship regarding the importance of relationship-based experiences as a basis for a preferred learning model. The more experienced principals placed a greater value on relationship-based professional learning which excluded other relationship-based experiences such as mentoring/coaching, networking and shadowing (Figure 6.25).

Figure 6.25: Scaled importance of relationship-based PL based on years' in the principalship

Importance of relationship-based PL for eperienced principals

Legend:
- 10+ years' experience
- 5-9 years' experience

Model	10+ years'	5-9 years'
Relationship-based PL (other than those listed)	~4.4	~3.6
Mentoring/coaching	~4.1	~4.3
PL based on self-reflection	~4.1	~4.4
Self-directed learning	~5.0	~4.5
Networking	~5.6	~5.8
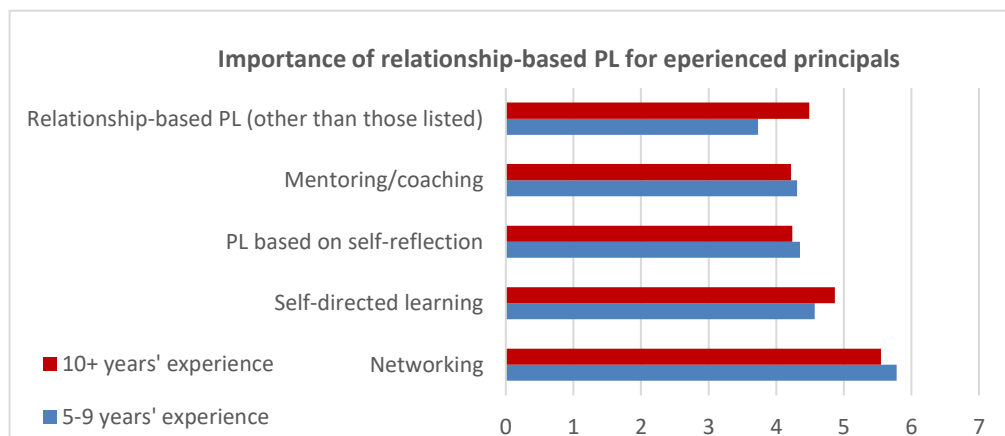
Summary

This part of the chapter focused specifically on the data gathered from the categories within Domain 3. Experienced principals reported that both conferences and networking provided the best professional development for them. They sought PD in the area of leadership but found it difficult to access PD programs that catered for their specific needs as mid and late-career principals. Relationship-based professional development was a priority for this cohort of principals.

Domain 4 – Change

This part of Chapter 6 analyses and discusses the fourth and final domain in the online questionnaire.

CATEGORY 1: CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Findings

23. *Nearly 50% of experienced principals felt that they faced an exciting new challenge during the implementation of the systemic changes.*

24. *Over 87% wanted access to professional development to support them during this climate of significant systemic change.*

25. *Principals appeared more interested in what was happening around the world than in what happens closer to home (NSW).*

Analysis

This category had two items. The first item revealed a high percentage of principals who felt "unsure" about the situation in which they currently find themselves. While 49.27% felt excited,

and therefore positive, about the new challenge facing them, a total of 50.74% either disagreed or feel unsure about the changes currently being faced (Figure 6.26).

Figure 6.26: Current changes providing exciting new challenges for experienced NSW DE principals

Current changes seen as exciting by experienced principals
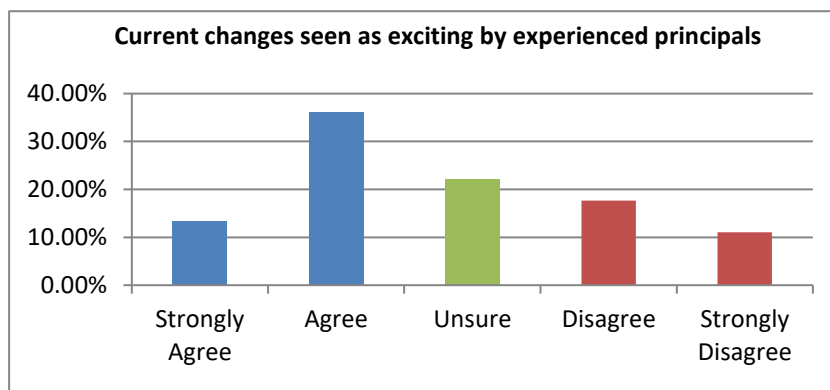
However, almost 90% of principals would have liked to access additional professional development to assist them in managing the changes (Figure 6.27).

Figure 6.27: Access to additional professional development during this time of systemic change

Access supporting PD during this time of systemic change
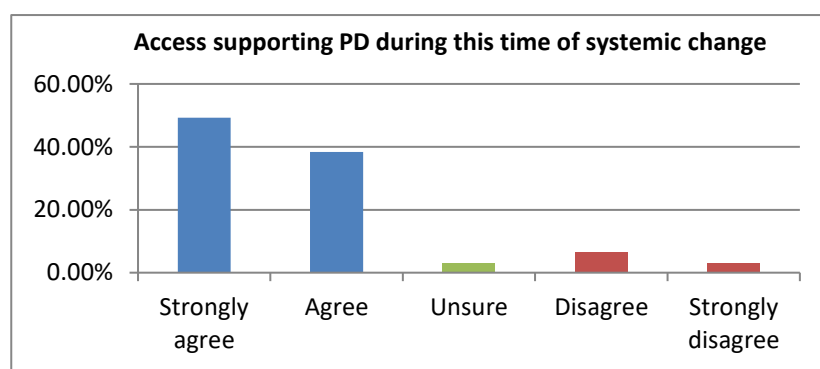
The second item in this category sought to elicit the areas in which principals would have liked additional professional development in relation to national and international trends, aimed at assisting them in gaining a deeper knowledge and understanding of their current situation in NSW. Principals could select more than one area for additional professional development to broaden this knowledge. Just over half of principals (57.35%) would like to know what happens in education in other Australian states (Figure 6.28).

As principals of 21st Century schools, 60.29% of principals reported that they would like to know what happens in other countries (e.g. Hong Kong, Finland, Canada, UK, Singapore); and 75.74% sought to further their understanding of global movements in education (Figure 6.28).

Figure 6.28: Areas for experienced principals to broaden their knowledge

Areas in which principals wish to broaden their knowledge
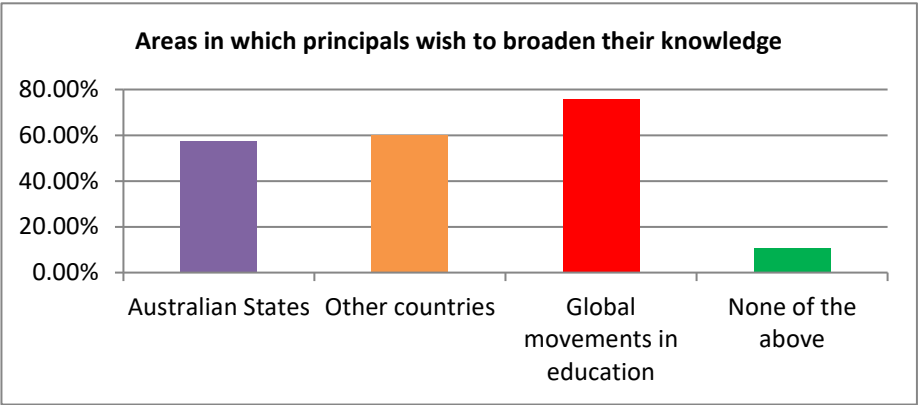
Variables

Statistical significance existed with the school classification variable when cross-tabulated with the "exciting new challenge" faced. Primary principals appeared more excited by the challenge provided by the systemic changes (Figure 6.29). Again, the high percentage of "unsure" responses remained interesting.

Figure 6.29: Secondary and primary principals currently facing an exciting new challenge during this time of systemic change

Principals are currently facing an exciting new challenge
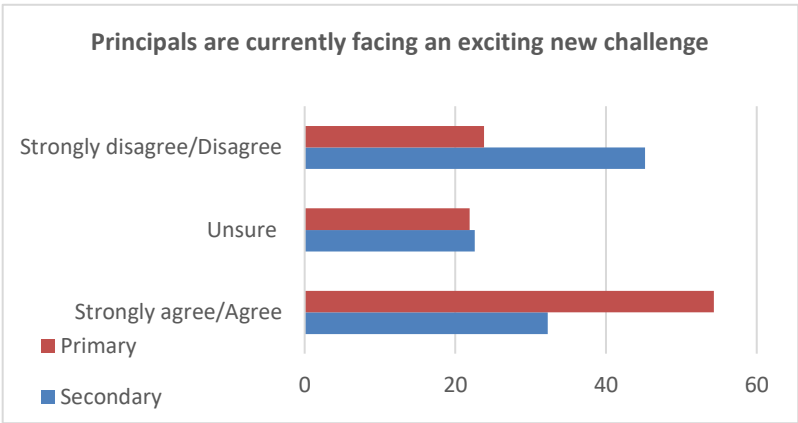
Statistical significance existed for this variable with primary principals appearing to see the current climate in a more positive exciting light than did their secondary counterparts. Primary principals felt stronger about accessing professional development to support them through these changes (Figure 6.30).

Figure 6.30: Schools' classification for accessing professional development to manage the current changes
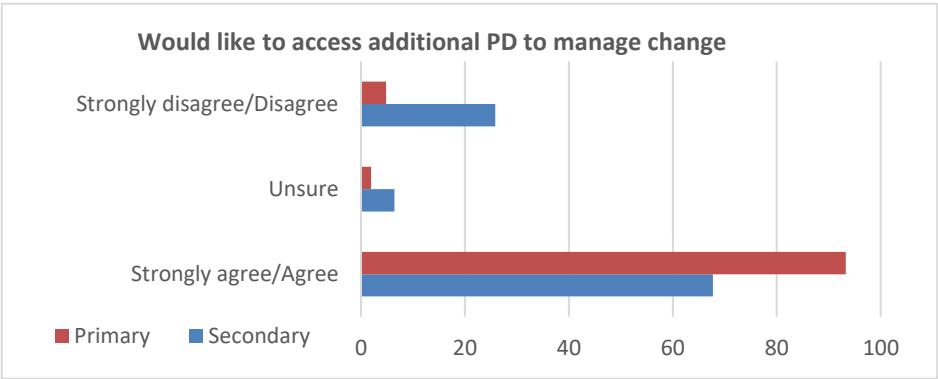
When cross tabulating the item related to the professional development needed to support principals during these changes, with the variable on principals' geographical location, it was found that urban principals had a more positive attitude towards the access of PL needed to support the current changes (Figure 6.31).

Figure 6.31: Comparing school geographical location and principals' perceived access to needed PL
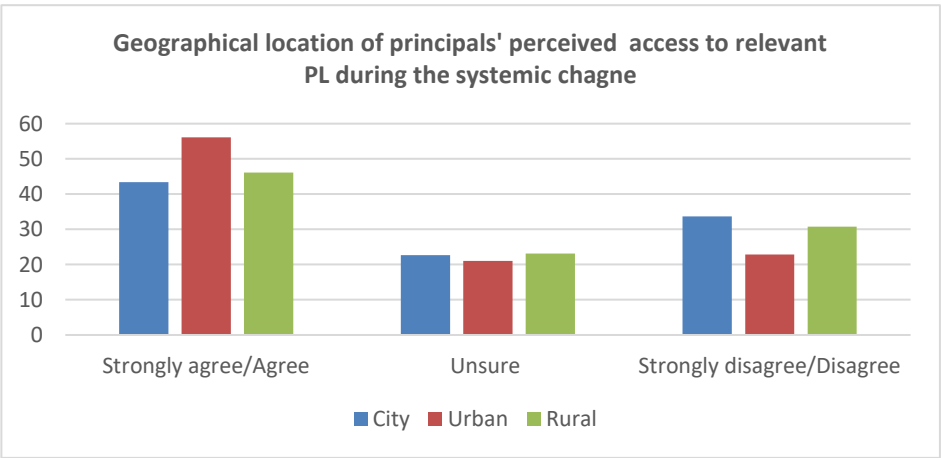
The percentage of principals feeling "unsure" remained consistent across each of the geographical school locations (Table 6.8) indicating a high degree of uncertainty surrounding access to PL to support the new changes being implemented.

	Strongly agree/Agree	Unsure	Strongly disagree/Disagree
City	43.39%	22.64%	33.69%
Urban	56.15%	21.05%	22.81%
Rural	46.15%	23.08%	30.77%

Table 6.8: Geographical school location and desire to access PL

CATEGORY 2: NEW SYSTEMIC MODEL

Findings

26. *The large amount of "unsure" (28.26% - 39.42%) registered in all the components of this question indicated a lack of confidence among a significant proportion of principals in the new systemic structural realignment.*

27. *Over 80% of experienced principals felt confident in leading their schools through the current changes.*

28. *Principals desired professional development in the areas of leadership and change management.*

Analysis

When reflecting on the current systemic changes principals' comments revealed uncertainty in a number of areas. The high rates of "unsure" responses indicated a lack of confidence in the opportunities offered by the new systemic model (Figure 6.32) specifically:

1. provision of greater opportunities for creative leadership;

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2. availability of personalised professional development programs; and

3. access to the financial support needed to enable effective implementation of the new changes.

Figure 6.32: Principals' opinions on the opportunities the new systemic model may provide
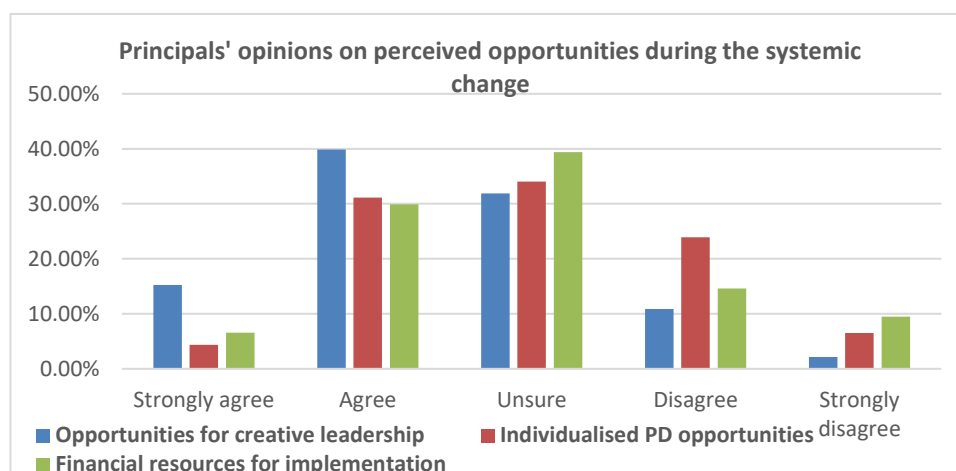
Over 80% of principals felt they had the necessary skills and experience to lead their schools through the current changes (Figure 6.33). However, only 52.17% felt confident they possessed the necessary skills to implement the system changes such as the new *Learning Management and Business Reform* (LMBR); *Local Schools Local Decisions* (LSLD); and the *Resource Allocation Model* (RAM).

Figure 6.33: Skills possessed by principals for the new systemic model or functional realignment
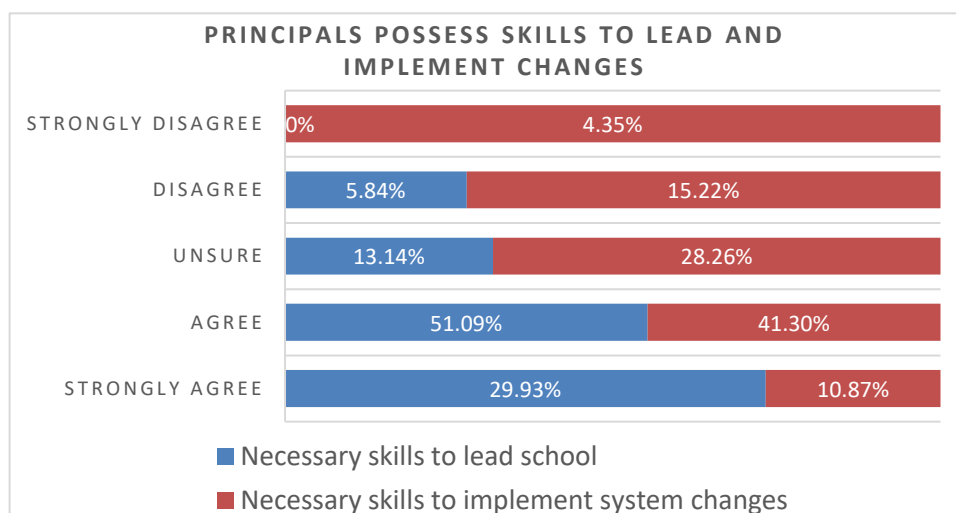
While principals felt they had the skills to lead change in their schools, at the same time they felt a lack of skills to implement system changes – administration and management issues. When asked to choose from a suite of options: leadership; change management; curriculum implementation; financial processes and management; sourcing appropriate professional development for the principal and staff, principals clearly saw leadership development as their priority. Little separates change management (leadership development) and the desire to know more about financial processes and management (skills' development) (Figure 6.34).

Figure 6.34: Principals' scaled priorities from a suite of options
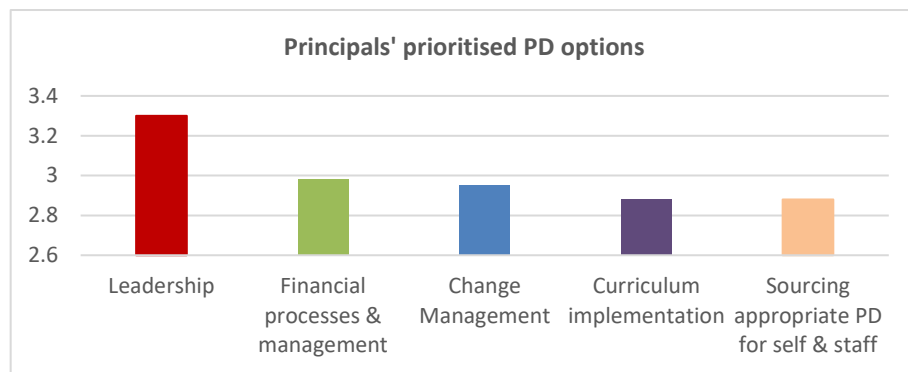
Variables

Statistical significance existed for schools' geographical locations in having the necessary skills and experience to lead their school through the current changes. City principals felt more strongly/confident about their capacity to lead their schools through the current changes (83.3%). Rural principals (80.0%) did not feel as confident, and Urban principals (79.31%) felt the least confident (Figure 6.35). Urban principals confirmed this with nearly 20% unsure about their capacity to possess the skills to lead their schools through the current systemic changes.

Principals' possession of skills to lead change related to geographic location
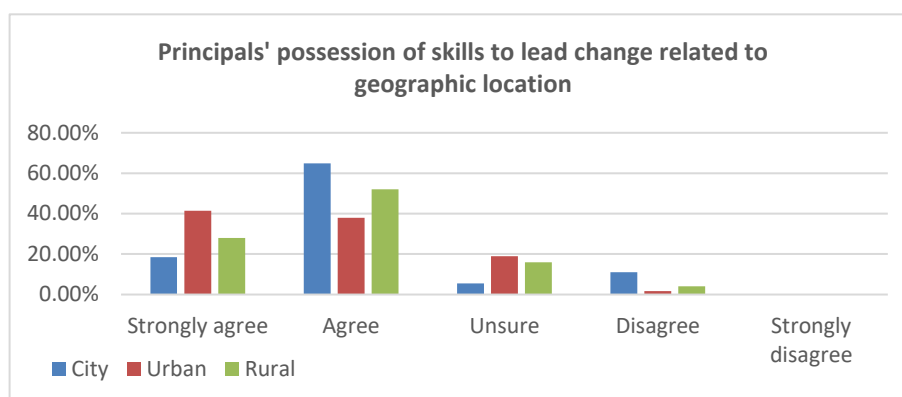
Statistical significance existed for geographic location and possession of the necessary skills to lead their schools through the current changes. Principals located in the city reported feeling less confident in possessing the necessary skills to manage the current systemic changes (Figure 6.35).

Principals with greater experience felt more confident they had the necessary skills and experience to lead their schools through the current changes (Figure 6.36).

Principals' readiness to lead their schools through the systemic change by years of experience in the principalship
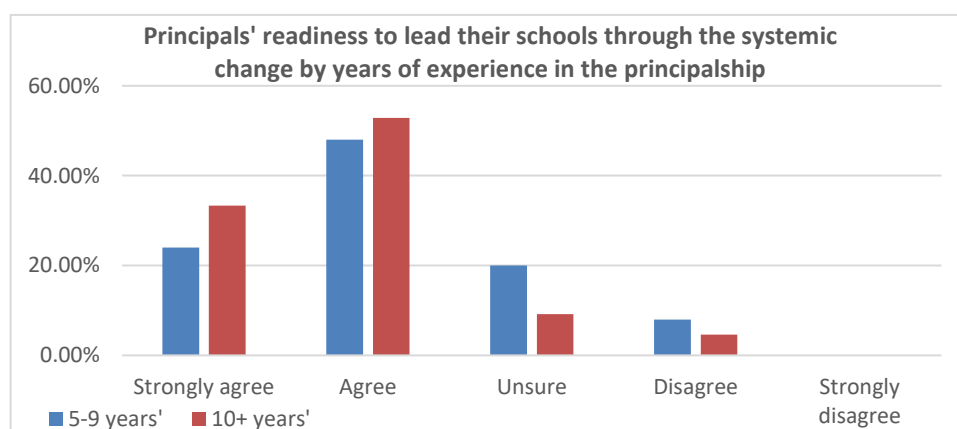
Principals prioritised their professional development needs next, by ranking 5 options. In determining their priorities, each professional development area attracted points in descending order i.e. 5 points allocated for a 1st priority; 4 points allocated to a 2nd and so on. In the event

of two professional development areas with the same ranking, the decision was made to divide the points across the two areas.

Leadership development remained the principals' highest priority with Change Management (an aspect of leadership development) ranked second. Financial management, an area of training and development, was not seen as an aspect of leadership development but (Figure 6.37) as a management skill.

Figure 6.37: Principals' scaled prioritised professional development areas of need
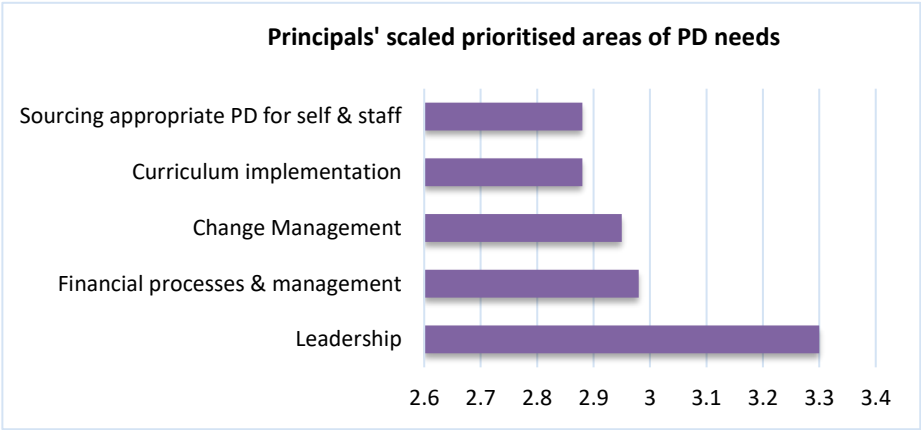
CATEGORY 3: POLITICISATION OF EDUCATION

Finding

29. *Principals perceived that more decision-making has been occurring at a political level than in the past.*

Analysis

The questionnaire asked principals, living in a time of globalisation and internationalisation, to respond to statements relevant to the impact of the country's government on education and in particular, on the role of the principal.

Over 96% of principals perceived that major education decisions were being made at a political level (Figure 6.38). Given that the cohort for this study consists of government school principals, the perception that the government of the day is responsible for making the decisions that impact on schools is probably to be expected.

Figure 6.38: Principals' major decision-making impacting schools occurs at a political level
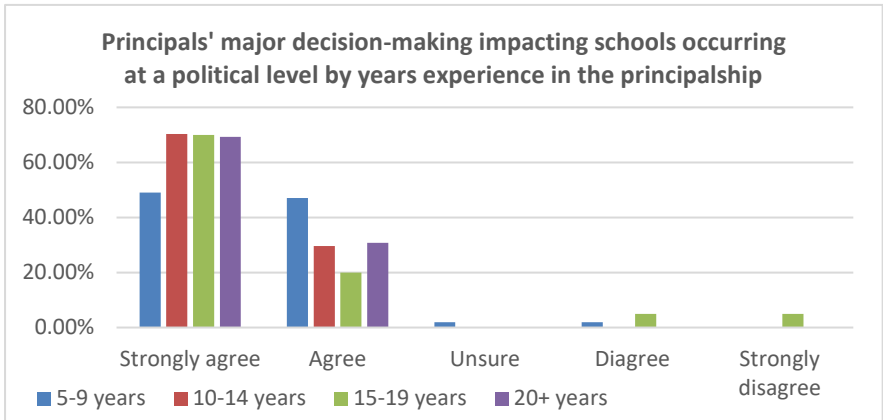
Principals also perceived that these decisions made by the government (at the political level), impact directly on the role of the principal (Figure 6.39).

Figure 6.39: Government decision-making impacting on the role of principal
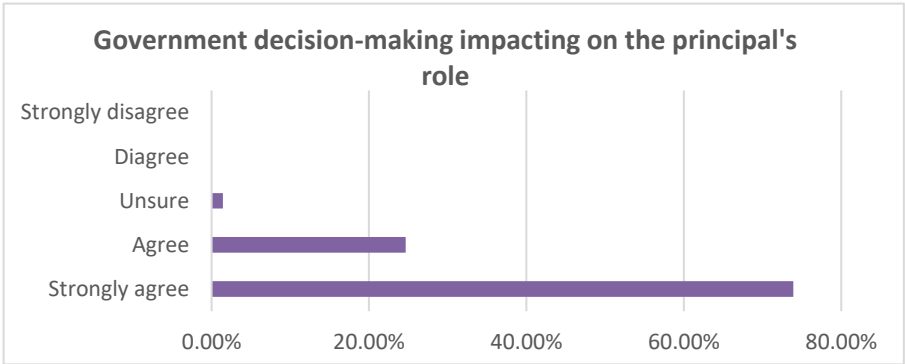
CATEGORY 4: 21ST CENTURY EDUCATION

Findings

30. *Principals perceived current NSW DE changes as a part of a political agenda and not based on bringing NSW in line with other Australian states.*

31. *Nearly 40% of experienced principals felt the NSW DE modelled current systemic changes on existing structures in other countries.*

Analysis

In relation to the implementation of the current systemic changes within the NSW DE:

- 90.58% of experienced principals perceived the current systemic changes as part of a political agenda;

- 36.96% perceived them as modelled on existing structures in other countries around the world;

- 16.67% saw the new changes as designed to bring NSW public schools in line with other Australian states; and

- 12.32% perceived the changes as based on successful models of schooling in other countries (Figure 6.40).

Figure 6.40: Principals' perceptions of the basis of the current NSW DE changes

Principals' perception of the basis of the current NSW DE systemic change
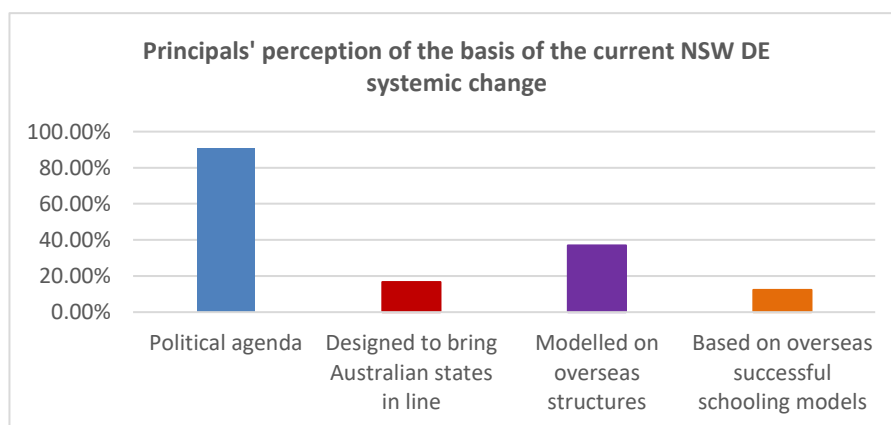
CATEGORY 5: PREPAREDNESS TO MEET CHANGE

Findings

32. *Principals, while feeling they possessed the skills to lead their schools through a time of change, also felt unprepared to do so.*

Analysis

Principals reported not feeling prepared to implement the current NSW DEC systemic changes. Less than a quarter felt prepared (22.96%) and over half felt unprepared (52.59%), while almost another quarter (24.44%) felt unsure – which implied that they really were not feeling confident and prepared (Figure 6.41).

Figure 6.41: Principals' preparedness for the systemic change
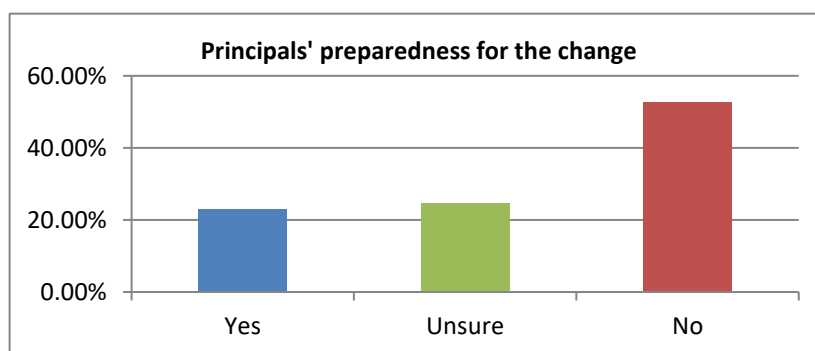
Finding

> 33. *Over 30% of experienced principals identified access to coaching as a desired professional development strategy.*

Analysis

An open-ended question asked principals to describe the types of professional learning activities they would like to access now during this time of change. The analysis of their answers revealed that the types of professional development principals would like to access, include coaching; structured professional development programs; conferences; action research projects; and access to internationalised programs (Figure 6.42).

Figure 6.42: PD activities principals would currently like to access

PD activities principals would like to access

Networking	
Internationalised programs	
Action research	
Conferences	
Programs	
Coaching	

0.00%   10.00%   20.00%   30.00%   40.00%
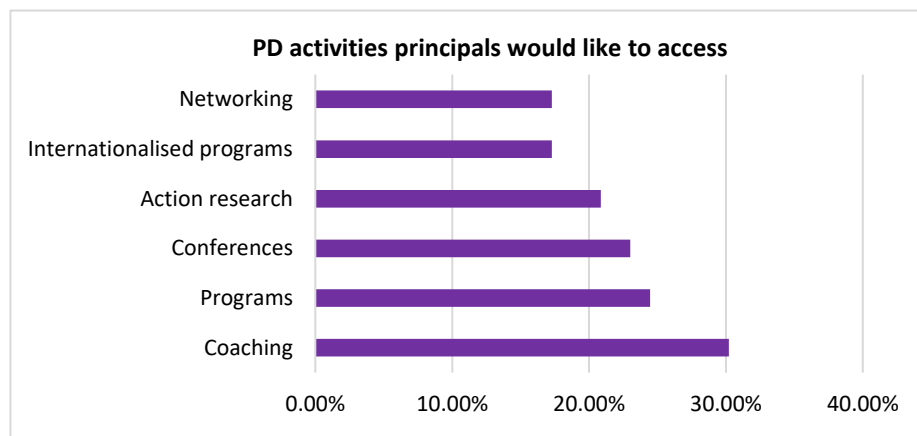
Finding

> *34. Experienced principals seemed aware of their position in a globally connected education community and desired access to professional development to keep them abreast of global trends in education.*

Analysis

While investigating the perceived professional development experiences and needs of experienced principals, this research also sought to investigate:

> *How and in what ways, if at all, does engagement in internationalised professional development experiences enhance the professional learning of the experienced principal?*

When analysing the data gathered from the questionnaire it was discovered that a substantial number of respondents had engaged broadly in internationally-based (internationalised) professional development as defined in Chapter 4. Therefore, when analysing the data, a sub-group was formed within the NSW DE sample group of principals who had engaged in internationalised professional development programs. The formation of this sub-group facilitated a deeper investigation of principals' PD needs and experiences in the next phase of the study: follow-up, in-depth individual interviews.

	Case Study	
	Number	**%**
Whole cohort	148	100.00%
Sub-group that engaged in internationalised PD	39	27.27%

Table 6.9: Comparison of cohorts

This newly formed sub-group of experienced principals constituted 27.27% of the total case study population (Table 6.9), determined through the answer to Question #26 (Figure 6.43). This question provided the data from which to calculate the sub-group (i.e. "…some of my professional development is sourced through internationalised programs…"). This information contributed to the selection of volunteers for inclusion in the next phase of the study: the individual follow-up interviews.

Figure 6.43: Principals' sourcing professional development
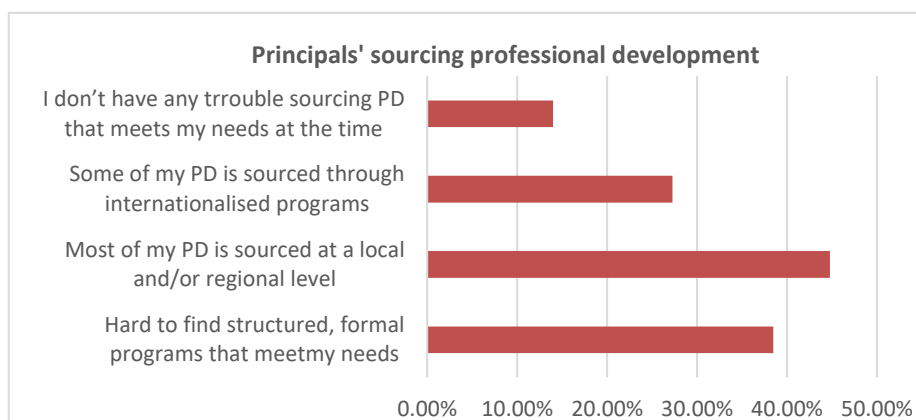
Summary

This final part of the chapter analysed and discussed the data from the final dimension of the online questionnaire and found that experienced principals desired access to professional development to support them through the current climate of systemic change. While they felt that they possessed the skills to lead their school they desired additional professional development in the areas of leadership and change management. This group of principals also

felt that the government's political agenda impact on decision-making at the school level and therefore on the role of the principal. Living in the Twenty-first Century, in a time of globalisation and internationalisation, these principals felt that current changes were based on what has been happening around the world and that access to internationalised professional development should be a part of their PD portfolio.

Chapter 7 which follows reflects on the findings emerging from Phases 1 and 2 of the study.

CHAPTER 7

REFLECTIONS ON FINDINGS EMERGING FROM PHASES 1 & 2 OF THE

STUDY

This chapter draws together and reflects on the findings emerging from Phases 1 and 2 of the study. These are included as Appendix 7.1 The findings centre on the nature of principals' professional learning either in an individual mode or with others and within various contexts as suggested by Figure 7.1 below.

Figure 7.1: Principals' professional learning in the early 21st Century
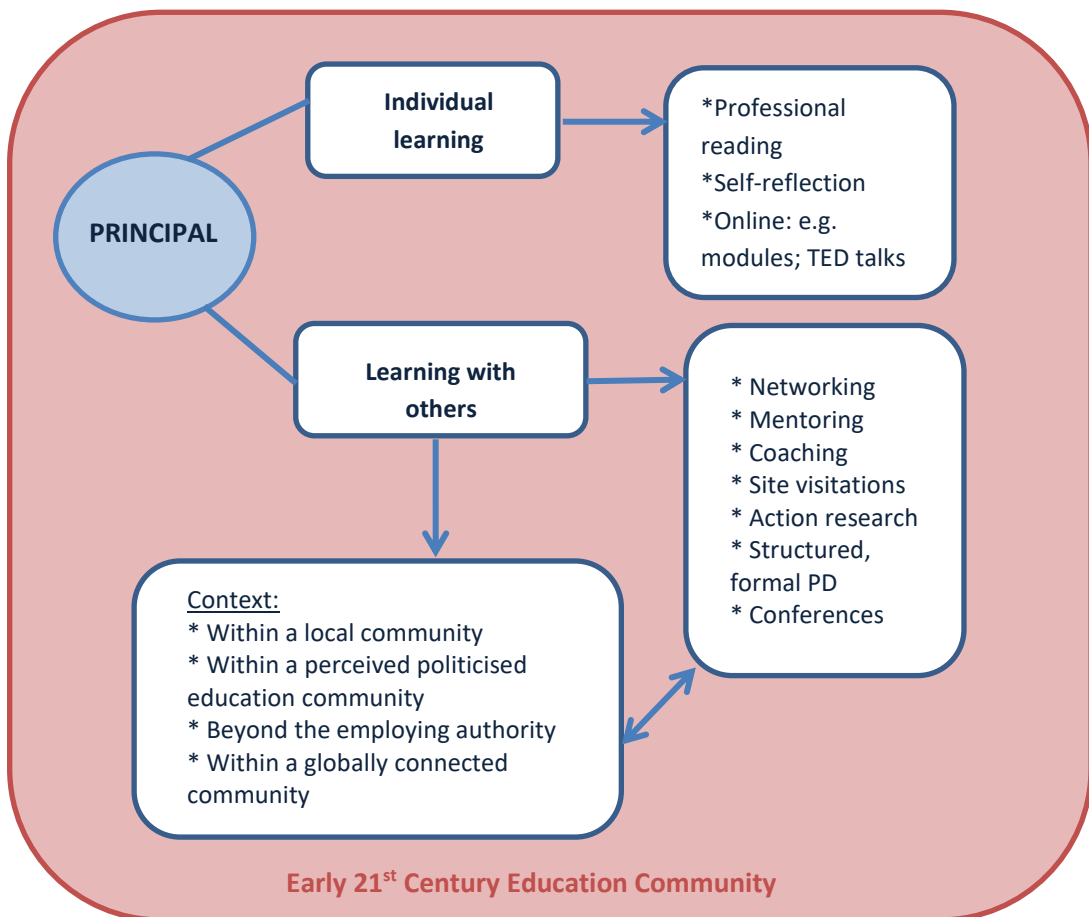
Drawing on these findings emerging from the study, each of the elements outlined in Figure 7.1 is discussed and elaborated on in the sections which follow. Where relevant, links are made to relevant literature.

Individual learning

Learning in isolation without interaction with another person can limit access to available learning environments and communities. Professional development opportunities for individual professional learning appear limited for experienced principals. These opportunities include professional reading, self-reflection, and engaging in online learning through such things as modules and TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) talks.

Professional reading

The availability of professional journals, articles and books both in hard copies and online, provides principals with a variety of sources on an extraordinary array of subjects. Access to these sources facilitates professional learning for the individual (and groups) at a time that suits the reader.

Self-reflection

Some 76.92% of principals reported using self-reflection as a strategy for professional development early in their careers. However, over 92% of principals reported regularly using self-reflection in the experienced stage of their career. Principals increased their engagement in self-reflection as they moved through their career (Finding #6). The ability to reflect constructively, to analyse practice, and to inform change in their practice remains a powerful skill (Branson, 2007). Experienced principals reported that self-reflection occurred in a variety of ways across their career: through diarised reflection; discussion with a trusted colleague or colleagues; internal reflection; or discussions with a partner or spouse. They also reported heightened engagement in reflection in their current stage when compared to their early years in the principalship.

Given the prominence of self-reflection in principals' responses in Phases 1 and 2, it raised the question whether or not this strongly preferred PD strategy exists as, (1) a reflection of the isolationist nature of the principal role (Degenhardt, 2013; Cannon & Duignan, 2011; Fink, 2010); and/or (2) because of a lack of other opportunities for relevant and effective professional development opportunities.

The Phase 3 follow-up individual interviews provided an opportunity to explore in greater depth the place of self-reflection in the working life of the experienced principal through such questions as:

- Is self-reflection prominent in the working lives of those being interviewed?

- When and how does it occur?

- What is a typical process?

- How and in what ways does the content of the reflection relate to the domains of leadership such as instructional, organisational, relational and contextual (McCulla & Degenhardt, 2015)?

- How, if at all, do principals "switch off" from reflecting about their work?

Online learning

Principals working in the current 21st Century education community have experienced technological advancements at an unprecedented rate (Prensky, 2001) with opportunities for learning via the internet through TED talks, podcasts or online modules delivered from a variety of sources. Somewhat ironically, these experienced principals consistently rated learning online through processes such as online learning modules, as their lowest priority and as the least preferred method of service delivery of their PD (Finding #22). Why this is the case was seen as worthy of further exploration in the follow-up Phase 3 interviews.

Learning *with* others

Principals' "learning with others" involves a variety of activities such as: networking, mentoring, coaching, school visitations, action research projects, structured, formal PD programs, and attendance at conferences.

NETWORKING

The data confirmed that principals highly valued networking for their professional learning (Findings #1, #2, #17, #18, #19). Networking can take many forms including: informal or formal meetings; in small or large groups; within or across school classifications; organised (structured or semi-structured) or incidental (unstructured) (Mathibe, 2007; Kiggundu & Moorosi, 2012; Muijs et al., 2011). Principals constantly sought networking opportunities as a source of professional learning. Networking opportunities also presented themselves through a variety of ways that include the membership of professional associations, social media (e.g. LinkedIn), academic forums, employing authorities and social occasions. With 94.45% of principals in the study reporting engagement in some form of networking, and 97.36% reporting engagement in networking in their early years, it appeared that the use of networking varied slightly across the career (Finding #1). It also raised the question of how the nature of that networking might change, if at all, for experienced principals.

Follow-up interviews with experienced principals in Phase 3 could therefore explore questions such as:

- Why experienced principals place such value on networking?

- What aspects of professional learning are facilitated by this strategy?

- Does networking provide "just-in-time, just-for-me" (relevant and timely) professional learning?

- Which current formal and informal network engagements support principals in their learning?

- How and in what ways, if at all, do the networks differ from those that principals engaged in before becoming a principal?

MENTORING

Phases 1 and 2 of the study revealed that the more experienced the principal, the less useful they tended to find mentoring (Figure 7.2) with almost twice as many (40.28%) finding mentoring only "somewhat" useful at the experienced stage, compared with 23.24% finding it "somewhat" useful during the early years (Finding #3).

Figure 7.2: Usefulness of mentoring for newly appointed and experienced principals
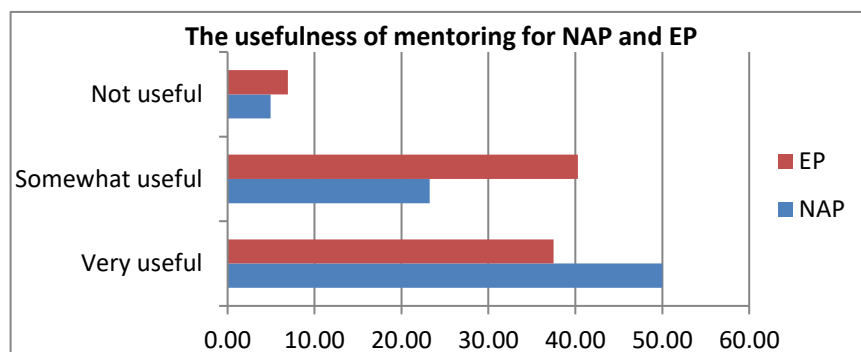
Experienced principals reported a decline in engagement in mentoring (as a mentee) at this stage of their career. They appeared to: (1) prefer a different form of one-to-one relationship with a significant other person such as a coach or a critical friend; and (2) reduce access to mentoring as they gained more experience. It was also reported that, (1) secondary principals were less likely to engage in mentoring across their career as either a mentee or a mentor (Finding #5); and twice as many primary principals (41.67%) found mentoring <u>very</u> useful compared to their secondary colleagues (27.27%) (Finding #4).

These findings suggested questions such as those below to further explore the mentoring relationship in the Phase 3 follow-up interviews with experienced principals:

- Could you tell me about any one-to-one professional relationships that you have had with somebody you view as significant outside the school that supports you in your learning?

- Given the definitions provided (mentoring, coaching, critical friend, professional companion, counsellor) which would characterise any relationship you may have?

- Do the more experienced principals that you know see mentoring as an appropriate professional learning strategy for them at this stage of their career?

- In your experience, to what extent, if at all, do experienced principals mentor less experienced principals?

COACHING

Principals raised coaching as a professional development strategy when asked about the PD they would like to access (Finding #33) with 26% of respondents requesting access to coaching in their future PD.

These findings suggested questions such as those below to further explore the mentoring relationship in the Phase 3 follow-up interviews with experienced principals:

- How accessible is coaching for principals?

- What do principals wish to achieve as a result of having participated in coaching?

- Would principals prefer to participate in coaching as a component of a broader PD program, or would they prefer it as a stand-alone PD strategy?

SITE VISITATIONS

School visitations provided principals with the opportunity to engage not only in reflective dialogue, but to also witness practice first hand. These visitations provided significant, appropriate and relevant professional learning for principals (Bickmore, 2012) (Finding #9).

These findings suggested questions such as those below to further explore the mentoring relationship in the Phase 3 follow-up interviews with experienced principals:

- Do principals often visit colleagues' schools? Why/Why not?
- Do school visitations occur locally, nationally or internationally? Is there a preference?
- What are the benefits, if any, of participating in school visitation programs?

ACTION RESEARCH/ACTION LEARNING PROJECTS

Participation in action research/action learning projects appeared more prevalent in the experienced stage of the principals' career (Finding #8). As early-career principals the participation rate was almost half (23.08%) that of experienced principals (40.56%).

These findings suggested questions such as those below to further explore the mentoring relationship in the Phase 3 follow-up interviews with experienced principals:

- Is this participation rate because action research projects were not as readily available to principals previously, as a newly-appointed principal?
- What is it that experienced principals like about engaging in action research?
- How easy is it to visit colleagues' schools?

STRUCTURED, FORMAL PD PROGRAMS

Principals accessed structured, formal PD programs in their early years and in their current stage of the principalship. They reported high participation rates in these programs with 94.37% in

their early years, and 97.20% in their current experienced stage (Figure 6.10). However, only 26.57% of experienced principals found structured, formal PD programs useful, where 46.48% reported that these programs were useful in the early years of their principalship (Finding #10).

Experienced principals found participation in structured, formal PD programs less useful as they became more experienced (Findings #10). The cohort in this study participated in this type of program less now than they did and found them only "somewhat" useful as they gained even more experience (Figure 6.11).

Throughout the mid and late-career stages of the principalship principals' engagement in relevant professional development varied (Findings #11, #12, #13, #14, #15) with opportunities to engage in relevant "just-in-time: just-for-me" professional learning underpinning that search. As principals moved through their career they reported greater scrutiny of the PD sought, becoming much more discerning in their choices of professional development programs, sourcing them from a variety of places (Finding #7).

With the data indicating that principals' desire to engage in structured, formal PD programs, follow-up interviews in Phase 3 might further explore questions such as:

- Why do experienced principals rate current structured, formal PD programs as only "somewhat useful"?
- What do experienced principals want out of structured, formal PD programs?
- What structure would experienced principals like in a structured, formal PD program?
- Why don't very experienced principals find the currently available structured, formal PD programs satisfying?

When asked to describe and explain what worked for them in their professional development, 62.14% of principals described their PD using descriptive words such as: "motivating"; "big picture"; "powerful learning"; "purposeful"; "creative"; "innovative"; "empowering";

"innovative"; and "relevant" (Finding #20). With 37.86% of principals citing specific programs this phase of the data collection did not reveal any additional information.

Follow-up individual in-depth interviews in Phase 3 had the potential to explore this issue more thoroughly in an endeavour to discover the reasons why experienced principals find it somewhat difficult to clearly articulate what works for them in professional development at this stage of their career.

CONFERENCES

Attendance at conferences continued to rate highly with principals, regardless of their career stage (Findings #17 and #18). This finding suggested questions such as those below to further explore the mentoring relationship in the Phase 3 follow-up interviews with experienced principals:

- Why do conferences continue to attract principals?
- Does a conference provide only a "one-off" learning experience?
- Do principals rank conferences highly in the absence of other relevant and effective professional learning opportunities?

Context for professional development

WITHIN THE LOCAL EDUCATION COMMUNITY

Locally, NSW public school principals' perceptions of the current systemic changes were relatively positive with nearly 50% agreeing that an exciting new challenge awaited them and with almost 90% of principals wanting to access relevant professional development to support them during the change process (Findings #23 and #24). An ideal time presented itself, then, for professional development providers to design, develop and implement appropriate PD for this group of experienced principals noting that 81.02% of principals felt confident that they

possessed the leadership to lead their schools through the current changes (Finding #27 and #32) and with only 52.17% feeling that they have the necessary skills to manage the change. This illustrates a need for professional development.

Principals indicated the two main areas of PD need were, (1) leadership of the changes; and (2) change management (Finding #38). While principals felt confident in leading their schools, the high number of 'unsure' responses (Figure 10.7) indicated a lack of confidence in having access to new opportunities for creative leadership (31.88%); in accessing personalised PD (34.06%); or in accessing financial resources to facilitate the changes (39.42%).

Only a small percentage of principals (22.9%) felt they have had appropriate PD to prepare them to implement the current systemic changes (Finding #32).

It was thought that follow-up interviews with experienced principals might further explore:

- What kind of professional development might best assist principals in their change management at this time of change?
- Is this proposed model of PD based on previous experiences?

CHANGE WITHIN A POLITICISED EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY

Experienced principals perceived that the current systemic changes belonged to a political agenda (Findings #29 and #30). Nearly 40% of principals believed these changes linked with changes in education elsewhere (Finding #31). Principals perceived greater education policy decision-making at political levels had impacted on the running of their schools, more than ever before. Nearly 50% of experienced principals felt excited by the systemic changes to be implemented (Finding #23). However, over a quarter of the principals felt unsure about the implications of the implementation of the new systemic structural alignment and their confidence in their capacity to implement the forthcoming changes (Finding #27). These changes within the systemic structure supporting NSW DE schools as described above were in favour of

increased local management of schools within more stringent regulatory frameworks. Principals desired professional development in the areas of leadership and change management (Finding#28).

They followed on from recent additional national and state government funding and resourcing of schools as a response to the global financial crisis, resulting in new school buildings. Also noted above, policy was also established at a national level resulting in additional resourcing; a new national curriculum; and new national teaching and principal professional standards.

Follow-up interviews with experienced principals might further explore questions such as:

- Do principals perceive any link between current systemic changes and global trends?

- Do principals see themselves as principals of schools in a globalised education community as well as in the NSW DE community?

WITHIN A GLOBAL EDUCATION COMMUNITY

Principals' awareness of their position in a globalised education community showed a desire among some principals to access professional development that informed them relative to their position internationally, keeping them abreast of global trends (Finding #34). Sourcing internationalised PD was seen to facilitate broader professional learning thus enabling them to engage in global issues and giving them the opportunity to compare and contrast education systems on an international basis.

Over a quarter (27.27%) of experienced principals had sourced some of their professional development through internationalised PD programs (Findings #14) with principals' involvement in internationalised PD increasing as they gained more experience.

Experienced principals seemed less likely to source their PD locally/regionally (Finding #13). They seemed more interested in global movements in education than in what was happening nationally (Finding #25). The opportunity to investigate experienced principals' engagement in

internationalised professional development provided an opportunity to investigate this relatively unchartered area.

Follow-up interviews with experienced principals explored questions such as:

- What motivates experienced principals to look outside their local community for professional learning opportunities?
- What do these programs offer that local PD programs do not?

PD BEYOND THE EMPLOYING AUTHORITY

The more experienced the principal the more likely they were to source their professional development outside their employer (Finding #7). They sought leadership development through a variety of means such as conferences, networking, structured PD programs, and internationalised professional development programs (Finding #18).

The data also suggested a more personalised approach to sourcing professional learning, prioritising the PD that worked best for them when they needed it most. Access to networking rated very highly with 92.25% of principals rating it either very important or important (Finding #1). When reflecting on what they valued in their professional learning, principals also rated\developing relationships as very important (Finding #21). The two are related: establishment of strong relationships between participants underpins effective networking.

These findings suggested questions such as those below to further explore the issue in the Phase 3 follow-up interviews with experienced principals:

- With experience, do principals become more discerning in which PD they engage?
- Does a link exist between the accumulation of experience and the accession to a broader range of PD options?

Summary

This chapter raised a number of conjectural questions as an outcome of reflection on the findings and the analysis of the data to date. These questions informed the development of the follow-up individual face-to-face interviews in the third and final phase of the data collection.

At the conclusion of the analysis and discussion of the Phase 2 data, five broad themes emerged (Appendix 4.34):

1. Experienced Principals take ownership of their professional development and rely less on the employer to provide their professional development.

2. Experienced principals find structured, formal PD Programs less useful in the experienced stage of their career.

3. Some experienced principals become more involved in internationalised programs in the experienced stage of their career.

4. Experienced principals remain unsure of the essential elements in their desired PD programs.

5. Experienced principals remain interested in participating in mentoring, coaching, shadowing and networking.

These themes, along with the speculative questions raised in this chapter, provided a framework and guided the development of the follow-up, in-depth individual interviews in Phase 3.

Chapter 8 now outlines how significant issues arising from Phases 1 and 2 of the study and outlined in Chapters 6 and 7 were probed more deeply in the Phase 3 individual interviews that followed.

CHAPTER 8

PHASE 3: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The previous three chapters dealt with Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the study:

- Phase 1 explored by way of exploratory interviews, principals' perceptions of their PD experiences and needs while in their mid and late-career (i.e. experienced) stages.

- Phase 2 integrated the findings from Phase 1 with a review of the current literature to develop questions for an online questionnaire.

At the commencement of this third phase of the research the emerging themes remained as previously stated. Experienced principals:

1.   relied less on the employer to provide their professional development.

2.   took greater ownership of their own professional development.

3.   reported structured, formal professional development programs less useful in the experienced stage of their career.

4.   reported involvement in internationalised professional development programs increased in the experienced stage of their career.

5.   remained unsure of the essential elements of their professional development programs.

6.   reported that interest in participation in mentoring, coaching, shadowing and networking continued throughout their career.

In response to some of the speculative questions generated in considering the outcome of Phase 1 and 2, Phase 3 of the study gathered data from follow-up in-depth individual interviews with a group of 30 purposively-chosen principals. The criteria for selection were gender, school setting, school classification and participation in internationalised professional development programs as outlined later in this chapter.

The interviews sought to further investigate the findings, issues and themes generated to date specifically from Phase 2 of the study, and to search for a deeper understanding of principals' perceptions of their professional development needs within local, national and globalised education communities. As an iterative study, the development and probing of themes occurred repeatedly, as indicated in Figure 8.1.

Figure 8.1: Flow chart showing the relationship between the findings and themes
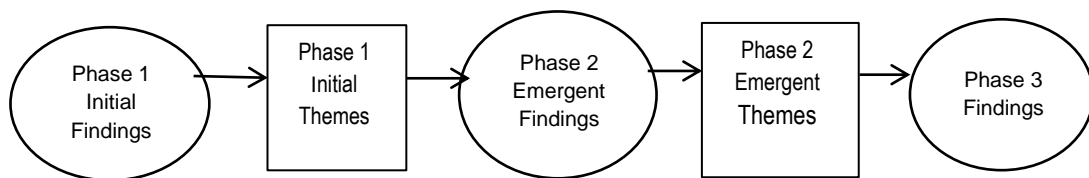
Establishing the phase 3 interviews

DEVELOPMENT OF THE INTERVIEW

The in-depth interviews contained eight questions developed from five emergent themes from Phase 2 (See Appendix 8.1 and 4.34). Participants received the interview questions prior to the interview. This gave principals time to consider the proposed questions and prepare responses as needed.

Open-ended questioning techniques employed for these interviews provided the interviewee with opportunities for deep discussion around each themed question. Designed to develop such discussion, the questions enabled the interviewee to respond individually (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The reflective nature of interview Questions #1 to #7 facilitated the respondents' retrospective meaning constructed from their experiences across a variety of professional learning activities (Maxwell, 2005).

An interview pro-forma guided each interview (Appendix 4.9) and supported the researcher in maintaining a consistent approach to each interview. Acting as a guide, the pro-forma facilitated

the sequencing of the interview questions and provided a record of additional probing questions and *memoing*. The use of *memoing* allowed the researcher to note reflections and follow-up actions as a result of the conversation (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The opportunity to ask probing questions during the in-depth interviews allowed the researcher to seek clarity or additional information in a response (Patton, 2002). As with the Phase 1 interviews the researcher again chose the semi-structured interview model (discussed earlier in Chapter 4).

The in-depth interviews

The collation of the dimensions and categories into emerging themes from Phase 2 (Appendix 4.11) facilitated the development of the interview questions linking them to the dimensions, categories, themes and item numbers (Appendix 4.12).

Two sub-groups were established within this purposively selected group, based on their participation or non-participation in internationalised PD. These were labelled, Sub-Group A and Sub-Group B. The questions became the standard set of questions (Appendix 8.2) for each interview. The interview questions for both Sub-Group A and Sub- Group B, remained the same, with the exception of one question. Sample Group B's questions included an additional question (Question #4b) which related to their participation in internationalised professional development programs (Table 8.1). The rationale underpinning the data description and interpretation of the Phase 3 interviews remained the same as with the Phase 1 interviews.

	INTERVIEW QUESTION
4.	*"Structured, formal PD programs: goal oriented; have intended outcomes; are relevant; have a framework; occur over time; have tasks set within the course of the program."* 4a: As an experienced principal, have *you personally* undertaken any structured, formal PD programs? Why/why not? 4b: As an experienced principal, have you been engaged in any internationalised PD programs? Can you please describe them for me: what did

	they look like? What, if any, were the outcomes for you; your staff; your school?

Table 8.1: Excerpt from Appendix 8.2 showing additional question relating to internationalised professional development

Validation through triangulation occurred between internationally and nationally renowned "experts" in the education field and the research findings to cross-check findings at the conclusion of the Phase 3 data analysis (Chapter 9). Triangulation, "seeks convergence, correspondence and corroboration of results from different methods" (Johnson & Christensen, 2014 p. 502).

PURPOSEFUL SELECTION OF INTERVIEWEES

Principals in this phase of the study were assured of the confidentiality of their responses and the process by which their identity would be concealed by the use of an individualised four-letter reference code (Appendix 8.3). The audio recorded interview transcriptions ensured the accuracy of the responses and the words used. The researcher chose topical organisation of the data record for this single case study (Merriam, 1998).

As mentioned, thirty principals were purposively selected for interview which represented a subset of the participants who completed the Phase 2 questionnaire; a nested relation (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The selection came from principals who volunteered when completing the Phase 2 questionnaire. The cohort consisted of two sub-groups. Sub-group A consisted of 16 principals who had not participated in internationalised professional development while sub-group B contained 14 principals who had participated in internationalised PD. The total interview cohort represented the Phase 2 cohort with regard to gender, geographical location and school classification/setting as shown in Tables 8.2 and 8.3.

Variable	Variable constant	Phase 2 participants	Phase 3 participants	NSWDEC total principal population
Gender	Male	43.54%	50%	45.4%
	Female	56.46%	50%	54.6%
Geographical Location	City	40.82%	43.3%	
	Urban	40.82%	40%	
	Rural	18.37%	16.7%	
School Classification	Primary	77.55%	80%	80.89%
	Secondary	22.45%	20%	19.11%

Table 8.2: Principal populations by location, gender and school classification

		No internationalised PD (Sub-group A)	Internationalised PD (Sub-group B)	TOTAL	%
Gender	Male	9	6	15	50
	Female	7	8	15	50
Sub Total		16	14	30	100
Geographical Location	City	5	8	13	43.3
	Urban	8	4	12	40
	Rural	3	2	5	16.7
Sub Total		16	14	30	100
School Classification	Primary	14	10	24	80
	Secondary	2	4	6	20
Sub Total		16	14	30	100

Table 8.3: Group A and B principal populations by gender, geographical setting and school classification

Additionally, the principals interviewed closely represented the total research project cohort with regard to years in the principalship (Figure 8.2).

Figure 8.2: Years in the principalship for the total cohort and Phase 3 interviews
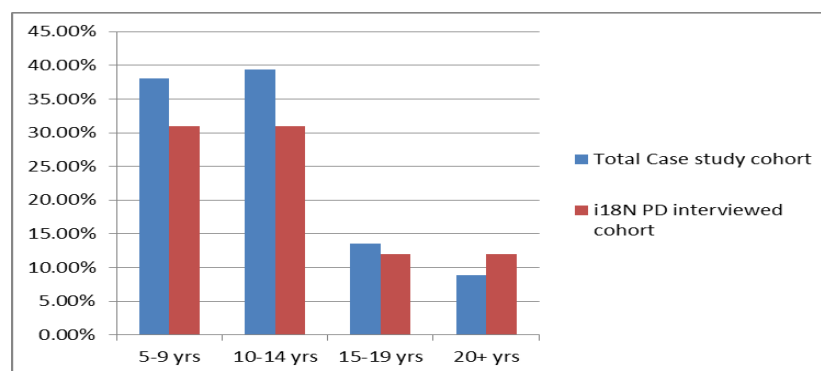
Findings and discussion

EMERGING THEME #1: EXPERIENCED PRINCIPALS TAKE OWNERSHIP OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND RELY LESS ON THE EMPLOYER TO PROVIDE THEIR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.

Five interview questions explored this theme (see Questions #2, #3, #5, #6 and #7, Appendix 8.1). From the analysis of the data five findings resulted (Table 8.4). For ease of referencing, the overall findings are once again presented first in this section followed by a comment.

Finding

Research Findings	
Phase 2 Emergent Theme	**Phase 3 Finding**
Emergent Theme #1: Experienced principals take ownership of their professional development and rely less on the employer to provide their professional development.	*Finding #1: Mid and late-career principals' PL needs changed as they gained more experience.*
	Finding #2: Experienced principals believed they had become more discerning in seeking quality, relevant and effective PD to match their needs.
	Finding #3: Experienced principals believed there was a void in available quality, relevant and effective PD to match this stage of their career.

	Finding #4: Experienced principals believed conferences provided quality, relevant and effective PD through networking opportunities.
	Finding #5: Experienced principals believe that in a 21st Century globalised education community quality, relevant and effective PD needed to focus especially on leadership and change management.

Table 8.4: Theme #1 Findings

Comment

When reflecting on the professional development accessed in the early years of their principalship, principals reported the need to constantly access the professional development available and provided to them by their employer. Twenty-five principals acknowledged a need to survive – to learn about "the nuts and bolts" of the role (Figure 8.3). This finding supported the initial finding from Phase 1.

Figure 8.3: Professional development for principals in their early years
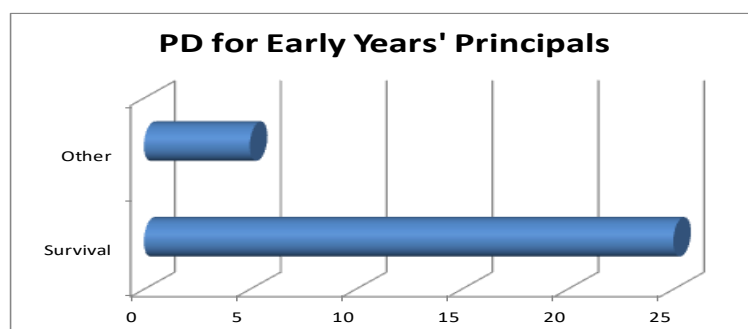
Principals said:

As an early years' principal, it is all about survival day to day (Male Primary Principal)

As a newly appointed principal it was all about compliance; all around those things needed to survive (Male Primary Principal)

When I first started as a principal it was all about systems: getting to know what the job was about; the function of the role; the mechanics; the nuts and bolts; knowing where things are; and what are the expectations (Male Primary Principal)

The focus then moved from their initial personal survival to broader professional development for both themselves and their staff. Once principals acquired the skills they perceived as necessary for survival, 100% of these principals claimed that their professional learning needs changed dramatically (Figure 8.4). Principals discriminated more in their selection of professional development activities in mid and late-career and emphatically reported that their professional learning needs changed across their career.

In the beginning, it's about orientation now it's about professional learning that intrigues me (Female Secondary Principal)

My learning needs are changing all the time now (Male Primary Principal)

Figure 8.4: PL needs change over time
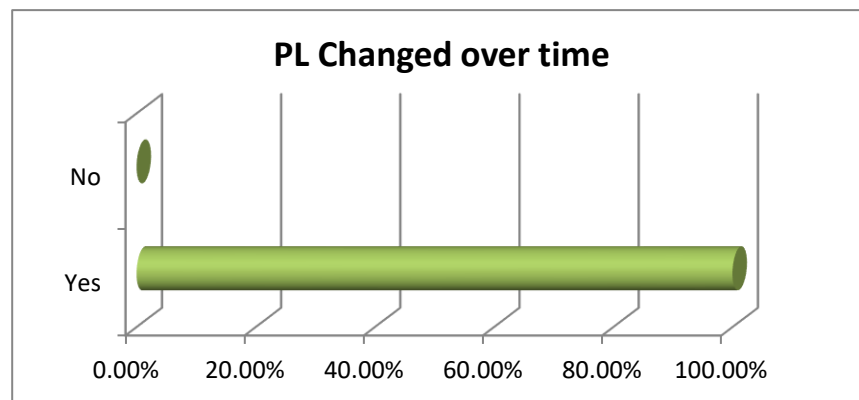
Principals also said:

You find yourself wandering a different path – it's almost like the grandfather thing where people almost expect you to have some knowledge and wisdom about things and I suppose in terms of your own professional growth you find yourself in positions where you are contributing in other ways to the principalship and education and so I think it leads you to a different learning path and a different way of reflecting on your professional goals and your growth needs (Male Primary Principal)

In the early years, you are looking for people to show you how to do it. Once you've been in a place for a long time and you get to know what you want to do – you design the 'how' (Female Secondary Principal)

Experienced principals (28) overwhelmingly reported consciously deciding on their choice of professional development (Figure 8.5). These principals observed that they were deliberately making choices about sourcing their professional development and taking responsibility for their professional learning. Principals reported the need to:

… focus on things I will get something out of (Female Primary Principal)

… pick and choose (Female Secondary Principal)

… take on more responsibility (Male Primary Principal)

… source my own learning (Male Primary Principal)

… be very discerning in the PD I go for now; I really only want top quality; I am very selective in what I'll do (Male Secondary Principal)

Figure 8.5: Professional development choices for experienced principals

EP are discerning in choice of PD

No	
Yes	

0   5   10   15   20   25   30
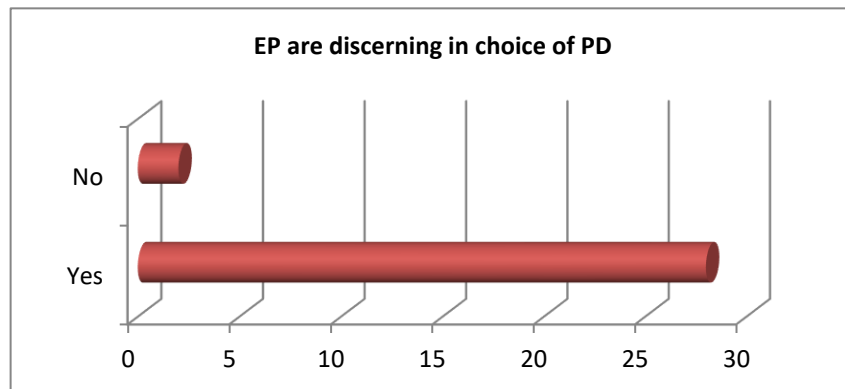
Although these experienced principals clearly indicated a desire to take responsibility to source their own professional development, two thirds (20) of the respondents also noted a lack of relevant and appropriate professional development available for them (Figure 8.6).

Figure 8.6: Experienced principals' perceptions of appropriate PD availability

Principals' perceived void in PD availability

No	
Yes	

0   5   10   15   20
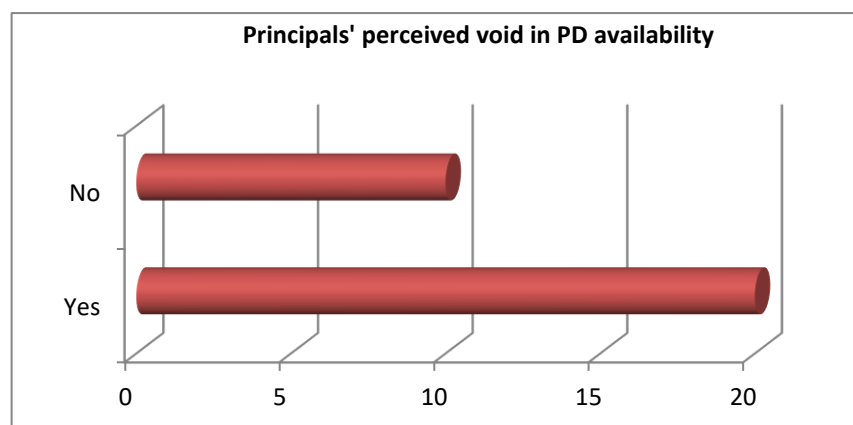
The following quotes typified comments:

There's a lot of training and development but not structured, formal PD (Female Primary Principal)

There's a void in terms of really rich purposeful professional development (Female Primary Principal)

There's very little for principals at my stage of development (Female Primary Principal)

In the last ten years particularly, I haven't seen any quality PD (Female Primary Principal)

In taking more responsibility for their own professional learning and exercising choice in their professional development, experienced principals reported an ongoing enthusiasm for the principalship and continued learning:

Provides me with that buzz of professional dialogue: I need an intellectual challenge (Female Primary Principal)

Most principals I work with want to be pushing the barriers/boundaries and seeing what's new. They don't want to just sit. I'm still learning stuff (Male Primary Principal)

I still get a real thrill about new ideas (Female Primary Principal)

I love the challenge of it and I've got a job that gives me excitement (Female Primary Principal)

In addition to remaining motivated to seek stimulating professional development for themselves these principals increasingly focused on the professional development needs of their staff:

The biggest change is having to worry about the professional needs of others and not my own (Male Primary Principal)

One of the joys at the moment is watching good people that I have mentored taking on responsibility (Male Secondary Principal)

That comes with being a principal over time – it's not all about me (Male Primary Principal)

When questioned about sourcing their professional development, 18 of the interviewed principals discussed their priority of ensuring the availability of appropriate professional development opportunities for their staff ahead of their own especially in leadership development and/or pedagogy (Figure 8.7).

Figure 8.7: Principals' prioritising staff PD in conjunction with Principal PD

Principal and Staff PD Priorities
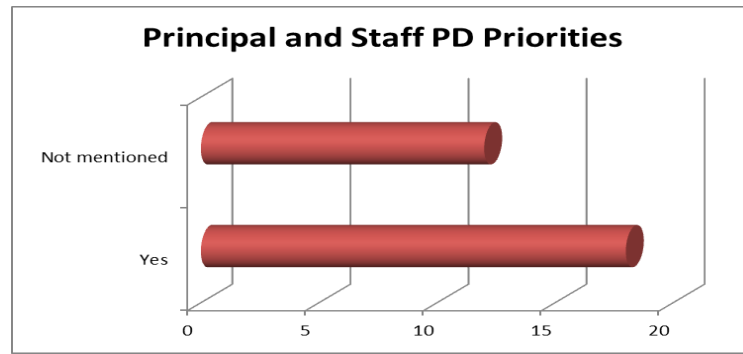
Analysis of the transcripts from the online questionnaire provided examples of PD activities that experienced principals claimed worked best for them. When discussing these activities, principals expressed a concern for the lack of appropriately structured, formal PD programs available to them at this stage of their career (further explored in Theme #2), and a strong desire for themselves and their staff, to attend conferences (Figure 8.8).

Principals discussed at length the main reason behind conference attendance: the opportunity to network. This issue is discussed further in Theme #5 later in this chapter.

Figure 8.8: PD that works best for experienced principals
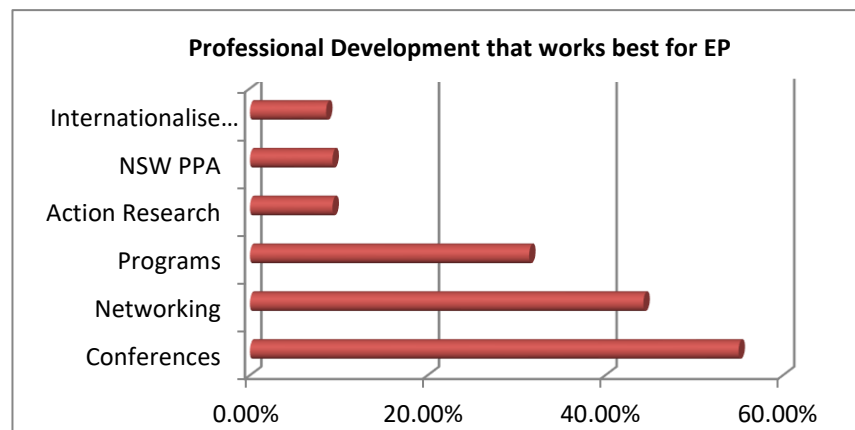
Professional Development that works best for EP

Like-minded people come together at a conference and so automatically network. Conferences connect people (Female Primary Principal)

Principal conferences are effective because you get a critical mass of principals together; a lot of networking opportunities goes along with that; you reconnect with colleagues (Male Primary Principal)

Two thirds of the experienced principals interviewed believed a void existed in available quality, relevant and effective professional development to match this stage of their career (Figure 8.6). Attendance at conferences was one option that sought to address that perceived void. This could also account for the low response rate for selection of 'programs' as a professional development option that worked best for them.

The analysis of the Phase 2 data indicated that males found it harder to source appropriate professional development. In discussion with the male principals these comments typify responses from them:

> *I don't think they cater for the experienced principals enough* (Male Primary Principal)

> *I am very discerning in the PD I go for; I really only want top quality; I am very selective in what I'll do* (Male Secondary Principal)

When asked if they would rank leadership and change management as priorities in their professional development, principals unanimously agreed (Figure 8.9). The issue around what that PD should look like is explored in Theme #4. Analysis of the Phase 2 data validates Finding #27.

Figure 8.9: Principals' professional development priorities
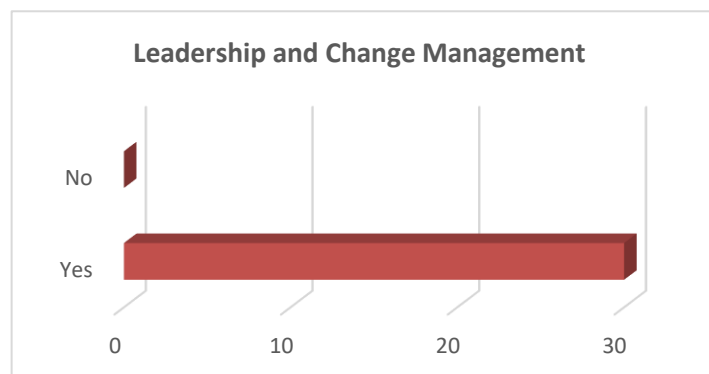
THEME #2: EXPERIENCED PRINCIPALS REPORT STRUCTURED, FORMAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS LESS USEFUL IN THE EXPERIENCED STAGE OF THEIR CAREER.

One question investigated this theme related to principals' experiences in structured, formal PD programs: Question #4a (Appendix 8.1). Findings #6 and #7 below emerged from the analysis of the data from this question (Table 8.5).

Research Finding	
Phase 2 Emergent Theme	**Phase 3 Finding**
Emergent Theme #2: Principals report structured formal PD programs less useful in the experienced stage of their career.	*Finding #6: Experienced principals exhibited high participation in available structured formal PD programs.*
	Finding #7: Experienced principals reported lower than expected satisfaction with the available structured formal PD programs.

Table 8.5: Theme #2 Findings #6 and #7

Comment

Prior to asking Question #4a, the researcher discussed the definition of what a "structured, formal professional development program" meant to them to achieve a mutually-agreed definition for the interview.

The proposed definition of a structured, formal professional development program, agreed to by every interviewed principal in both sub-groups A and B (Table 8.3), stated:

> *Structured, formal PD programs: are goal oriented; have intended outcomes; are relevant to the principal's current career stage; have a framework; occur over time; have tasks set within the course of the program.*

Although 97.2% of principals surveyed acknowledged engagement in structured, formal professional development programs throughout their career, the interviewed principals

described them as *"one size fits all".* This resulted in their overall rating of low satisfaction with

the programs available (Figure 8.10).

Figure 8.10: Comparison of the usefulness of structured, formal PD programs for NAP (newly-

appointed/early years' principals) and EP (experienced principals)
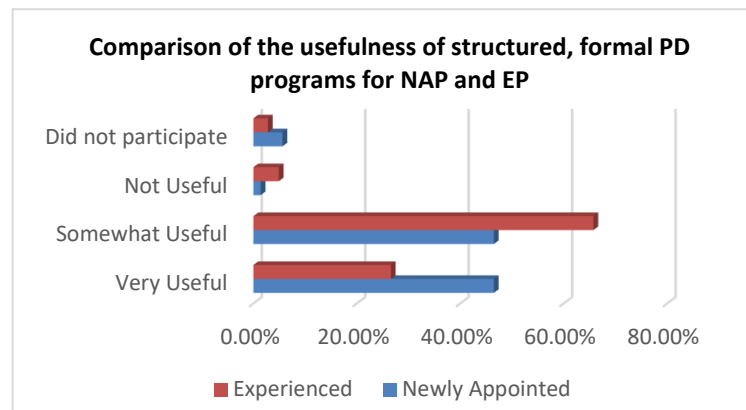
When discussing the satisfaction of engagement in these programs generally, the interviewed

principals measured the effectiveness of a program by:

> *…the long-term application of the new knowledge* (Female Primary Principal)

> *…a change in practice (*Female Primary Principal)

> *…using adult learning* (Female Primary Principal)

> *…applying that learning to other situations* (Male Primary Principal)

Overall, the low satisfaction rating resulted from principals' sense of a lack of effectiveness of

the programs available and lack of engagement felt at the time of program participation. The

trend towards higher levels of dissatisfaction across the principalship as indicated in Figure 8.11

found the 15-19 years' band 'out of step' again.

Figure 8.11: Satisfaction in structured, formal PD programs for experienced principals by years in the principalship
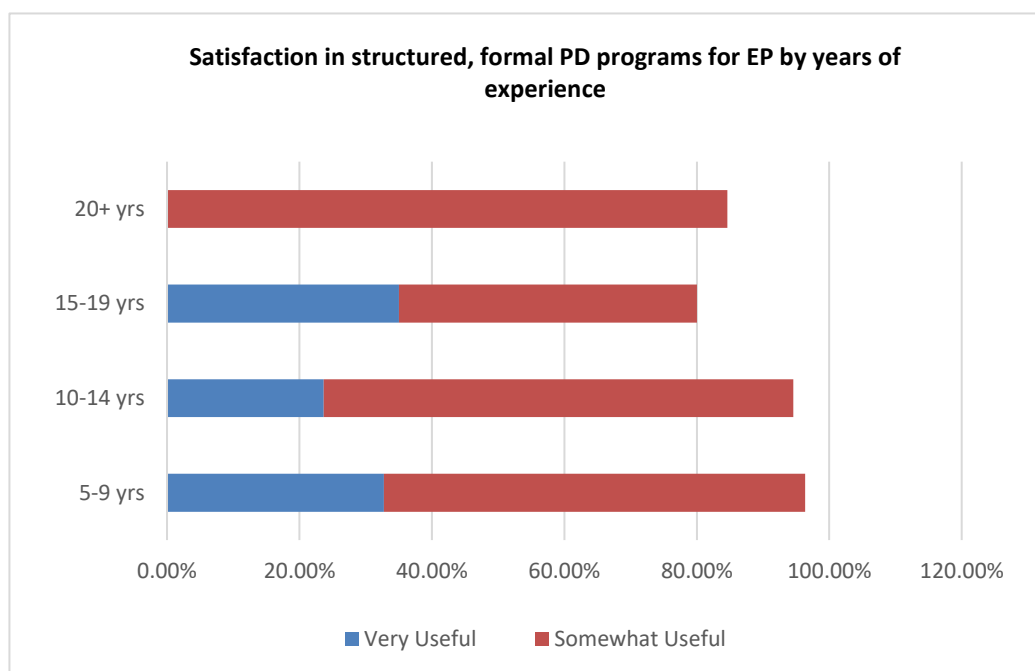
Analysis of the languaged interview data revealed that participation in any effective structured, formal PD programs was measured by any resulting change in practice. Female principals appeared more positive in their reflections on any PD program they had engaged in. They felt that the usefulness lay in its activities and relevance.

> *The program was effective because it linked theory to practice. There were tasks; it was research based; it was user friendly; and the school context was understood* (Female Primary Principal)

> *I think it was the framework; it occurred over time; the tasks weren't formalised written tasks; content was of genuine interest to me; it was knowledge I didn't have and it met a need within the school but it also met a need for me personally* (Female Primary Principal)

> *Principals are very busy people and if you design a learning process that is efficient; is intellectually rigorous and based on really good theory and practice then that's what you want to get out of it* (Female Secondary Principal)

Having established that a majority of these principals perceived a void in the availability of professional development tailored to the needs of the experienced principal (Figure 8.4) 5% of respondents indicated they would readily engage in such programs if available and relevant to their age and stage in the principalship (Figure 8.12).

Figure 8.12: Engagement in structured, formal PD programs if available
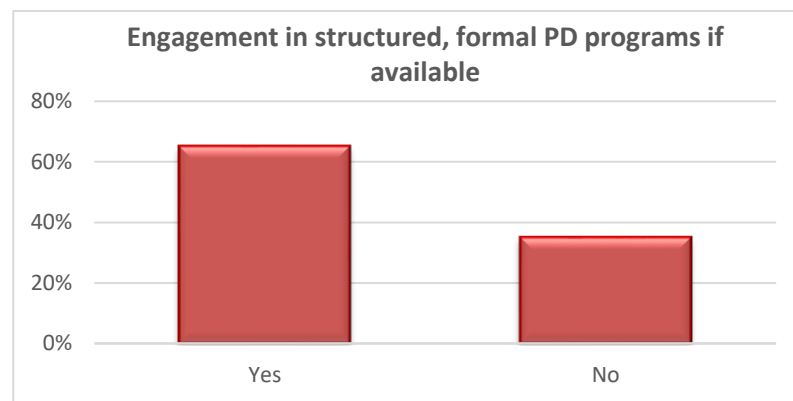
I would like to engage in more structured, formal PD programs (Female Primary Principal)

I would jump in (Male Primary Principal)

If it grabbed me – I would – something that really interested me (Female Secondary Principal)

THEME #3: EXPERIENCED PRINCIPALS' INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONALISED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS INCREASES IN THE EXPERIENCED STAGE OF THEIR CAREER.

Principals' responses in the Phase 2 questionnaire indicated significant interest and participation in internationalised professional development programs. Question #4b (Appendix 8.1) investigates principals' engagement in internationalised professional development programs. Finding #8 emerged from the analysis of the data from this question (Table 8.6).

Research Findings	
Phase 2 Emergent Theme	**Phase 3 Finding**
Emergent Theme #3: Experienced principals' involvement in internationalised PD programs increases in the experienced stage of their career.	*Finding #8: Experienced principals believed participation in internationalised PD is essential for leadership in the current globalised education community.*

Table 8.6: Theme #3 Finding #8

Comment

This question was presented to sub-groups A and B principals. Only sub-group B were asked probing questions related to the perceived value of participation in internationalised professional development programs. The majority (80%) of the interviewed principals (sub-groups A and B) supported the concept of participation in internationalised professional development programs as essential in today's education climate (Figure 8.13).

Figure 8.13: Internationalised PD programs' support
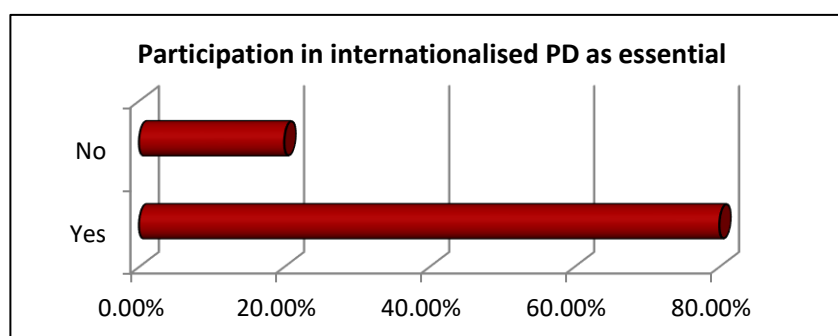
A majority of the principals pointed to the importance of increasing their knowledge of global trends and practices in education.

> *Main one* (outcome) *is just the engagement – keeping interested and keeping aware of trends around the world. You talk about specific programs and you pick up specific tips. There's the 'craft' there* (Male Secondary Principal)
>
> *Global change facilitates local change. I am a bower bird so I pick up ideas from all over the place* (Male Secondary Principal)
>
> *The experiences of travelling overseas and connecting with international colleagues is fantastic as it broadens your horizons and then you come back and try things* (Female Primary principal)

Some 50.7% of principals not currently engaging in internationalised professional development programs supported participation in internationalised PD. The remaining 49.3% cited lack of financial support, family circumstances, or other personal reasons prohibiting engagement in internationalised PD.

*Wouldn't that be awesome? That would be fantastic! I love the concept and I'd love to do an international study tour (*Female Primary Principal)

Figure 8.14 illustrates principals' reflections on participation in internationalised professional development programs.

Figure 8.14: Support for participation in internationalised PD programs
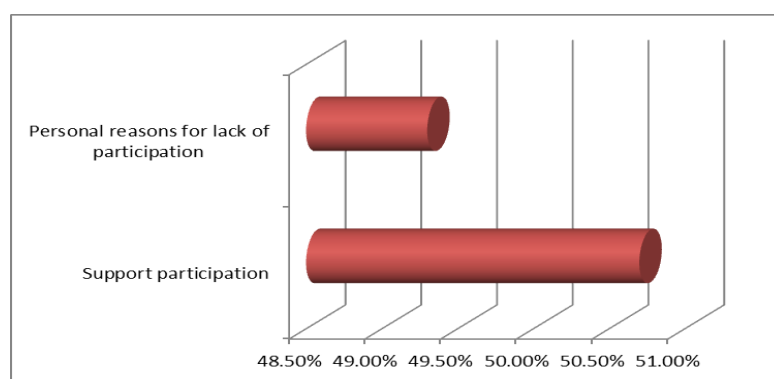
I think it is incredibly important. I do think it's absolutely vital simply because it all inter-links. You have to be aware of what's out there (Female Primary Principal)

It's not just about your own little network anymore – it's global or "glocal" or whatever you want to call it (Female Primary Principal)

It's critical – having been through it, it is a critical professional learning strategy (Male Primary Principal)

Analysis of the Phase 2 data showed that engagement in internationalised professional development programs increased across the experienced stage of the principalship (Figure 9.16). Analysis of the Phase 3 data gave greater insight into why experienced principals engage in this type of professional development: they saw it as essential PD in a 21st Century globalised world (Figure 8.15).

Figure 8.15: Engagement in internationalised PD across the experienced stage of the principalship
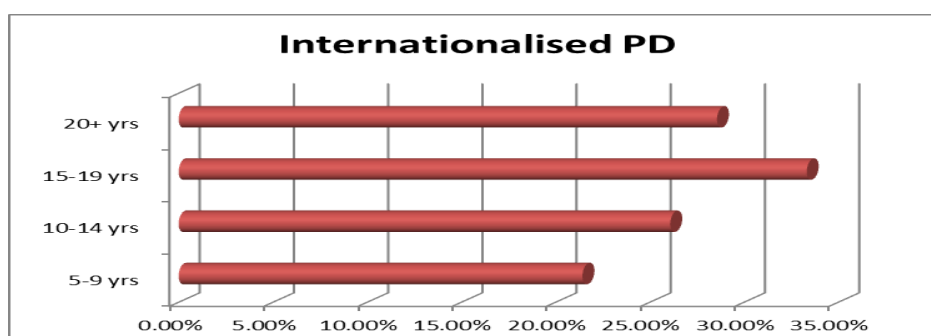
Some principals participated in conventional study tours while others engaged in a peer-shadowing experience with an international colleague on their school site. These principals reported that the experience of school visitations internationally provided unique opportunities for deep professional dialogue and shared-reflection.

> (Peer shadowing) *…being immersed in someone else's job – there are so many things that are universal; conversations; dialogue; reflections; I think that the most powerful thing about it was the shared-reflections – positive and negative* (Female Primary Principal)

> *Peer shadowing…the questions are huge with regard to the shared-reflection; internationalised professional development provides the opportunity to gain big picture knowledge* (Female Primary Principal)

> *What was really good was that it wasn't just the school and the educational programs which were amazing she (my international colleague) took me to see a variety of school communities* (Female Primary Principal)

> (When she visited me)…*She shadowed me and we exchanged ideas.* (When I visited her school)*...I had the chance to talk to other people I wouldn't normally talk to. It was really good* (Male Primary Principal)

Principals' involvement in internationalised professional development among this cohort included engagement in the following programs:

- Auckland (New Zealand) action research

- Leading Educators Around the Planet (LEAP) Program, Canada, United Kingdom, Finland, United State of America

- Korean Cultural Exchange Program

- International Confederation of Principals Conferences held in overseas locations

- International school visitation programs with Japan; Denmark; Holland; Alabama, Chicago, New York (USA); Malaysia; Bhutan; Borneo; UK; Burma; Bangladesh

- International Research Programs

- China visitation programs

- Churchill Research Fellowships

Many of the sub-group B principals possessed a portfolio of internationalised professional development experiences that included involvement in more than one of the programs listed above. Reasons cited for looking to participate in internationalised professional development opportunities included:

For me it's the broadening of your view – it's shown me other ways of doing things (Male Secondary Principal)

You grow current practice from what is happening overseas. Global change facilitates local change (Male Secondary Principal)

Internationalised programs provide a deeper knowledge and understanding (Male Primary Principal)

When reflecting on the effect of their participation in the internationalised professional development programs principals reported:

I think that the most powerful thing about it was the shared-reflections - positive and negative (Female Primary Principal)

The welcomeness of the educational community world-wide is just outstanding. It makes you reflect and share your own expertise (Male Primary Principal)

The reinvigoration and the enthusiasm that I got from that was amazing and we are still doing things (Female Primary Principal)

Participation internationalised PD is critical – it is a critical strategy. Internationalised PD provides a deeper knowledge and understanding (Male Primary Principal)

It's not just about our own little network any more – it's global or glocal or whatever you want to call it. It's so easy to tap into other things – the technology helps us (Female Primary Principal)

These experienced principals saw themselves as principals of schools in a globalised education community as well as in the NSW DE community.

THEME #4: EXPERIENCED PRINCIPALS REMAIN UNSURE OF THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS REQUIRED IN THEIR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.

One question (Question #8; Appendix 8.1) explored this theme. It sought to have principals reflect deeply on previous professional development and professional learning experiences to

determine what worked for them. These reflections guided their answer in response to a question that required them to design a model for a professional development program in which their experienced colleagues might engage. Findings #9, #10 and #11 emerged from the analysis of data from this question (Table 8.7).

Research Finding	
Phase 2 Emergent Theme	**Phase 3 Finding**
Emergent Theme #4: Experienced principals remain unsure of the essential elements required in their PD programs.	*Finding #9: Experienced principals believed current structured formal programs lacked networking and shared-reflection as integral components.* *Finding #10: Experienced principals believed they know and can recognise quality, relevant and effective PD.* *Finding #11: Experienced principals believed all quality, relevant and effective PL should involve networking, shared-reflection and active learning.*

Table 8.7: Theme #4 Findings #9, #10 and #11

Comment

During Phases 1 and 2 principals found difficulty in articulating perceived essential elements of professional development programs for themselves. As part of piloting the questions for the Phase 3 interviews, the Principals had to:

> "… design a professional development program for your experienced principal colleagues - drawing from your past professional learning and PD experiences. What would it include?"

The activity required participants to manipulate eight stimulus cards. The concepts on the stimulus cards were sourced both from the literature review and from the content of the responses to open-ended questions in the online questionnaire. The stimulus cards read:

1. Framework
2. Data
3. Shadowing
4. Reflection

5. Timeframe
6. Tasks
7. Action Research
8. Networking

The principals could either: (1) use those cards exclusively; (2) use those cards in addition to composing ones of their own; or (3) create cards of their own excluding the supplied ones.

Using these cards principals designed and described a professional development program for their experienced colleagues. After manipulating their cards into the desired formation, the interviewees then explained their model taking a linear or more wholistic approach. This open-ended question provided great scope for experienced principals to bring their accumulated PL experiences and perceived professional development needs to the interview question.

Principals initially felt this question challenging and potentially difficult to answer. However, once involved in manipulating the cards and narrating their proposed program model their opinion changed:

> *I thought this would be really hard but I really enjoyed it. That's clever. I hadn't thought about this, but these are good. When I start to think it through and start to write, then it becomes a bit of a planner. Can I take a photo of my model?* (Female Secondary Principal)

> *This has been great. When did anyone talk to me about my professional development and what I would like?* (Female Primary Principal)

The opportunity to talk about the essential elements of a professional development program designed specifically for experienced principals opened up a rich and deep discussion. As principals talked through their models for a PD program for experienced principals their enthusiasm grew:

> *I can't remember the last time I had the opportunity to talk about this. This is great!* (Female Primary Principal)

This question provided a professional learning opportunity on its own:

> *Having a discussion gets you thinking: I have really enjoyed that and liked it* (Female Primary Principal)

Most significantly, principals elected reflection (93.3%) and networking (87%) as two of the most essential components of their professional development program. Other essential elements included the use of school data (70%), a framework (73%), and tasks (Figure 8.16).

Figure 8.16: Essential elements of a PD program designed by experienced principals for experienced principals
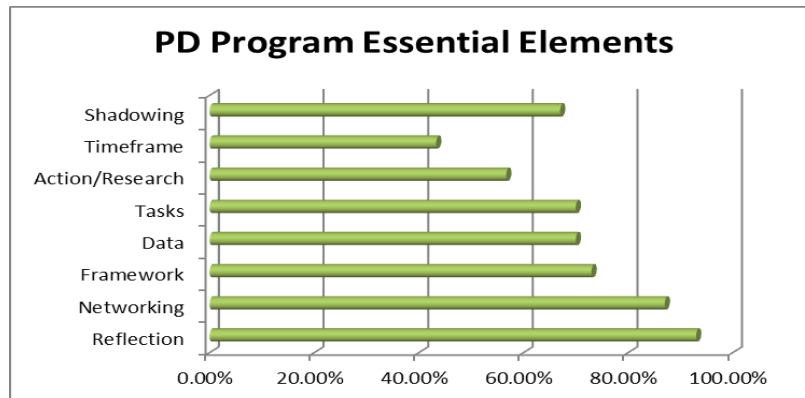
Drilling down further into the data to determine whether or not principals who elect to stay on past their nominated retirement date look for the same essential elements to the same degree, showed some marked similarities and differences (Figure 8.17). While principals who stay on significantly value reflection and networking, the biggest differences centred on the use of shadowing and the inclusion of tasks.

Figure 8.17: Essential elements of PD programs for staying-on principals
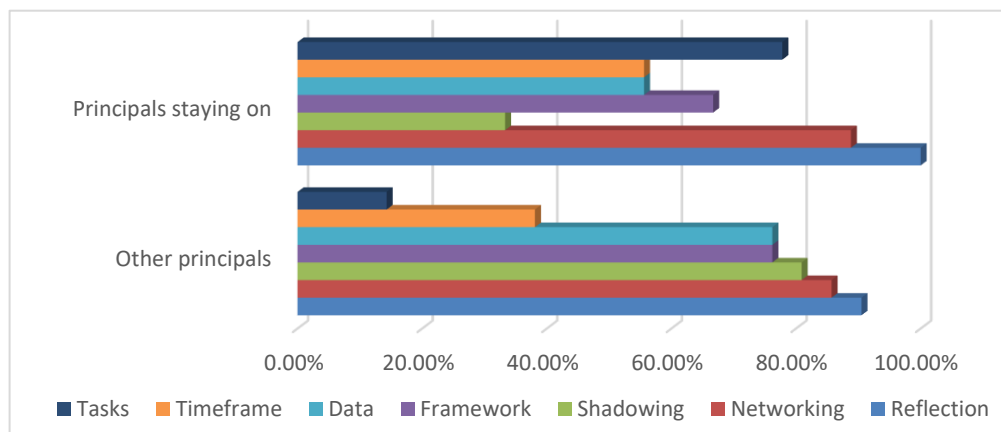
Reflection

Research into the significance of reflection in an individual's professional learning abounds (see for instance Zepeda et al., 2014; Drago-Severson, 2012; Dalgic & Bakioglu, 2014; Evans, 2009) These researchers affirm the importance of reflection in professional learning opportunities and

state that it requires additional research. This study further shows that principals believe strongly in the importance of shared-reflection as integral to their professional development and as a continuous practice with colleagues through networking and network learning.

> *Reflection is in everything I do. Reflection time I create during my week when I swim and walk* (Female Primary Principal)

> *I do a lot of self-reflection. I think also that with reflection you pre-empt what will occur. Reflection makes you stronger* (Female Primary Principal)

> *Reflections are crucial in the principalship* (Male Secondary Principal)

> (During our peer-shadowing experience)*…at night time we would reflect together on the day – we would sit up until 10 or 11 with a glass of wine and the heater, chatting, talking, mulling things over – that's the richness. The rich conversations; the best PD you can get* (Female Primary Principal)

Principals reported that their reflections occurred in different ways (shared-reflection and self-reflection) and encompassed a wide range of topics that included both management and leadership issues, the sharing of practice and site-specific contextual issues.

> *I think the shared-reflection is the most powerful thing. You end up having really rich conversations – and you really analyse everything you do; reflecting on why you do things and then having to explain it* (Female Primary Principal)

> *Reflection is different for everybody* (Male Primary Principal)

> *I could reflect on my own practice in the exposure to someone else's practice during our peer-shadowing program. It was shared reflection with a trusted colleague* (Female Secondary Principal)

Principals in this study expressed a need for shared-reflection (and networking) to also occur in their professional development programs:

> *To reflect with colleagues of the same mindset in networking; feedback and what's happening and what does it mean to my school and my students* (Female Primary Principal)

> *Needs to allow sharing with other experienced principals; you need to connect people with each other: you need reflection together* (Male Primary Principal)

> *Sustained conversations and shared-reflection are important* (Female Primary Principal)

> *Me, personally, I will be learning from my experienced colleagues and talking about my site* (Female Primary Principal)

> *Shared-reflection is a result of networking* (Male Primary Principal)

These principals expressed the need to develop relationships with their colleagues in the pursuit of their professional development. They did not feel that engaging in stand-alone online modules met their professional development needs.

<u>Networking</u>

The importance of social networks in developing and supporting leadership now appears prominent in education (Couto, 2010). Networks form for different reasons occurring both formally and informally. Principals reported that networks that were developed came through social, academic, professional association, geographic location or needs-based connections with other principals. They provided essential, "just-in-time; just-for-me" professional learning. Experienced principals felt that:

> *Networking is essential and integral to our job* (Male Primary Principal)
>
> *You have to use them – it's really important to develop those networks so you have someone to call when you need immediate assistance* (Female Primary Principal)
>
> *The older I become and the more experience I have, the more people I network with becomes more powerful* (Female Primary Principal)

They also felt that the principalship is unlike the middle executive roles they had held previously. Prior to entering the principalship middle executives and teachers in schools were not isolated but existed in numbers on site. Once they became a principal they felt the isolation that came with the role and so developed networks to support them and to further their professional learning.

> *The principalship is isolating so you reach out to all these other people* (Female Primary Principal)
>
> *The more experienced I become, the more I network* (Female Primary Principal)
>
> *You need someone to talk to about issues – even as an experienced principal* (Male Primary Principal)

Principals reported engagement in a variety of different networks. These networks appear to be self-managed, self-directed and developed through attendances at conferences, participation in

internationalised professional development programs, local professional associations and with local, geographically-placed colleagues.

School data & frameworks

Existing research acknowledges the importance of the use of data and frameworks in the development and analysis of professional development programs (Peterson, 2002; Kennedy, 2005; Darling-Hammond 2006; Dempster & Beere, 1996). Recent research supports the important role the use of data plays in every aspect of education (Hattie, 2009; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012) from leading student achievement to school planning, pedagogy, leadership and school effectiveness.

Principals felt that:

> *Collecting, understanding an analysing the data is essential. Everything we do has to be evidence based* (Male Primary Principal)
>
> *I need the cycle. I need data. You need a framework for what you are going to do. Frameworks need to be adjusted as you reflect and see* (Female Primary Principal)
>
> *The conversations would need some data: qualitative and quantitative. Send it to a colleague to help reflect on it – clarifying questions* (Female Secondary Principal)

Shadowing & tasks

Polite, McClure and Rollie (1997) pointed to the significance of the professional learning gained from experienced principals' engagement in peer shadowing; that is, shadowing a colleague of similar principalship experience. Participation in principal peer-shadowing produces an extremely positive result with high value placed on the opportunity to engage in shared-reflection on practice, while engaging in deep discussion with a trusted principal colleague (Barnett, 2007; Barnett, 2001; Polite et al., 1997; Brady, 1994). This relationship-based learning builds on mutual trust, credibility and respect.

Interviewed experienced principals reported:

Being immersed in someone else's job – there are so many things that area universal; conversations; dialogue; shared-reflections; I think that the most powerful thing about it were the shared-reflections – positive and negative (Female Primary Principal)

The questions are huge with regard to the shared-reflection; internationalised (peer) *shadowing provides the opportunity to gain big picture knowledge* (Female Primary Principal)

It was beneficial because the questions we asked each other actually prompted shared-reflection on your practice – compared things across systems and in different countries. You are actually digging deep into your actions and beliefs. Very beneficial (Male Primary Principal)

These principals reported that visitations to local, national or international colleagues' schools rarely happened unless it was part of a program. They felt that the busyness of the role often precluded their shadowing visitations but felt that the experience, once achieved, was extremely beneficial to their professional learning. The visitations developed their networks and offered opportunities for professional dialogue and shared reflection.

I could reflect on my own practice in the exposure to someone else's practice (Female Secondary Principal)

It involves a lot of shared-reflection – it's the sharing and the collection of evidence that's really interesting (Male Primary Principal)

Networking – is absolutely vital. We have lots of different networks. Can always rely on the networks (Male Secondary Principal)

Active learning

An abundance of research exists supporting the effectiveness of active participation in professional learning programs (Zepeda et al., 2014; AITSL, 2014b; Ehrich & Hansford, 2006; Scott, 2003; Guskey, 2002; Dempster, 2001). Active participation involves engagement in tasks. Principals reported that their ideal PD program would contain active learning tasks that:

…are site relevant; meaningful; and address my needs (Male Primary Principal)

…give a suite of options; gives choices (Male Primary Principal)

…include networking/shadowing; conversations, shared-reflection. Three things that go together here: the tasks you set yourself to do to test your theory; networking/ shadowing; and critical friends to talk to (Female Secondary Principal)

…include practical and realistic workshops (Male Secondary Principal)
…include action research; shadowing; shared-reflection; and networking (Female Primary Principal)

Action research appeals to experienced principals because it links research with practice, is cyclical in nature and provides active learning that is relevant and site-based. They take responsibility for their professional learning and self-manage the project - sometimes working with colleagues from neighbouring schools.

I think the whole way people view PL and quality PL has changed and so much more of it now involves action research (Male Primary Principal)

Action research broadened me (Male Primary Principal)

I do like the notion of action research (Female Secondary Principal)

We have a really strong group of high school principals in this area. You have the opportunity to have a conversation with your colleagues which tends to lead you down the pathway of thinking about your own context and your own projects. (Female Secondary Principal)

THEME #5: EXPERIENCED PRINCIPALS' INTEREST IN MENTORING, COACHING, SHADOWING AND NETWORKING CONTINUES THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREER.

While interview Question #1 (Appendix 8.1) investigated this theme, data from the responses to Questions #4, #5 and #6 also contributed to this analysis. From the data analysis of these responses four findings (#12, #13, #14 and #15) emerged (Table 8.8).

Research Findings	
Phase 2 Emergent Theme	**Phase 3 Findings**
Emergent Theme #5: Principals' interest in participation in mentoring, coaching, shadowing and networking continues throughout their career.	*Finding #12: Experienced principals reported high engagement and high satisfaction when their PL included networking, shared-reflection and active learning.*
	Finding #13: Experienced principals believed 'networking' to be a far more important component of quality, relevant and effective PL than has been recognised in the past.

	Finding #14: Experienced principals believed 'networking' to be defined by the inclusion of deep discussions; rich conversations; shared-reflection on practice; problem solving; sharing best practice; collaborative discussions that occur in open shared relationships characterised by mutual deep trust.
	Finding #15: Experienced principals believed that mentoring was less important at this stage of their career (than in early years).

Table 8.8: Theme #5- Findings #12, #13, #14 and #15

Comment

As a result of asking Question #4 the researcher found that responses to this question also linked to Initial Theme #4. This question aimed to determine the degree of engagement in structured, formal PD programs, both locally and internationally. The responses supported the significance of peer-shadowing, shared-reflection and networking and the emergence of an additional finding: Finding #9 (Experienced principals believed current structured formal programs lacked networking and shared-reflection as integral components).

Interview question #6 investigated whether or not principals' professional learning needs changed across their career. Experienced principals categorically stated that their PL needs do indeed change as outlined in Finding #1 (Table 8.3). The need to engage in leadership development prioritised engagement in the professional development activities of conferences, networking, structured formal PD programs, action research and participation in internationalised professional development (Figure 8.18). Each of these professional development activities provided an opportunity for leadership development.

Figure 8.18: Portfolio of PD sought by experienced principals

Professional development principals now seek

Category	Approximate %
Internationalised PD	~13%
Research based PL	~20%
Structured, formal programs	~13%
Networking	~20%
Conferences	~13%
Leadership	~32%

(Bar chart with horizontal axis: 0.00% 5.00% 10.00% 15.00% 20.00% 25.00% 30.00% 35.00%)
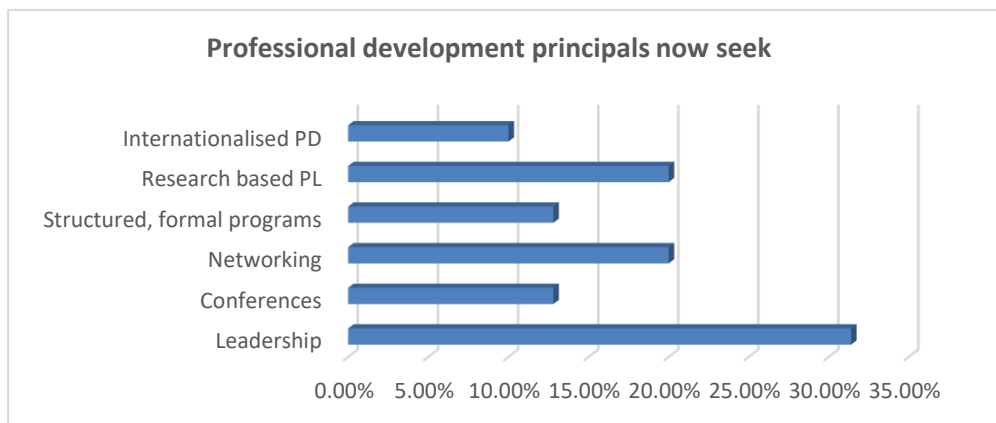
While shadowing has already been discussed in this chapter, experienced principals' interest in mentoring, coaching and networking is elaborated on below.

Mentoring

While 78.17% principals reported engaging in mentoring as a mentee during their early years (Figure 8.19), currently 66% of experienced principals engaged in mentoring relationships (Figure 8.21).

Figure 8.19: Engagement in mentoring for early years or newly-appointed principals (NAP)

NAP engagement in mentoring

Category	Approximate %
Very/somewhat useful	~75%
Not useful	~5%
Did not participate	~23%

(Bar chart with horizontal axis: 0.00% 20.00% 40.00% 60.00% 80.00%)
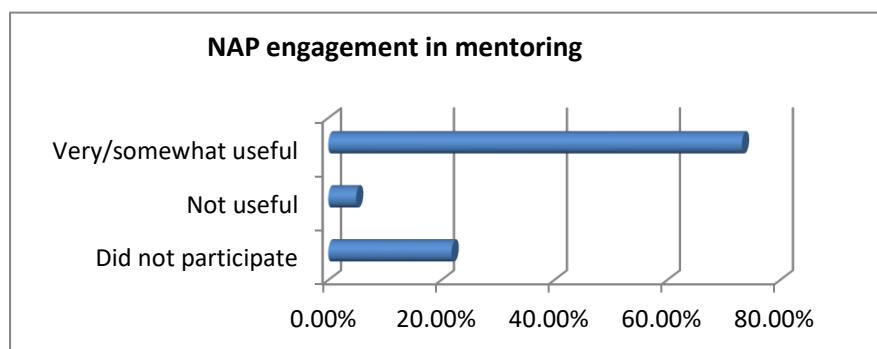
I was mentored formally and most deliberately in my early school leadership time. I think it is a really powerful form of professional learning and growth (Male Primary Principal)

Over 60% of experienced principals reported engagement in mentoring to some degree as either a mentor or mentee (Figure 8.20). About 33% of experienced principals felt that mentoring was not a learning strategy in which they wished to engage at this stage of their career.

Figure 8.20: Experienced principals (EP) current involvement in mentoring

Current engagement in mentoring for experienced principals

No

Yes

0   20   40   60   80
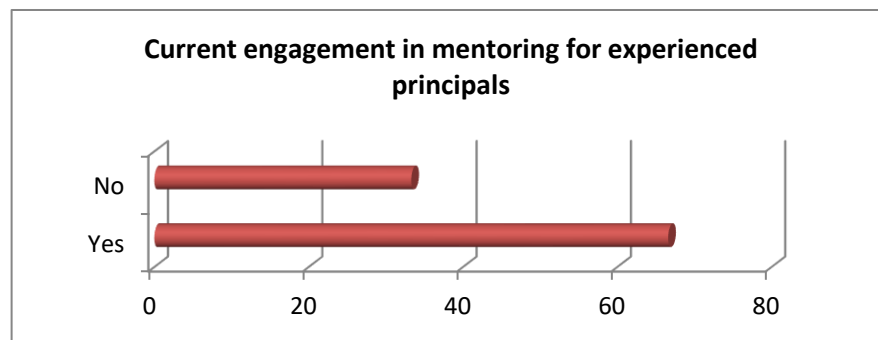
I'd like to spend time with someone who is going to change my thinking rather than someone that is going to change my processes (Female Secondary Principal)

There's a trust and relationship that facilitates discussions (Female Secondary Principal)

Some very experienced principals now look to develop relationships with mentors or critical

friends who are also outside the field of education.

My mentors are now people who are not in education. I am being informally mentored by the Chair of ACER. What I have found is that the mentoring I am involved in now is much more to do with the broader issues of social policy and strategic partnershipping. So, I'm still being mentored because these are fields that are new to me – but educationally very few people offer to mentor me any longer (Female Secondary Principal)

I am guided by someone outside education. Experienced principals don't want to be told how to do it. They are often the ones who get into trouble for failing to follow procedure. They want to design a 'how' that works for their context but they are never averse to getting a new idea or new way of thinking about something – if they have an open mindset (Female Secondary Principal)

I certainly have colleagues I draw upon. One of them is probably not a mentor but the closest colleague I have – to bounce, sort, put my words into thoughts. A critical friend is probably how I would describe her (Male Primary Principal)

Further investigation revealed that 70% of interviewed principals engaged in mentoring less

experienced principal colleagues, both formally and informally (Figure 8.21). Some experienced

principals were approached by less experienced colleagues while others were invited to become

involved in mentoring programs by their supervising officer.

Figure 8.21: Experienced principals mentoring less experienced principals
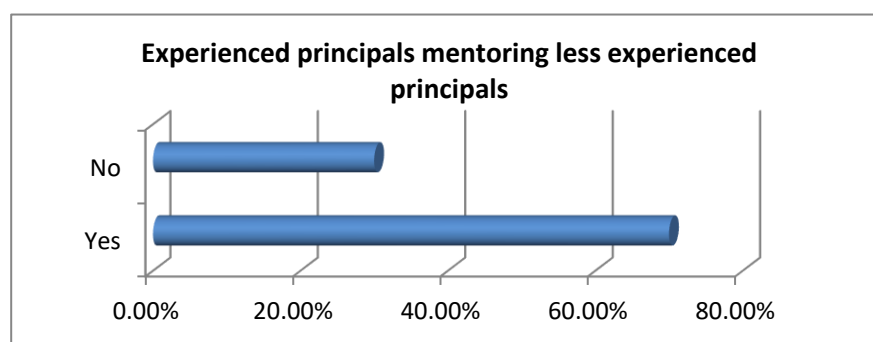
A lot expect me to mentor them formally and informally every day (Female Secondary Principal)

I have been asked to mentor less experienced principals by my Director (Female Primary Principal)

This supports existing research with experienced principals called upon to mentor or act as professional companions for aspirant and early years' principals (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004; Dempster et al., 2011; Degenhardt, 2013; Fluckiger et al., 2014; Turnbull et al., 2015). This study pointed to the value seen by experienced principals in such supportive and developmental activities.

Coaching

Analysis of the data from an open-ended question in Phase 2 of this study, showed that over 30% of experienced principals would like to access coaching to lead them through the current systemic changes (Figure 6.42).

For my principalship I have worked with a principal for a week every term: he comes to my school and works with me and my executive and asks me really hard questions. You could call him my coach. He pushes me to say why I made my decisions. He's never been a principal – he's actually an academic and a consultant. (Female Primary Principal)

Coaching would be very relevant for me today (Male Primary Principal)

One of my goals is around instructional leadership – coaching would benefit me. I feel confident enough now to accept coaching (Male Secondary Principal)

Coaching is so crucial in the new model – it is an area I want to develop. Coaching helps you sustain the practices. Being coached is fantastic – it is changing my practice (Female Primary Principal)

While an analysis of responses relating to networking, reflection, and shadowing occurred earlier in this chapter, the significance of networking in principals' professional development necessitates its mention here as well:

> *The rich conversations – the best PD you can get* (Female Primary Principal)
>
> *It was beneficial because the questions we asked each other actually prompted shared-reflection on your practice. You are actually digging deep into your actions and beliefs* (Male Primary Principal)

The Phase 3 Question #5 allowed the researcher to further investigate the reasons behind the significance of conferences in principals' professional development (Figure 8.22). The richness of the responses to this question provided the researcher with an insight into this issue.

Figure 8.22*:* PD that has worked best and PD that they now seek
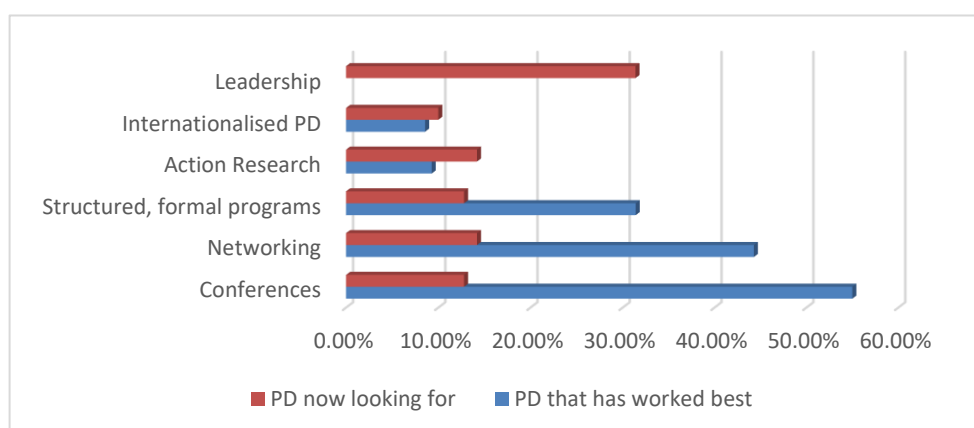
While the discussion initially centred on inspirational speakers, gaining access to new ideas and the provision of "one-off" PL experiences, it then focused on "the collegiality" at conferences (female primary principal) and "opportunities to build relationships" (male primary principal) which "gives value to attending conferences" (male primary principal). The opportunity of engaging in networking appears to be the catalyst for conference attendance with 80% of principals acknowledging the importance of attending conferences to establish, extend and maintain networks (Figure 8.23).

Figure 8.23: Conferences offer opportunities to network
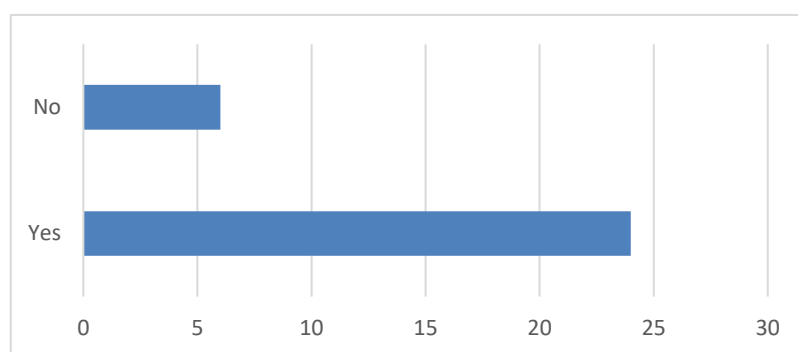
The interviewed principals reported the importance of their experiences in networking at conferences:

> *There's nothing like being a principal: the collegiality at that level - you don't understand until you are in it. It is so powerful, so strong* (Female Primary Principal)
>
> *You have the opportunity to have a conversation with your colleagues which tends to lead you down the pathway of thinking about your own context. It allows you to clarify your thoughts; to reflect with a colleague* (Female Primary Principal)
>
> *When you have rich conversations with colleagues – that's the best PD you can get* (Female Primary Principal)
>
> *Reflection is difficult to do on your own – you need that discussion: shared-reflection* (Male Primary Principal)

Summary

This chapter has outlined the findings from Phase 3 of the study. Chapter 9 which follows summarises the key findings from Phases 1, 2 and 3 of the study and proposes a means of further triangulating them.

CHAPTER 9

SUMMARY AND TRIANGULATION OF KEY FINDINGS

Introduction

This study investigated the professional development needs of experienced principals as indicated by the research question:

> *"What kinds of professional development activities do principals in the experienced stage of their careers value as significant contributors to their professional learning?"*

This chapter summarises each of the key research findings developed iteratively through Phases 1, 2 and 3 of the study. It links them with the set of research questions outlined at the commencement of the study. The key research findings are distilled from the 34 findings that emerged from the study.

Given that the findings emerged from the views of principals themselves, a form of triangulation was used to gain further insights into and, where possible, validate each of the research findings. The form of triangulation utilised was "expert opinion". Four acknowledged experts in the field of educational leadership were asked to comment from their perspective on the relevance and accuracy of the findings drawing on their own knowledge, experience and studies into the PL needs of experienced principals. These four experts were drawn either from research or administration backgrounds (Merriam, 1998).

Key Research Findings

Table 9.1 below, summarises the key research findings in relation to the research questions posed at the commencement of the study.

Research Question	Key Research Finding
1. *Which professional development activities do experienced principals value as effective contributors to their professional learning?*	#1 Experienced principals valued networking and shared-reflection as essential elements of their professional development. #2 Experienced principals valued conferences as a significant opportunity to establish, consolidate and expand networks.
2. *What professional development would principals like to have access to in the experienced stage of their careers that will sustain them for current and future challenges to lead schools in the 21ˢᵗ Century?*	#3 Experienced principals identified the key characteristics of good practice in PD programs as: shared-reflection, networking, use of frameworks, context relevant tasks and data. #4 As mid and late-career principals' PL needs changed across their career, so their PD needs also changed. #5 Experienced principals believed 'networking' to be a critical component of their PD to sustain their leadership into the future.
3. *What professional learning experiences arising from professional development activities do principals see as enhancing their school leadership?*	#6 Experienced principals took responsibility for sourcing, and were discerning in the selection of, their PD. #7 Experienced principals expressed a desire to participate in structured, formal PD programs targeted to meet their needs, specifically in the areas of leadership and change management.
4. *How and in what ways, if at all, does engagement in internationalised professional development experiences enhance the professional learning for experienced principals?*	#8 Experienced principals believed inclusion of internationalised PD in their PD portfolio to be essential in a 21st Century globalised education community.

Table 9.1: Research findings linked to research questions

The four purposively-selected experts consisted of an internationally renowned researcher and author in this area (Expert #1); the Director of Teaching and Learning (and published researcher) from the NSW Catholic Education system (Expert #2); the Director of School Operations and Performance from the NSW Department of Education (Expert #3); and an educational consultant with both national and international experience in leading professional development for principals at systems and governmental levels (Expert #4). Each expert was interviewed either face-to-face or via telephone. Each was presented with the key research findings and the four

"big ideas" arising from the study as outlined below and invited to comment. Audio recording and transcriptions were undertaken for analysis.

RESEARCH QUESTION #1:

Which professional development activities do experienced principals value as effective contributors to their professional learning?

<u>**Key Research Finding #1**</u>

Experienced principals valued networking and shared-reflection as essential elements of their professional development.

Experienced principals reported that shared reflection (as opposed to private individual self-reflection) was facilitated by network interactions. Whilst experienced principals highly-valued both shared reflection and networking, the cohort clearly explained that it was the networking structure that established the opportunity for shared reflection. Both processes (networking and shared refection) are intertwined but networking is the catalyst for powerful shared reflection.

Figure 9.1 below indicates those elements that principals (through Phase 3 of the study) deemed essential in any effective PD program designed for their experienced colleagues.

Figure 9.1*:* Elements deemed essential in PD programs for experienced principals
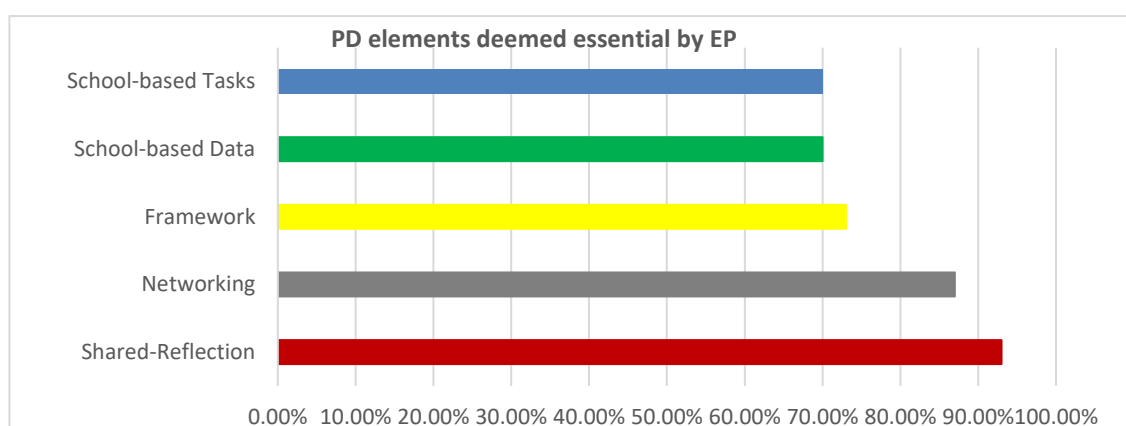
We reflect together on our principalship. We (my colleagues and I) are always reflecting on our practice together. Networking is important to me. (Female Primary Principal)

Networking is very important. I have good conversations. (Male Secondary Principal)

I love working with my principal colleagues. My networks are so important. If I don't know something I will contact my colleagues. (Male Primary Principal)

Experienced principals noted that their networking was often self-directed and self-managed. This networking was either unstructured (e.g. meeting at conferences); semi-structured (e.g. organised by participants); or structured (e.g. attending a defined PD program) (Figure 9.2). The data from the follow-up interviews indicated that principals believed that semi-structured and/or unstructured networking worked best for them. However, irrespective of the setting, experienced principals importantly reported that for the networking to be effective, it needed to be self-directed and self-managed.

Figure 9.2: Networking groupings
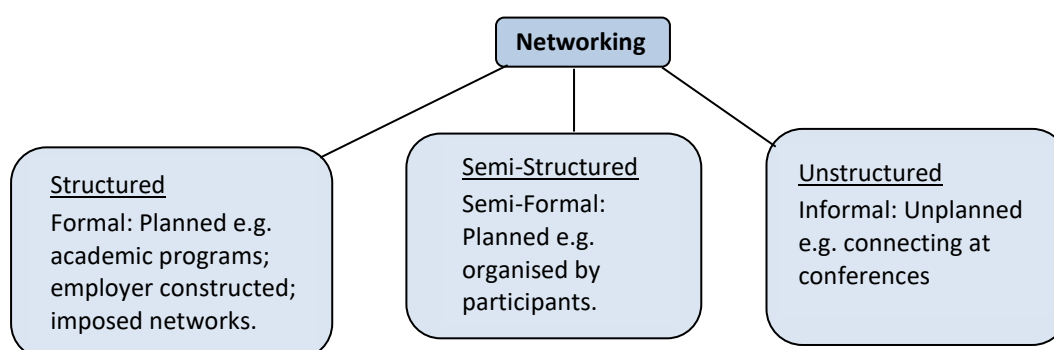
Thus, while networking may differ in structure and purpose all networking was seen by experienced principals as providing opportunities for shared-reflection, deep discussion and collaboration. The deep learning that principals reported as resulting from these reflective conversations was seen as essential by principals for timely and effective personal and professional growth.

Significantly, principals believed strongly in the power of networks but felt that networking lacked appropriate recognition. These experienced principals believed networking needed to be more openly highly-valued and acknowledged within the educational community. They felt that the current situation could best be described as ad hoc (with some principals engaging in it and

some not) and that the value of networking needed to be better recognised by employing authorities. The development of PD programs for experienced principals needed to at least acknowledge and include the power of networking as a highly-valued professional learning strategy.

Experienced principals believed that semi-structured (self-directed and self-managed) networking based on collegial trust, respect, and the acknowledgement of credibility in the role, facilitated the growth and development of these relationship-based networks. Mutual trust created a "safe" environment, through which networking opportunities provided principals with the environment to engage in deep discussion, reflection, problem solving and sharing.

Key research finding #1 indicated that experienced principals acknowledge and support purposeful, experience-based, trustful, semi-structured and unstructured networks.

<u>Purposeful networks</u>

Principals in the study reported that they purposefully and intentionally develop their networks by driving their own agendas and developing essential trusted relationships:

> *We have a breakfast meeting every Friday and we mull over the week…talk about what's happening at each other's schools and any problems we may be having.* (Female Primary Principal)
>
> *I belong to a network group where we ring to arrange for a coffee to catch up and talk.* (Male Primary Principal)
>
> *We have a really strong group of high school principals that we developed, in this area, and the subject of our networking is not admin but big time professional matters.* (Female Secondary Principal)

The findings would seem to clearly indicate that although principals develop networks in a variety of ways, each interaction is purposefully and intentionally managed.

<u>Experience-based networks</u>

Principals testified that they became more proactive in developing these networks as they gained more experience. With experience they sought to knowingly design and clearly define their networks by pursuing, establishing and managing their own involvement:

> *The more experienced I become the more I network.* (Female Primary Principal)

> *The more experienced and the more confident I became in the principalship, the more I took responsibility for seeking my own networks.* (Male Primary Principal)

> *So, I would actively seek out people who could enrich my knowledge and so that's when I began developing networks. When you have rich conversations with people – that's the best PD you can have.* (Female Primary Principal)

> *As an experienced principal I seek out my principal colleagues to talk about specific problems.* (Male Secondary Principal)

These deliberate, self-initiated and self-managed actions apparently did not occur through osmosis but rather appeared as deliberative actions as principals became more experienced, more confident and came to appreciate the value and power of networking to enhance their professional learning.

<u>Trustful networks</u>

Trust plays a vital and pivotal role in these self-managed networks. High relational trust levels (Fink, 2016) added significantly to principals' perception of the effectiveness of their networks:

> *There is a high level of trust in the group. Principals learn best form other principals.* (Male Primary Principal)

> *There's a trust and relationship that facilitates deep discussions.* (Female Secondary Principal)

<u>Semi-structured networks</u>

Experienced principals reported that the best professional learning can occur in both semi-structured or unstructured settings. However, when asked to clarify this even further principals

consistently reported in this study that deep professional learning is more significantly enhanced through semi-structured networking experiences.

> *You actually have to do it yourself. Formal ones don't satisfy me*. (Male Primary Principal)

> *We form our own networks. We have a coffee club group. It's a very collaborative and support group.* (Female Primary Principal)

Triangulation

The finding that experienced principals placed high emphasis and value on networking and shared-reflection as essential elements of their professional learning was triangulated with the members of the expert group. Each expert verified that experienced principals not only highly value networking and shared-reflection but saw it as integral to professional learning:

> *The networking has to be serious networking – sharing information, resources or strategies to address issues of common concern; principals need to call the shots.* (Expert #1)

> *That really resonates with me. From my experience, experienced principals highly value networking and the opportunity to reflect on their practice.* (Expert #2)

> *Experienced principals are more likely* (than early years' principals) *to reflect on their practice and what they are doing.* (Expert #3)

> *Yes. I would agree with that.* (Expert #4)

There was a consistent agreement across the expert group that networking together with shared-reflection and deep discussion was valued and provided effective professional learning for experienced principals. Furthermore, the expert group felt that artificial, system-imposed or too loosely-formed networks without any structure, focus or ownership by the principals, lacked value for them.

Collectively, the expert group agreed that from their experiences the most effective networking and reflection occurred when it was facilitated by the principals themselves rather than imposed "from above" (i.e. self-directed and self-managed).

Key Research Finding #2

Experienced principals valued conferences as a significant opportunity to establish, consolidate and expand networks.

Analysis of the Phase 2 data indicated that generically experienced principals highly-valued attendance at conferences. The Phase 3 follow-up individual interviews with these principals sought to ascertain the reasons behind this finding. Principals reported that conferences provided the opportunity to re-establish long-distance network connections; to extend existing networks; and to develop new networks in order to engage in collaborative dialogue with their peers.

> *Conferences create networks that can be reconnected somewhere else…at a different conference when we meet. Like-minded people come together at a conference and so automatically network. Conferences connect people.* (Female Primary Principal)
>
> *Conferences generally – it's all about the networking. The most valuable thing you get: talking with people you wouldn't normally meet. They provide an opportunity to extend my network.* (Male Primary Principal)

In response to the question, "As an experienced principal, how effective, if at all, do you find conferences in your PD?", Some 80% of principals reported that attendance at conferences provided them with significant networking opportunities that impacted positively on their professional learning (Figure 9.3).

Figure 9.3*:* Networking at conferences provided effective contributors to PL
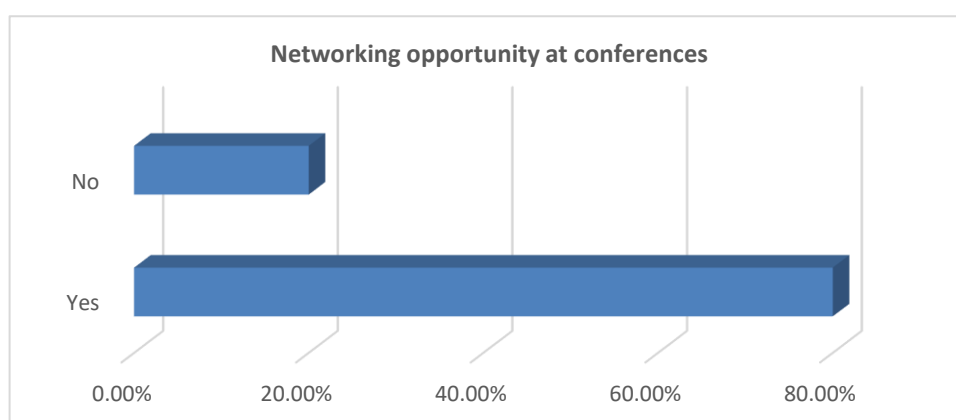
In addition to networking, experienced principals also reported that conferences provided time for shared and personal-reflection. Only one principal (out of 30) felt that attending conferences was "a waste of time and money".

The importance of establishing, maintaining and expanding networks, through attending conferences, aligns with key research finding #1 (experienced principals valued networking and shared-reflection as essential elements of their professional development) and finding #5 (experienced principals believed 'networking' to be a critical component of all effective PL).

The evidence supports the finding that a majority of principals valued conferences as a significant opportunity to establish, consolidate and expand networks.

Triangulation

The experts generically agreed that experienced principals were attracted to conferences because of the networking.

> *They do very much appreciate those opportunities where they can share their experiences with others.* (Expert #2)

> *Networking is better when it is developed from the ground up, but conferences are good for connecting with colleagues.* (Expert #3)

> *Yes, I agree. They go to conferences because of the networking.* (Expert #4)

However, one expert sounded a note of caution in relations to the value of experienced principals' engagement in networking at conferences.

> *There isn't always serious intent. It can just feel good to have a chat, learning from colleagues.* (Expert #1)

In addition, one expert (Expert #4) felt strongly that principals attended conferences not only due to the opportunity to network but because they were searching for relevant professional development at this stage in their career. This aligned with key research finding #7 which highlighted the need for relevant structured, formal professional development programs for experienced principals.

RESEARCH QUESTION #2:

What professional development would principals like to have access to in the experienced stage of their careers that will sustain them for current and future challenges to lead schools in the 21st century?

Key Research Finding #3

Experienced principals identified the key characteristics of good practice in PD programs as: shared-reflection, networking, use of frameworks, context relevant tasks and data.

This finding originated in Phases 1 and 2 where experienced principals initially had difficulty articulating what they considered to be the essential components of a structured, formal PD program. However, when asked to design effective PD for a colleague, the situation changed dramatically. Principals were then able to design structured, formal PD program models based on what they considered the essential components: shared-reflection, networking, frameworks, context relevant tasks and data (Figure 9.1). This significant finding clearly identified the core components of effective PD programs for mid and late-career principals, as seen by this cohort of experienced principals.

Analysis of the Phase 2 survey data showed a high participation rate of 97.2% in structured, formal PD programs (Figure 9.4 below).

Figure 9.4: Participation rate in structured, formal PD programs for experienced principals
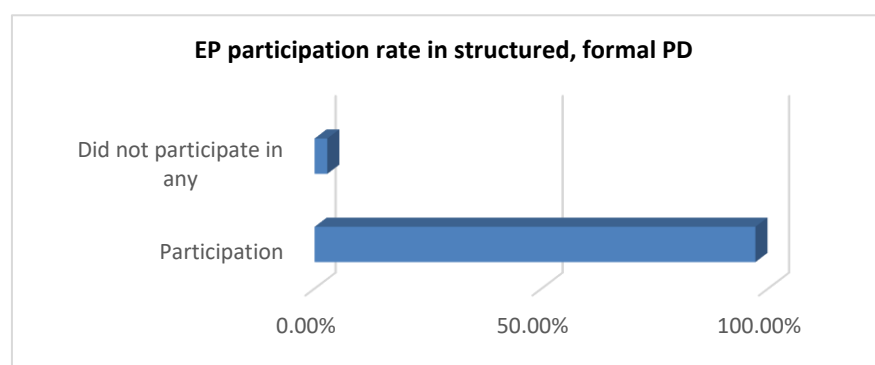
As previously discussed in Chapter 6 principals sought to take part in these types of programs but did not rate the currently available programs as highly useful. This would indicate that experienced principals valued the concept of structured, formal PD programs but were disappointed with the delivery. They reported that such PD programs consistently lacked capacity for participants to learn collaboratively through engagement in shared-reflection, networking and context-specific tasks.

Principals also perceived the development and delivery of existing PD programs as more suited to the needs of aspirational and newly-appointed principals thus leaving the experienced principals wanting something different and to better suit their needs. These experienced principals continued to be motivated to participate in structured, formal professional development programs but expressed frustration that the current programs generically failed to meet their PD needs.

Consequently, principals in this study perceived a void in available appropriate professional development designed for them at this stage of their career (see Figure 8.6).

*There's a void now – it is time to fill that void. (*Female Primary Principal)

There is nothing provided for me as an experienced principal. (Male Primary Principal) Experienced principals expressed a desire to continue to grow and learn. Previous research findings (Marks, 2012; Mulford, 2008) indicated that experienced principals continued as motivated, enthusiastic learners and leaders seeking to grow personally and professionally. Findings from this current research are consistent with previous research.

I need it (the PD) *to be interesting and challenging.* (Male Primary Principal)

I need something intellectually challenging. (Female Primary Principal)

The accumulated skills, knowledge and experiences of mid and late-career principals appeared to give them the confidence to know what worked (and what didn't work) for them in their professional development. The highest priority was placed on self-directed networking and shared-reflection with their colleagues.

In addition (during the Phase 3 follow-up interviews) principals saw their professional development as needing to have a more personalised component. This called for a more specific, school-based, context-specific tasks set within a framework. This personalised, school-based component could then be collaboratively approached by networking and shared reflective discussion.

Figure 9.5 below provides a conceptual framework of PD that principals reported they would like to access in this stage of their career. The framework is underpinned by networking and shared reflective discussion. The surrounding action research cycle is centred on context-specific tasks and the use of data.

Figure 9.5: Action research model underpinned by principal peer-network learning
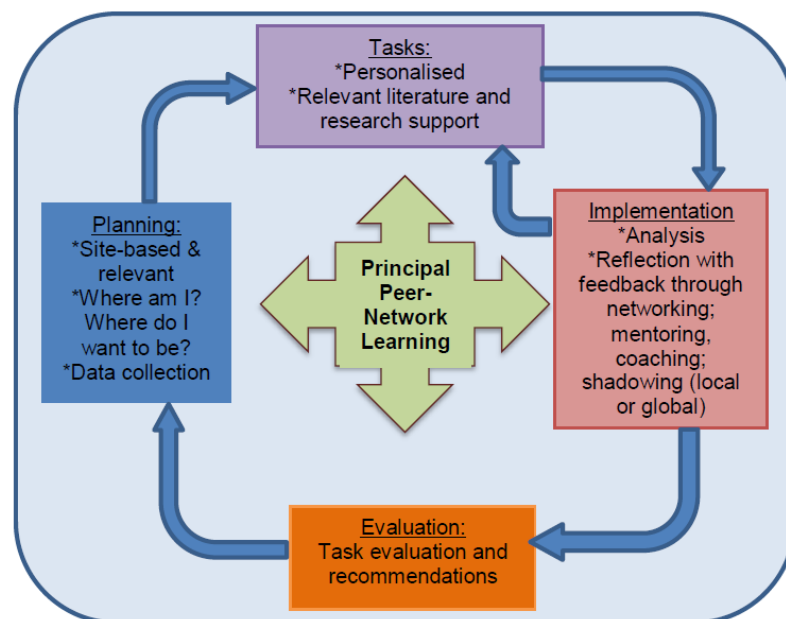
This conceptual framework captures the essence of key finding #3: the key characteristics of good practice in PD programs as seen by experienced principals.

Triangulation

The experts with experience of NSW DE principals supported the original finding that historically principals had difficulty in visualising (and therefore articulating) PD programs to meet their own professional learning needs. Changes made within the NSW DE in 2015 (NSW DE, 2015) included the introduction of a *Professional Development Framework* (PDF) for all principals which has provided them with a vehicle by which they can now articulate their PD needs. This framework formed part of the recently introduced principals' performance appraisal and focused on principals developing their own PD plan in consultation with their supervising Director. This development may well be signalling a system response to the very issue unearthed by this research.

> *As an experienced principal, it had been a very long time since someone has actually spoken to them about their own PL needs...they could not articulate the PL they wanted. As a system, we have become deskilled.* (Expert #3)

> *We found principals – especially the experienced ones – articulating the direction the school was going. They weren't able to focus on their own PL – they were focusing on the PL required by the school.* (Expert #4)

Collectively, the views of the expert group supported the observations that, within the socio-cultural and historical context in which the NSW DE principals worked, little attention had been given to the ways in which experienced principals learn. This flaw may well have resulted in experienced principals' difficulties in visualising and articulating PD relevant to this stage of their careers. It would be of interest to investigate this further in other school systems and jurisdictions in Australia and overseas.

Key Finding Research #4

As mid and late-career principals' PL needs changed across their career, so their PD needs also changed.

In the Phase 3 individual, follow-up interviews principals were asked whether their PL needs had changed across the course of their career. Principals unanimously reported that their initial

professional development needs as principals varied significantly from the needs they now held as experienced principals (Figure 9.6).

Figure 9.6: Experienced principals' PD needs changed over time
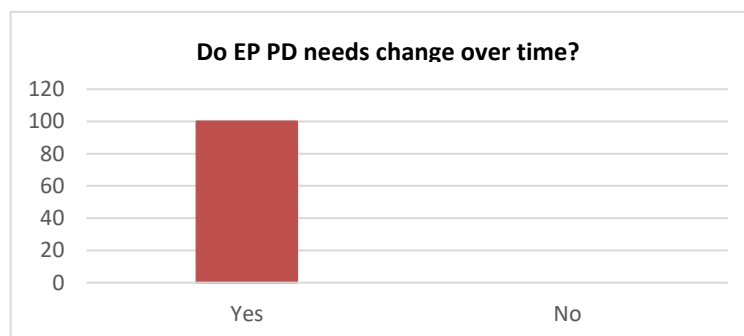
Initially, through the early years' stage, principals sought professional development that focused on their survival. As experienced principals, however, their professional development needs centred more on leadership, culture and change management.

> *As an early years' principal, it was all about survival day to day. My needs were very much about the mechanical things: the nuts and bolts of it all. As an EP now, my focus is to develop the atmosphere, culture in the workplace. It's about getting the relationship right.* (Male Primary Principal)

> *In the beginning it's about survival. You then get visionary: what do I want my school to look like in the future?* (Female Primary Principal)

> *Initially I was about what the department wanted: putting in place the relevant policies and procedures. Now, it's about what the school needs and how I will guide it along its journey.* (Female Secondary Principal)

Triangulation

There was consensus among the expert group that principals' professional learning needs changed as they became more experienced.

> *Principals in the early years certainly need and seek out additional support to understand the principalship.* (Expert #1)

> *You can assume that all new principals will need the basics. Once they've been in the job for a while they are going to have different interests and different needs in terms of where they want to put in their energies. So, it's harder to turn out a sausage factory of PD for them.* (Expert #2)

Definitely. Their professional learning needs certainly do change. They move from survival to looking to something that they can put in place to make some changes. (Expert #3)

All new principals need the basics. In later stages they start to think, "How can I make a difference here?". (Expert #4)

From the experiences of the expert group there seemed little doubt amongst them that principals' professional learning and professional development needs did indeed change as they gained more experience across their career, moving from a self-centred survival mode to a broader focus encompassing the intersection of both personal and professional needs. Both the finding and the triangulation verification highlighted the need for PD programs to be tailored to the changing needs of experienced principals and not be locked into the "one-size-fits-all" mindset.

Key Research Finding #5

Experienced principals believed 'networking' to be a critical component of their PD to sustain their leadership into the future.

This finding resulted from principals' identification of the PD which would sustain them for the current and future challenges of leading schools in the 21st Century. Analysis of the Phase 2 surveys of the study indicated that networking was the highest ranked preferred professional learning model to sustain experienced principals further into the 21st Century (Figure 9.7 below).

Figure 9.7: Preferred professional learning models to sustain experienced principals
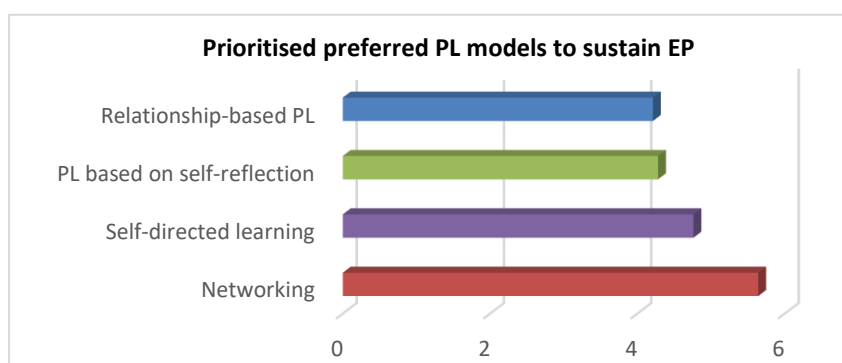
Networking is essential and integral to our current job. (Male Primary Principal)

The more experienced I become the more I network to sustain my leadership. (Female Primary Principal)

Overwhelmingly, experienced principals in this research indicated that *networking* with like-minded colleagues in a climate of trust provided the essential conditions for valuable and effective professional learning (Figures 6.1; 6.20; 6.21; 6.24; 6.25; 6.42; 8.8; 8.16; 8.17; 8.18; 8.22; 8.23). Developing networks with experienced colleagues reduced the sense of isolation and provided principals with the opportunity to focus not only on leading their own schools but also on their own professional growth.

Triangulation

The expert group reaffirmed that 'networking' was a critical component of sustaining effective professional development and leadership for experienced principals.

> *There is a difference between casual informal networking and formal networking which might have a heck of a lot of capacity building associated with it.* (Expert #2)

> *Engagement is highest when experienced principals are engaged in conversations which are always about students, staff and curriculum. There are always conversations about a range of topics. It is important that principals have someone to talk to; a safe person with an eye on the future.* (Expert #3)

> *Experienced principals have credibility with other experienced principals because they've fought the same battles on the same battlegrounds. Through comraderies they've walked that path together. These shared experiences provide guidance for the future.* (Expert #4)

Engagement in networking provided experienced principals with vital opportunities to engage in deep conversations about professional practice and personal issues with a 'safe person' who understood the role and experienced similar problems during their own career. These trusting relationships (networks) are vital to sustain leadership in the future and were seen as a critical strategy in principals' professional development.

RESEARCH QUESTION #3:

What professional learning experiences arising from professional development activities do principals see as enhancing their school leadership?

Key Research Finding #6

Experienced principals took responsibility for sourcing, and were discerning in the selection of, their professional development.

Over a quarter (29.79%) of newly-appointed principals sourced their professional development solely from their employer whereas only 3.5% of experienced principals did. While 68.79% of newly-appointed principals found their PD from a variety of sources (including their employer), 92.31% of experienced principals reported that they looked for a variety of sources for their professional development (including their employer) at this stage of their career (Figure 9.8).

Figure 9.8: PD sources for newly appointed (NAP) and experienced principals (EP)
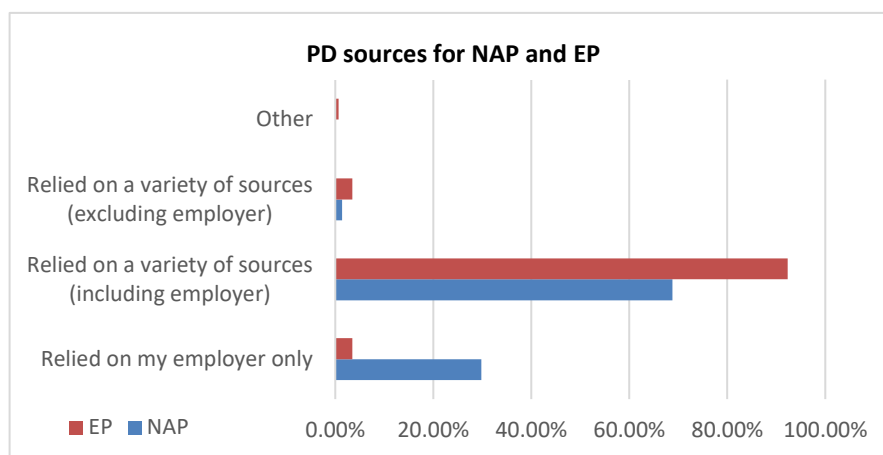
As experienced principals, they were more discerning (see Figure 8.5), taking more responsibility for their professional development by selectively choosing the PD activities in which to engage.

> *I am more discerning in my choice of PD activities as an experienced principal.* (Female Primary Principal)

> *The more experienced and the more confident I became in the principalship the more I took on the responsibility for sourcing my own PD.* (Male Primary Principal)

Current employer provided principal PD, was generically judged by experienced principal as not meeting the specific needs for their mid and late-career stages.

I rely less now on the department for my PD. (Female Primary Principal)

As I've become more experienced I've found the department hasn't offered a lot of PD for people with a lot of experience. They don't cater for the experienced principal enough. (Male Primary Principal)

Triangulation

The experts agreed with the finding that experienced principals took greater responsibility for sourcing, and were more discerning in the selection of, their professional development:

Yes – it is most understandable and desirable. (Expert #1)

Once they get the nuts and bolts done they move onto, 'how do I make a difference here?' (Expert #2)

Absolutely – they do! (Expert #3)

Precisely what they do! (Expert #4)

The strong feeling from the expert group was that principals' PL needs change across the principalship. As they gather experience in the role their changing needs result in taking greater control in the decision-making around which PL activities will best provide the most effective professional development for them at this stage of their career.

Key Research Finding #7

Experienced principals expressed a desire to participate in structured, formal PD programs targeted to meet their needs, specifically in the areas of leadership and change management.

Significantly, more than 90% of experienced principals in this study continued to be motivated to engage in structured, formal PD programs even though, as experienced principals, they reported lower satisfaction/usefulness rates (Figure 6.18). The issue, as identified in the study, is that experienced principals' professional learning needs are both more context-specific and more personal. Structured, formal PD programs for these principals need to reflect this.

It has to be relevant – which most of them aren't. It has to have a framework of actual purpose. (Female Primary Principal)

I would like to engage in more structured, formal PD programs but what is offered does not acknowledge my experience level. (Female Primary Principal)

It would have to be relevant to what I am doing: to give me new understandings, practices and tools that I can apply. (Male Primary Principal)

Analysis of the Phase 2 survey data revealed that the two highest priority content areas for principals' PD programs were leadership and change management (Figure 6.37). During the follow-up interviews principals unanimously agreed with these priorities (Figure 9.9).

Figure 9.9: Experienced principals' prioritised Leadership and Change Management as their top two PD areas
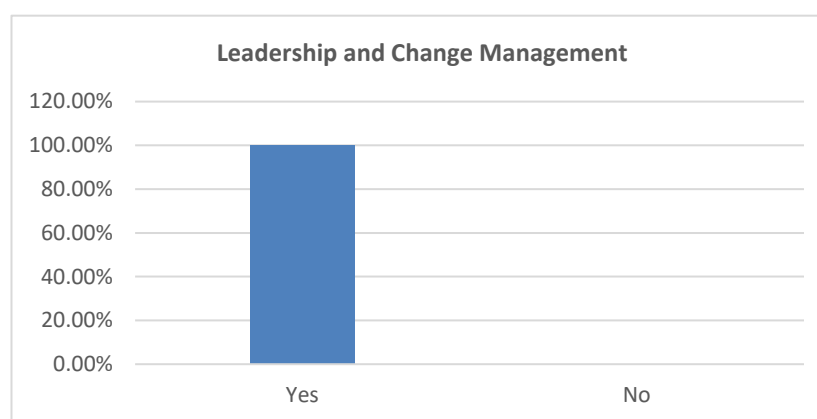
Triangulation

A key point of consensus for the expert group was the need for experienced principals' PD to be both personalised and flexible.

I'd be a little wary of saying there is one best way. PL must be flexible and personalised. (Expert #1)

When people are looking for PL it seems to me that they are looking for some kind of framework to address an issue at their school. (Expert #2)

We found experienced principals articulating for their own PL the direction that their own school was going. They articulated their own needs for the future. (Expert #3)

Experienced principals have different ways of learning. Adult learning theory is very important. (Expert #4)

Significantly, the expert group identified the need for professional development programs to acknowledge the experience of these principals, provide flexibility and provide the option to personalise the program to meet the context-specific needs of each school and principal.

RESEARCH QUESTION #4:

How and in what ways, if at all, does engagement in internationalised professional development experiences enhance the professional learning for experienced principals?

<u>**Key Research Finding #8**</u>

Experienced principals believed inclusion of internationalised professional development in their PD portfolio to be essential in a 21st Century globalised education community.

Analysis of the Phase 3 interviews reported an increase in engagement in internationalised PD as principals gained more experience in the role. This is clearly indicated in Figure 9.10.

Figure 9.10: Percentage of principals accessing internationalised PD by years in the principalship
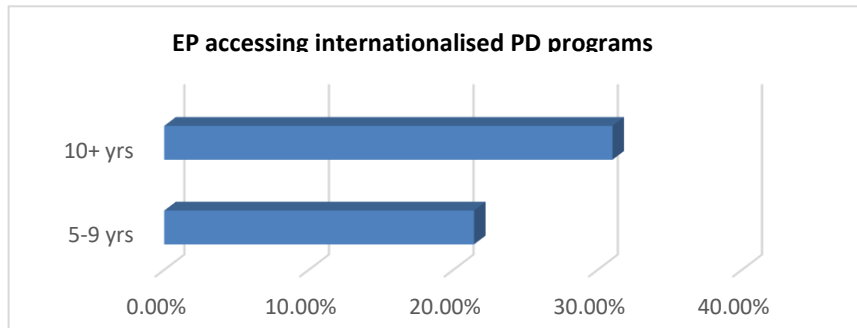
Experienced principals believed participation in internationalised PD is essential for leadership in the current globalised education community. It will be recalled that "internationalised PD" has been defined for the purposes of this study as, "PD that occurs beyond the employing authority and jurisdiction and that is embedded in the context of another national jurisdiction as a basis for comparison and reflection".

The following quotes are indicative of principals' evaluation of their experiences in professional development that occurred in other countries:

What I find is that I can now bring to the table an internationalised perspective which almost none of my colleagues have. It grows my brain. (Male Secondary Principal)

The main outcome is just the engagement – keeping interested and keeping aware of trends around the world. (Male Secondary Principal)

Engagement in internationalised PD provided me with the opportunity to engage in intense learning while being immersed in a different system. While overseas, I was constantly engaged in reflection with my international colleague, while travelling to and from school. (Female Primary Principal)

Analysis of the in-depth individual interviews revealed that engagement in a variety of internationalised professional development programs enhanced principals' professional learning. Experienced principals having access to programs of this nature reported that it was a critical strategy with intense and powerful learning. Internationalised PD provided opportunities for rich conversations that facilitated "in-the-moment reflection" on practice between global colleagues.

The welcomeness of the educational community world-wide is just outstanding. It makes you reflect and share your own expertise. (Male Primary Principal)

We had every conversation possible. Shared-reflection was a huge part of the international experience. We were reflecting every day – constantly. (Female Primary Principal)

My international experience provided personalised, flexible PD. It was open-ended. I had the chance to talk to other people I wouldn't normally talk to. (Male Primary Principal)

Internationalised PD provided personalised and flexible PD that aligns with key research finding #7. Principals also reported that they took responsibility for sourcing internationalised PD programs that align with key research finding #6. Principals established and managed their own network learning on an international basis which aligns with key research findings #1 and #5. This was aided by the use of technology to ensure its continuation beyond the initial face-to-face interactions.

It wasn't only the conversations I had over there, but the ongoing conversations we keep having using phone calls, Facebook. The current technology is wonderful. (Female Primary Principal)

I still communicate with my international colleague. It is so easy these days. (Male Primary Principal)

For me, it is about being able to continue the conversations with my international partner. The learning just continues. (Female Secondary Principal)

It would seem that involvement in internationalised PD allowed experienced principals to bring together, in one PL experience, all the vital components of effective PD that they identified. Opportunities to engage in an internationally based peer-shadowing program, a visitation program or a cultural exchange program provided principals with opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of movements in education around the world. It also provided opportunities to develop international networks and to develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of the craft of the principalship.

When you engage with international educators, you talk about specific programs and you pick up specific tips. There's the 'craft' there. (Male Secondary Principal)

My international experience provided me with the opportunity to gain big picture knowledge. Those networks I have established are very important to me. It has changed my practice. (Female Primary Principal)

Principals, therefore, acknowledged inclusion of internationalised professional development as an essential component of their PD portfolio in a 21st Century globalised education community.

Triangulation

The expert group unanimously verified that engagement in internationalised professional development in today's educational community is essential:

What they really value is the opportunity for that in-depth quality conversation with people that are outside their system. Paradigm shifts as a result of exposure to internationalised PD and other overseas systems – hard to argue with that from a number of points of view. (Expert #2)

Travelling to another country, being there and feeling it and seeing it and making decisions about it and then having the time to reflect about it – is actually the strongest and most essential part of PD that anyone can do. (Expert #3)

The benefit of – whether it's going on a study tour or program or exchange program – the benefit of those things is actually going to another country, listening to what's going on, thinking about how that relates to your own setting, your own system ad school and your own leadership and having time to reflect on it. (Expert #4)

Consequently, the expert group readily acknowledged the importance of the inclusion of internationalised professional development in principals' professional development portfolios.

Summary

This chapter summarised the key research findings arising from the data and, through a triangulation process, sought the verification of an expert group's opinions in relation to those findings. To summarise, these findings would seem to suggest that, when sourcing their PD, experienced principals:

1. highly valued self-determined and self-managed networking and shared-reflection

2. valued conferences as scaffolding for networking opportunities

3. identified key characteristics of effective PD programs (e.g. shared-reflection, networking, relevance)

4. sought PD to meet their changed career needs

5. saw networking as critical to sustaining their future leadership

6. took responsibility for sourcing professional development that works for them

7. expressed a desire to engage in structured, formal PD programs if these programs acknowledged their experience, were personalised and flexible

8. included access to internationalised PD as an essential component of their 21st Century PD portfolio

These eight key research findings collected from the experiences, values and beliefs of the experienced principal research cohort and verified by an expert group, are now condensed into four "big ideas".

Each "big idea" incorporates aligned components of the eight key findings. This collation and filtering process allows for the data collected through exploratory interviews (Phase 1), the

broad survey (Phase 2), and individual follow-up interviews (Phase 3) to be presented as four all-encompassing major findings or "big ideas".

Table 9.2 below, distils of the eight key research findings into the four "big ideas".

	Key Research Finding	"Big Idea"
1	Experienced principals valued networking and shared-reflection as essential elements of their professional development.	Experienced principals: 1. Take greater responsibility for sourcing their professional development; 2. Know (can visualise) what effective professional development looks like for them; 3. Believe participation in professional development extends beyond their employing authority; their immediate jurisdiction and includes access to internationalised professional development as an essential component in their portfolio of professional learning activities; and 4. Highly value networking and interaction with their colleagues, which was seen to provide the most effective, beneficial and relevant professional learning.
2	Experienced principals valued conferences as a significant opportunity to establish and consolidate networks.	
3	Experienced principals identified the key characteristics of good practice in PD programs as: shared-reflection, networking, use of frameworks, context relevant tasks and data.	
4	As mid and late-career principals' PL needs changed across their career, so their PD needs also changed.	
5	Experienced principals believed 'networking' to be a critical component of their PD to sustain their leadership into the future.	
6	Experienced principals took responsibility for sourcing, and were discerning in the selection of, their PD.	
7	Experienced principals expressed a desire to participate in structured, formal PD programs targeted to meet their needs, specifically in the areas of leadership and change management.	
8	Experienced principals believed inclusion of internationalised professional development in their PD portfolio to be essential in a 21st Century globalised education community.	

Table 9.2: The four "big ideas" emanating from the study

These "big ideas" indicated that experienced principals are indeed a discreet group that require professional development that caters for their specific needs at this point in their careers. Interestingly a review of these findings would seem to indicate that for experienced principals, networking is the most dominant strategy for their professional learning. Chapter 10, which now follows, discusses the four big ideas that have emerged from the study in relation to the more recent literature on educational leadership.

CHAPTER 10

DISCUSSION OF KEY FINDINGS

This study sought to address the following question:

> *"What kinds of professional development activities do principals in the experienced stage of their careers value as significant contributors to their professional learning in a Twenty-first Century globalised education community?"*

To achieve this, the study targeted the mid and late-career stages of the principal's career trajectory. It explored experienced principals' professional development experiences and needs so as to add to the existing body of knowledge on educational leadership, specifically, the knowledge about the latter stages of a principal's career trajectory.

The study was informed by the changing role of the 21st Century principal in the Australian context. The paradox of this context requires principals to work in a world of increasing global expectations on the one hand, and with a greater emphasis on local school management on the other. Added to this dilemma is an increasing community and political expectation for even higher levels of student outcomes.

Education in Australia in the 21st Century has been viewed through a business model to a greater extent than previously. Consequently, the Australian education agenda has become far more federally-driven; more responsive to accountability demands; more influenced by market-force ideology; and far more competitive on a global market (Fink, 2016). The findings emanating from this study need to be seen in the context of this 21st Century globalised education community.

This chapter locates the four "big ideas" from the study within in the current literature on educational leadership. On reviewing recent educational leadership literature that emerged from 2014 onwards (as the study progressed), it was observed that research into the specific PD needs of the experienced principal is still quite scarce. Indeed, van Veelen, Sleegers & Endedijk

(2017 p. 367) observed that the, "general knowledge base for school leader professional development programs (remained) rather weak"). Research still focused more on teachers' rather than principals' professional development (Davis et al., 2016).

It is important to note that the gap identified in existing research relates specifically to the PD needs of the experienced principal cohort. As indicated in earlier chapters, there is quite extensive research related to the PD needs of aspiring and newly-appointed principals. There is also considerable (and current) research into the role of the principal, which will be referred to in this discussion. In addition, there is considerable (and current) research which generically examines PD for principals. This research will also be referred to in the upcoming discussion. However, the missing component of the existing literature on educational leadership (which deals with the principalship and professional development) is the specific PD for experienced principals.

There is also an emerging recognition in the international literature that the theoretical base of educational leadership needs to be further strengthened by recognising and including non-Western perspectives and developments (Walker, 2017; Huber, 2017). Of direct relevance to this study in that regard is recent research into Principal Development Policy in mainland China by Zheng, Walker and Cheng (2013). This research aligns with the premise of this current Australian-based research by acknowledging that experienced principals are those with five years plus experience. While state authorised PD is mandatory in China for early years' principals (with less than five years' experience) those principals with additional experience participate in national principal training centres, and other university provided PD, on a voluntary basis. These are promising indicators that other jurisdictions are taking note of the historical vacuum which has existed in the provision of relevant PD for experienced principals.

This chapter now examines and discusses in depth, the four "big ideas" from this research through the lens of existing research.

Big Idea #1:

Experienced principals take greater responsibility for sourcing their professional development.

Much has continued to be written about preparation for the principalship and the professional development required to support that journey (Zepeda et al., 2014). With the expansion of principals' responsibilities in recent years, there is recognition in the literature that school leaders are leading their schools through increasingly challenging situations on a global stage (Clarke, 2016; Davis et al., 2016). Serrato (2015) states that the provision of relevant and effective professional development for school principals is essential, but with that said, current research does not indicate what kind of PD the experienced principal might access. This study has investigated that issue.

More recent literature has revealed that, as principals move through the stages in their career, they accumulate experiences and develop a "practical wisdom" which can only be acquired "through experience and reflection" (Clarke, 2016 p. 356). The data in this study revealed that experienced principals unanimously agreed that their PL needs changed across their career. They indicated that the initial need to learn the 'nuts and bolts' of the job from their employer was, as they gained experience, replaced by such activities as engagement in shared-reflective learning about their practice specifically through networking. Clarke (2016 p. 356) describes this process as 'phronesis' linked to, "the process of 'apperception' in understanding something perceived with reference to previous experience". New experience is therefore assimilated with reference to previous experience.

Together with the accumulation of experience and the developing complexity of the principal role (Pollock et al., 2014; Robertson, 2017), the experienced principals in this study sought to only engage in those PD programs they saw as effective, worthwhile and appropriate. A degree of self-selection and even censure can be seen to be at play. The findings in this study were also

supported by recent research with principals from the USA which indicated that the current PD landscape was not meeting their needs and that the need existed for PD providers to develop more relevant and appropriate professional development programs for them (Serrato, 2015). Serrato called for additional global research to be carried out in this area.

The research of Lovett et al., (2015) also indicated that principals needed to take more responsibility for sourcing their PD than they currently do. The principals in this Australian study can be seen to have taken one step further, actively taking responsibility for pursuing and discriminating in the professional learning activities in which they wished to engage.

Big Idea #2:

Experienced principals know (can visualise) what effective professional development looks like for them.

The provision of 'content and process frameworks' defining PD programs needs the flexibility and capacity to be personalised to support leaders' learning (Lovett et al., 2015). Principals in this study confirm this. They reported the need to be able to choose and have input into the design of the professional learning relevant to their career stage.

This big idea also supports the research of Zepeda et al. (2014) linking effective principal professional development with adult learning theory as outlined in Chapter 2. The point to be noted here is that the design of professional development programs for newly-appointed principals has also informed the design of the professional development that has been offered to experienced principals (Zepeda et al., 2014; Zheng et al., 2013). Experienced principals in this study affirmed this observation, perceiving the current professional development environment as a 'one-size-fits-all' approach. Their dissatisfaction with the usefulness of currently available 'one-size-fits-all' PD programs has reinforced the need to adopt a different approach to the design, development and implementation of PD programs that caters for experienced group of principals. Other recent research by van Veelen et al., (2017) has reported that current programs

still do not appear to take into consideration principals' career stages or school context. Principals in this study asserted that they still remained motivated to engage in appropriate, effective PD during this experienced stage of their career with the proviso that PD made available to them must contain a focus on context-specific tasks where this has been neglected. Including this contextual focus would open up further areas of inquiry.

Principals' professional development continues to be seen as essential for school improvement (Davis, Harrigan & Rogers, 2016). Understanding that school leadership is linked inextricably with context has gained further prominence, in that, "one cannot separate leadership from the context any more than one can separate a flavour from food" (Clarke & O'Donoghue, 2017 p. 180). This was reaffirmed by this study.

"Big Idea #2" emphasised that not only do the PD needs of principals change over time, but that experienced principals understand what does and does not work for them at this stage of their career. This understanding has developed over time as a result of participation in numerous PD activities with data from this study showing experienced principals take more responsibility for their own professional learning and development.

Big Idea #3:

Experienced principals believe participation in professional development extends beyond their employing authority and their immediate jurisdiction and includes access to internationalised professional development as an essential component in their portfolio of professional learning activities.

The impact of globalisation on education policy and practice, and hence school practice, has been acknowledged increasingly in the years encompassed by this study (Sahlberg, 2017; Fink, 2016). School effectiveness, improved pedagogy and student outcomes, together with teacher and leadership effectiveness, have become the focus of high-performing schools across OECD countries that include the USA, Canada, Australia and Finland. Within this more globalised education community, the push to improve and raise standards as well as to improve that

country's place on international league tables, has become a main focus of principals' work (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Maintaining an awareness and understanding of current global trends in education and their impact on context-specific school practice has become essential for the 21st Century principal (Degenhardt, 2013). Access to internationalised PD as part of principals' PD portfolios, seen as essential by this study's principal cohort, would also seem mandatory. However, caution is critical when investigating initiatives and strategies implemented in other countries. Care should be taken when transferring initiatives and strategies from other countries, as what works in one country won't necessarily work in another (Sahlberg, 2017). What this study revealed as being important was the opportunity to see how others are handling similar professional challenges in the school context and specific jurisdiction in which they work. Development of a deep understanding of global movements in education "has been shown to be an asset to today's school leaders when leading change locally" (MacBeath & Dempster, 2009 p. 25). Fullan (2017, p.18) argues that now, more than ever, the moral imperative for our schools' leaders is to be good leaders and deep learners, "developing global competencies", building system and school capacity.

This "big idea" that arose from this aspect of the study adds to this current literature by affirming that experienced principals deem some measure of engagement in internationalised PD programs as an essential part of their PD portfolio.

Big Idea #4:

Experienced principals highly value networking and interaction with their colleagues which was seen to provide them with the most effective, beneficial and relevant professional learning.

Principals in this study valued and looked for increased opportunities for collaboration and networking both within and beyond their employing authority and immediate jurisdiction. In some instances, this involved national and international linkages. The importance of educational networks was acknowledged by principals and validated as a means of providing opportunities

for shared-reflection and the sharing of resources and expertise in what could be described as a set of complex and dynamic relationships among the participants.

Recent research by Moolenaar & Sleegers (2015 p. 24) has indicated that principals benefit from participating in networks by sharing information and supporting each other. At a time when principal accountability is high and there is widespread pressure to increase student achievement, principals, more than ever, are relying on the relationships developed in collegial networks. It is widely acknowledged in the current literature that deep learning is a result of shared-reflection, both individually and shared, through the invaluable support provided by networking with peers (Robertson, 2017; Dalgic & Bakioglu, 2014). Leithwood and Azah's 2016 research has also supported the assertion that participation in leadership networks, "is a key strategy for school leadership development" (p. 426).

There appeared to be increasing recognition in the literature that principals develop their knowledge through 'grounded learning' facilitated by shared-reflective discussions and rich conversations about real-life, real-time and context-specific tasks (Lovett et al., 2015 p. 128). A sense of isolation within an increasingly complex, global education landscape (Tahir, Thakib, Hamzah, Sais & Musah, 2017; Clarke, 2016) is fostering the need for school leaders to form networks and engage in shared-reflective discussions resulting in the formation of educationally sound judgements (Earley, 2016). Experienced principals in this study affirmed these observations, reporting that engagement in networks helped alleviate the isolationism, pressures and complexity of their role. Researchers for some time have widely accepted the isolation that can be inherent in the principal's role and principals' needs to alleviate this isolation if they are to cope with the rapid changes of 21st Century globalised education (Moolenar & Sleegers, 2015; Wildy, Sigurdardottir & Faulkner, 2014; Dempster, Lovett & Fluckiger, 2011). The ways in which principals can best do this has been problematic.

Principals interviewed in this study indicated that attendance at conferences provided them with significant opportunities to both consolidate and extend existing networks as well as establish new ones. These networks gave principals opportunities to engage in, "critical reflection in leadership learning so that (they) could develop insights into their own learning and the assumptions they possessed about their practice" (Clarke, 2016 p. 361).

As early as the 1970's Vygotsky, (cited in Muijs et al., 2011) recognised and promoted the value of networking in educational settings (as a subset of social networking). However, by the beginning of the 21st Century the notion of networks and networking had become, "totally trivialised and applied indistinctively to very dissimilar phenomena" (Avila de Lima, 2010 p. 3). This relegated the term to a meaningless entity where it loosely applied to many things, resulting in a loss of value (Avila de Lima, 2010). Researchers and practitioners in the educational community reacted to this situation by re-engaging with the power of teacher networks to share best practice and build teacher capacity. The work and research into professional learning communities and communities of practice (Harris & Jones, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2011; Leithwood & Azah, 2016) is illustrative of this. However, despite this resurgence of interest in networking that supports principals' development, sustainability and renewal (Drago-Severson, 2012; Serrato, 2015), the implications of networking had still not been considered in any depth for experienced principals.

Other recent research into teacher networks in relation to effective school improvement that emerged during the course of this study emphasises that the health, structure and communication within networks remains integral to the success of the network (Leithwood & Azah, 2016). It is crucial that principals invest time and energies into the development of relationships with colleagues to establish an environment of shared-reflective discussion and information exchange. This is illustrated in Figure 10.1 below.

Figure 10.1: Model for successful networks
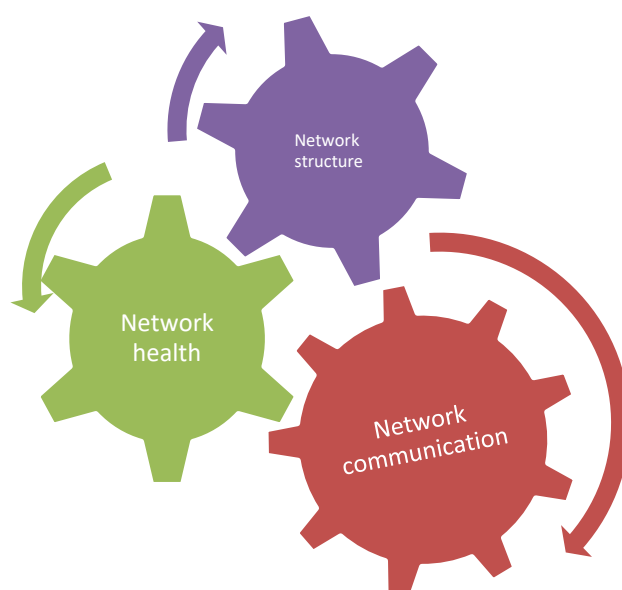
More recent research is supporting the development of collective teacher efficacy (Donohoo, 2017; Hattie, 2015) and investigation into its impact on school improvement and student outcomes. Collective teacher efficacy "refers to the perceptions and judgments of a group of educators regarding their ability to positively influence students' outcomes", and the, "shared belief in their conjoint capability to organise and execute courses of action required to produce given levels of attainment" (Donohoo, 2017, p. 102). This concept of collective efficacy can also be applied to principals' networking and the development of *collective principal efficacy* (CPE). The power inherent in principals' engagement in peer-networking and in the building of CPE is being acknowledged.

Mora, Pont, Casado & Iglesias (2014) reported that the capacity to share information as these networks develop depended upon freedom of expression within an environment of trust. Principals' continued engagement in their networks relied on a balance being attained between trust and verification, with verification being provided by either, changes in the principals' practices and/or, schools' practices. Fink (2016) observed that principals inherently trust their

peers, choosing their colleagues' support to enhance their own personal growth and professional learning or collaborative peer-network learning.

Big idea #4 not only confirms the importance of networking and reflective practice with peers but this finding actually has a much deeper significance. While more research is needed into models of informal learning for principals (van Veelen et al., 2017), this study has established the fact that self-initiated, self-directed and self-managed principal network learning is seen by experienced principals as providing the most effective, beneficial and relevant professional learning for them.

Summary

The provision of relevant and effective professional development for experienced principals in a 21st Century globalised education community is essential in light of the fact that school improvement is linked inexorably with quality, relevant and effective PD for principals (Davis et al., 2016; Serrato, 2015; Timperley, 2011).

If networking can be such a powerful supportive and motivating tool for experienced principals in their professional development, as verified in this research, what then are the practical implications and further recommendations? Chapter 11 that follows concludes the study by discussing the implications of these findings, together with recommendations, for educational practice, policy and research.

CHAPTER 11

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE,

POLICY AND RESEARCH

The implications of the four "big ideas" that emerged from the study are now examined as they impact on *current* educational practice, educational policy, and research in educational leadership. This order has been selected given that the study reports on the voice of the experienced principal with regard to the professional development experiences and needs of their educational practice. It is therefore logical that the further implications for policy and research be examined and presented in that order.

Educational Practice

IMPLICATIONS

Planned and designed networking

The study revealed *collaborative peer-network learning* as a powerful professional learning strategy for experienced principals. This finding suggests that the time for a changed perspective on *networking* has now arrived. Ideally, this should happen in three ways.

First, the power of networking needs to be openly acknowledged and recognised as a deliberate strategy in capacity building.

Secondly, networking for principals needs clearer definition, recognition and status rather than being seen as it is at present as a loosely-defined generic term used to describe any time principals gather. Loose definitions such as this can serve to trivialise and de-value networking and limit its use as a powerful professional learning strategy for principals.

Thirdly, principals in this study clearly and consistently identified high-quality and high-status networking as a process that reduced their isolation. The isolation felt by principals has been long-acknowledged in the literature as was noted in Chapter 2. The implication arising from the study is that access to high-quality and high-status networking is essential if experienced principals are to be supported in overcoming any sense of isolation and build their capacity to lead schools and manage the changes arising from the increasing globalised demands of education in the 21st Century. It can also be seen as an essential component in supporting the wellbeing of principals.

Structured networking

Significant amongst the implications seems to be the need to more deeply explore the relative merits of structured versus informal networks. Formal networks mandated by school systems were identified by principals in the study as being problematic. However, systems that ignore (or do not consciously support) less formal networks as collaborative peer-network learning opportunities may well face a similar fate. A significant implication would appear to be that the nature of clearly defined, consciously-designed, purposefully -implemented and effectively self-managed and sophisticated networking processes need to be more highly-valued and thoroughly researched if they are to be developed further.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has suggested that greater understanding, and therefore definitional support is required, in defining exactly what "networking" means. It is recommended therefore that the following definition be considered:

> *Networking underpins opportunities for professional engagement with peers, significant others in the working lives of principals such as policy makers and employers within their own and other jurisdictions, and those who might challenge their thinking and/or help them gain insights to resolving issues in their own context.*

Recommendations for educational practice also suggest that employing authorities and principals' professional associations:

1. review and elevate the status of networking;

2. recognise and value networking as a high-impact strategy for providing essential professional learning for experienced principals; and

3. incorporate networking into the design and development of all PD programs for their experienced principals.

DISCUSSION

In Chapter 10, key research finding #3 proposed a model underpinned by principal peer-network learning. (Figure 9.5 reproduced here as Figure 11.1).

Figure 11.1: Action research model underpinned by principal peer-network learning
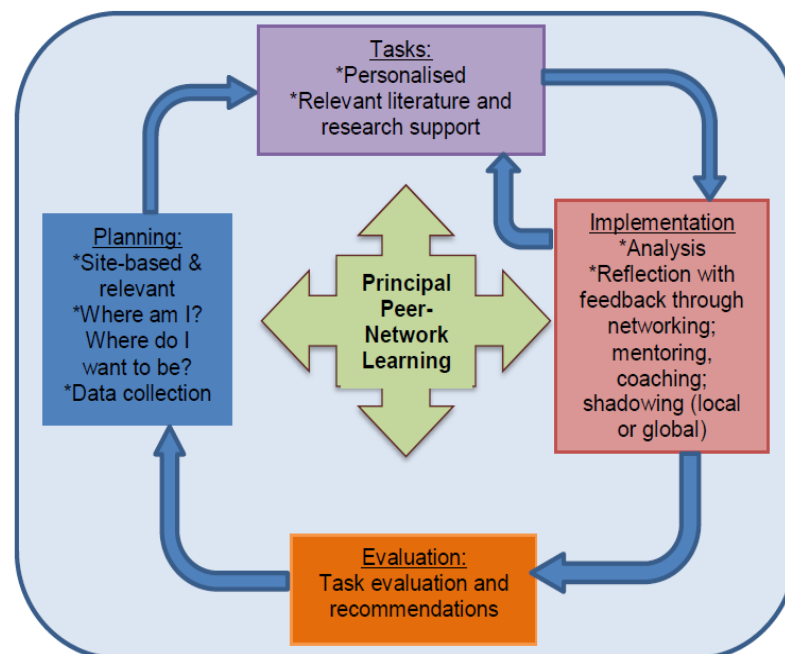
With the distilling of the eight key findings into four "big ideas", a model can be described which captures experienced principals' beliefs about the core components of effective professional

learning. This model, the *Experienced Principals' Professional Learning* (EPPL) model, is shown figuratively in Figure 11.2 below.

Figure 11.2*:* The Experienced Principals' Professional Learning (EPPL) Model
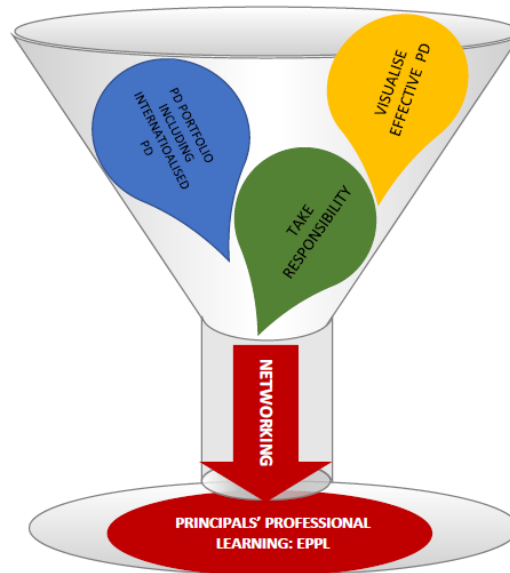
With peer network-learning in mind, this EPPL model as shown in Figure 11.2, funnels three of the "big ideas" (principals' discernment in their selection of PD; what they know works for them; and a PD portfolio that included engagement in internationalised PD) through the fourth "big idea" of collaborative network learning with their peers.

Given that metaphors can convey powerful messages in education (Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2009) the image of a martini glass comes to mind; the model for EPPL invites participation. Three of the big ideas sit tall in this PD framework, supported and underpinned by the fourth big idea, resulting in highly effective professional learning for experienced principals (as perceived by experienced principals themselves).

The EPPL model centres on the concept of principals' "peer-networking" which this study revealed permeated all components of effective and valued professional learning among this group of principals. The model, therefore, brings together the eight key findings and distils these

to the four "big ideas" which the data revealed as promoting effective professional learning during the experienced stage of the principalship.

A key factor to emerge from the research centred on networking principals' professional learning as the means to developing the notion of "collective efficacy" (Donohoo, 2017) or, "the collaborative power of the group" (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2013 p. 37). Not to be confused with the previously held perception describing all informal gatherings of principals as loosely defined "networking", this research has suggested a more thoroughly researched, clearly defined, consciously-designed, purposefully implemented and effectively self-managed and sophisticated networking process generating individual and collective principal efficacy.

The apparent simplicity of the concept of *networking* would appear to have been a primary inhibitor in the past to this strategy receiving the level of status and deliberate attention this study has revealed it deserves. While this concept may appear straightforward at a surface level, the interpretation and implementation into practice are indeed quite complex.

Educational Policy

IMPLICATIONS

Reconceptualising PD Policy

Many challenges exist for policy makers as a result of this research but the most significant rests on the key element of networking principals' professional learning. The re-conceptualising and active support of self-managed and self-initiated networking into a deliberate, highly-valued and powerful professional development strategy would require a significant shift in professional development policy for many educational jurisdictions. This would necessitate principals being trusted to have a greater measure of control over network formation and direction. This would

also require a policy shift with employing authorities actively supporting self-managed networks as opposed to establishing employer-imposed networks.

Implementation would require a high degree of trust by employing authorities and a greater capacity to promote a culture of collaboration and co-operation among schools rather than one of competition. It could be held that this runs counter to the prevailing neo-liberal ideologies that have seen schools more inclined to compete than cooperate both within and across sectors in any jurisdiction (Fink, 2016).

Demographic Policy Demands

At the time of writing, experienced principals in the Government school sector in New South Wales constituted 70.5% of the total number of public school principals in NSW DE schools. This highly significant principal cohort requires greater attention and recognition than has been afforded in the past. This presents significant challenges to educational jurisdictions given that other recent research into workforce working life asserts that people are indeed extending their work lives by now working comfortably into their 70's (Mackay, 2007; Gibbs, 2008; Oplatka, 2010; Marks, 2012). Educational jurisdictions need to engage in new thinking in relation to professional development programs and PL opportunities for experienced principals. In preceding chapters, it was noted that professional development providers currently expend the vast majority of focus, time, resources, energy and research on aspirant and newly-appointed principals with less than five years' experience. Yet, in NSW Government schools, this latter cohort represents just 29.5% of the total principal cohort (Appendix 6.2).

A major implication from this research for policy makers, employing authorities and developers of professional development programs is the need to acknowledge this demographic shift to staying-on in the workforce, which is also a trend in many western countries (Marks, 2012). A

second implication for employing authorities is that valued professional development for this group of principals extends its focus well beyond the immediacy of local priorities.

Internationalised PD policy

The study revealed the need for experienced principals to engage more deeply with their international colleagues. Consequently, policy makers need to be supportive of and facilitate the engagement in, and development of, internationalised PD programs. These internationalised programs would then be a vital component of 21st Century principals' professional learning portfolios. The implications for policy makers are:

1. to encourage and facilitate principals' establishment of networks with their colleagues in local, national and international contexts;

2. to proactively forge linkages with education systems, principals' associations in other jurisdictions around the world;

3. to promote awareness among principals of the available local, national and international professional development opportunities that cater for the needs of experienced principals; and

4. to be proactive in the design, development and implementation of networking-based PD programs that specifically cater for the needs of their experienced principals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations, which follow, for education policy makers centre on three key points:

1. guaranteeing genuine recognition and acknowledgement of the accumulated skills and experiences of this experienced principal cohort when developing professional development programs;

2. ensuring a genuine commitment to valuing, trusting and supporting the self-managed networking for principals' professional learning; and

3. promoting engagement in internationalised professional development in recognition that principals exist in a globalised 21st Century education community.

Principals in this study reported the need for acknowledgement of these three points by educational policy makers in order to fill their perceived void in the current PD landscape for experienced principals. Policy makers need to accept and deliberately promote self-managed networking as a specific powerful professional development strategy for experienced principals.

DISCUSSION

Educational policy drives educational practice. Changes in policy result in changes in practice. The question is how to change policy. Principals, their professional associations and their employing authorities have the potential to impact on educational policy and system change (Fullan, 2011). Emergent practice can be an important factor in policy change.

Educational policy makers need to be informed by the wisdom and expertise within principals' professional associations who represent the accumulated knowledge, skills and experiences of mid and late-career principals. Research based on principals' experiences that then informs policy can then result in more deliberate, purposeful and empowered educational practice (Fullan, 2011). This relationship is shown in Figure 11.3 below.

Figure 11.3: The cycle of Educational practice informing educational policy

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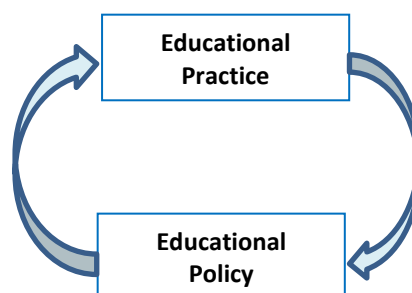
Educational Research

IMPLICATIONS

The findings from this study have contributed to educational leadership research by significantly adding to the current research literature on the mid and late-career stages of a principal's career trajectory and specifically in relation to their professional development needs and experiences.

This study found that:

1. principals' PD needs change as they progress along the career continuum into the experienced stage;

2. experienced principals need to take control in the selection of, and participation in, effective PD programs;

3. experienced principals need to have input into the development of their PD; and

4. participation in self-initiated and self-managed networks with their peers is an essential component of effective professional learning for this cohort.

Importantly, this study also adds to the current research by identifying the need to purposively include opportunities for participation in internationalised professional development programs into the PD portfolio for all experienced principals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From this study's findings it is recommended that similar research be undertaken with experienced principals in mid and late-career principals across other employing authorities in other jurisdictions both nationally and internationally.

It is further recommended that specific research be undertaken into:

1. the still under-researched career trajectory of principals in their mid and late-career stages in the 21st Century globalised context;

2. the impact on school leadership and learning generated by experienced principals' participation in internationalised PD programs;

3. the processes, relationships, learning and outcomes that emerge within a specific network

4. the impact which trust and verification play in the relationship between principals and their employing authority in the success of peer-networked professional learning; and

5. the school effectiveness (measured by staff capacity building and student outcomes) as a result of experienced principals' participation in peer-networked professional learning.

The study also suggested that there is value in further investigating the processes inherent in the formation, development and renewal of networks that principals identify as being highly valuable to their professional learning.

In Conclusion

This study revealed that the professional development needs of experienced principals differ from those of the aspirant and newly-appointed principal. This cohort of experienced principals drawn from Government school principals in the NSW Department of Education in Australia, the largest school system in the southern hemisphere, clearly indicated that the "big ideas" for effective change in experienced principals' professional development primarily involved a deeper and more highly-valued use of networking with their peers. Genuine peer-networking was seen as the most powerful professional learning strategy. While the focus on one school sector in one jurisdiction can be seen to be a limitation of the study, a further review of the contemporary literature that emerged as the study progressed also revealed a growing interest in this area.

Of specific significance is the high priority that experienced principals in this study placed on participation in internationalised professional learning experiences. In a 21st Century globalised education community that demands a more highly professionalised, knowledgeable, informed and effective leadership, this potentially has far-reaching implications for the principalship, professional associations, educational jurisdictions and governments around the world. Certainly, the study revealed the merit in opportunities for principals to see and discuss how colleagues in different jurisdictions are handling contemporary challenges. It is a reminder that, as an international profession, principals do indeed face similar professional challenges and that it is the context that can make their resolution different.

The four "big ideas" that emerged from the findings of this study investigating the PD needs of experienced principals revealed that experienced principals:

- take greater responsibility for sourcing their professional development;

- know (can visualise) what effective professional development looks like for them;

- believe participation in professional development extends beyond their employing authority; their immediate jurisdiction and includes access to internationalised professional development as an essential component in their portfolio of professional learning activities; and

- highly value networking and interaction with their colleagues, which was seen to provide the most effective, beneficial and relevant professional learning.

The significance of these findings has led this researcher to propose the specific recommendations noted in this chapter in regard to educational practice, educational policy and research into educational leadership.

Developing principals to their fullest capacity in the journey into and through the principalship is unquestionably a major priority for all jurisdictions seeking high-performing schools. It is to this end that it is hoped that the insights provided by this study into the professional development needs and professional learning outcomes of a cohort of experienced principals has made a useful contribution.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 3.1 – Coding applied to the study's participants

	Letter coding for participants
MPU	Male Primary Principal: Urban school
FPU	Female Primary Principal: Urban school
MSU	Male Secondary Principal: Urban school
FSU	Female Secondary Principal: Urban school
MPR	Male Primary Principal: Rural school
FPR	Female Primary Principal: Rural school
MSR	Male Secondary Principal: Rural school
FSR	Female Secondary Principal: Rural school
MPC	Male Primary Principal: City school
FPC	Female Primary Principal: City school
MSC	Male Secondary Principal: City school
FSC	Female Secondary Principal: City school
MCR	Male Central Principal: Rural school
FCR	Female Central Principal: Rural school

APPENDIX 3.2 - NSW Primary Principals' Association newsletter advertisement

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING FOR EXPERIENCED PRINCIPALS

Opportunity to participate in research into professional learning for experienced principals

I am a recently retired principal undertaking doctoral research with Macquarie University, into professional development needs and experiences in the established phase of the principalship. An established principal is defined in this research, as someone who has been a principal for 5 years or more. The research will consist of an online questionnaire and interviews.

This research has the support of both the NSWPPA and the NSWSPC. If you are interested in volunteering to participate in this research project, would like to know more about the research, or how you can participate please contact me by August 28th, 2013:

By email on suzanne.lazenby@gmail.com; or
By phone on 0412 960108.

If you have been a principal for 5 years or more, you qualify to volunteer to participate in this valuable research. Confidentiality and anonymity will be central to this research.

Business partners of the New South Wales Primary Principals' Association:

APPENDIX 3.3 - NSW Secondary Principals' Council email

Suzanne Lazenby <suzanne.lazenby@gmail.com>

6/28/13

to liliana.mularczyk.

Hi Lila.....I thought I would send this info through to you before we chat next week......so that you know what I am wanting to talk with you about.

I am seeking the support of the SPC (and PPA – although I have yet to contact Geoff) in conducting my research. In phase 1 I will make contact with a purposively selected group of 12 to interview, and I would like to have the full support of the SPC when I commence this. These interviews will inform an electronic survey (phase 2) that I would like to distribute state-wide…..hopefully with the support and assistance of the SPC and PPA.

The research is a study of the professional learning of principals in the established phase of their careers. The purpose of the study is to specifically focus on the professional development of established principals: their experiences and the perceptions of their professional development needs…….especially in the current climate of unprecedented change.

The study is being conducted to meet the requirements for a doctoral degree under the supervision of Dr Norman McCulla, Faculty of Human Sciences, Department of Education.

During phase 1 of the research (interviews with a cross section of public school principals in NSW), an audiotape will be made of the conversations for the purpose of confirming the accuracy of the data I collect and possible transcription. Participation in the study is voluntary and no payments will be made to participants in the research.

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study are confidential, except as required by law. No individual will be identified in any publication of the results. Data will be accessed by both Dr Norm McCulla and the researcher. A summary of the results of the data can be made available to participants and principals' associations on request and will forwarded to you electronically.
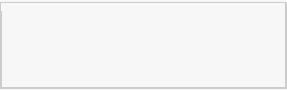
I am really excited by this project. Ethics application has been approved and DET has said I won't need SERAP if I work through the associations.

Cheers :-)))

Suzanne Lazenby <suzanne.lazenby@gmail.com>	7/2/13
to liliana	

==Just a quick note to thank you most sincerely for the support the SPC is giving me with my research. I look forward to working with you over the next couple of years as the research unfolds and I have data to share.==
Hope you enjoy the conference and the holidays.
Be in touch soon to finalise time on 17th
Thanks again....
Cheers :-)))

Sue Lazenby
Sent from my iPad

<u>Reply</u>   <u>Forward</u>

Mularczyk, Lila <Liliana.Mularczyk@det.nsw.edu.au>   7/2/13

to me

==No [problem at all.==
==Lila Mularczyk==
==Lila (Liliana) Mularczyk JP==
==Principal, Merrylands High School==
==President, The NSW Secondary Principals' Council==
==NSW ACEL Executive==
==FACEL(NSW and Nat.)==
Work   0296329401
Mobile   0417284227

_____

From: Suzanne Lazenby [suzanne.lazenby@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, 2 July 2013 9:27 PM
To: Mularczyk, Lila
Subject: Sue's research

Opportunity to participate in research into professional learning for experienced principals

As a recently retired principal I am seeking your assistance with some important doctoral research that I am undertaking with Macquarie University, into the professional development needs and experiences in the established phase of the principalship. An established principal is defined in this research, as someone who has been a principal for 5 years or more. The research will consist of an online questionnaire and possible follow up interviews.

It is hoped that the outcomes of this research will inform professional development providers, to better cater for the unique professional learning needs of the established principal.

This research has the support of both the NSW PPA and the NSWSPC. If you are interested in volunteering to participate in this research project please click on the link below:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/G5TKGKF

Confidentiality and anonymity will be central to this research. Full details are available on the website in the invitation to participate.

If you would like to participate in a follow-up interview, please click on the link below to leave your name, contact details and preferences:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LCQGZBQ

The survey will close on 31st March, 2014.

Sue Lazenby

APPENDIX 3.5 - Korean Cultural Exchange Program email

Sent Items
Wednesday, 14 August 2013 10:05 AM

Hi Hanjoo

I have attached the invitation to participate in my research. If you could send it out on my behalf..............that would be terrific.
All the best,
Once again, many thanks for supporting his valuable research
Cheers :-)))
Sue
김한주 [kimhj@moe.go.kr]
Actions
To:
M
Lazenby, Suzanne
Tuesday, 13 August 2013 4:31 PM
You replied on 14/08/2013 10:05 AM.

Hello Sue
Congratulations on your prolonged education career at Macquarie Univ.
If you need any assistance, just name it afterwards.
Nice to hear from you!!
Take care.
Hanjoo

APPENDIX 3.6 - China Program email

Lazenby, Suzanne
To:
Fisher, Mandy
Sent Items
Friday, 16 August 2013 2:05 PM

Many, many thanks for doing this and supporting the research.
Cheers Sue :-)))
Sue Lazenby

Sent from my iPad
Fisher, Mandy
In response to the message from Lazenby, Suzanne, 9/08/2013

To:
Lazenby, Suzanne
Friday, 16 August 2013 12:44 PM
You forwarded this message on 16/08/2013 2:05 PM.

Invitation sent by email to a range of people so hopefully some response. If not let me know and I can follow up for you.
Mandy
Mandy Fisher Project Officer Leadership and Regional Relations Northern Sydney Region Department of Education and Training 9941 3000 0422008523

Lazenby, Suzanne
To:
Fisher, Mandy
Attachments:
Research Invitation 210713.pdf (6 KB) [Open as Web Page]

Sent Items
Friday, 9 August 2013 3:41 PM
Hi Mandy..... many thanks :-)))
Fisher, Mandy
To:
Lazenby, Suzanne

Friday, 9 August 2013 3:37 PM
You replied on 9/08/2013 3:41 PM.

Happy to oblige Sue Away at the Asia Education Conference next week in Melbourne so if you send it asap I shall also mention it to those down there who are some of those to whom I would send it.
Mandy

Lazenby, Suzanne
Actions

To:
Fisher, Mandy
Sent Items
Friday, 9 August 2013 2:55 PM

Hi Mandy

Mandy, I was wondering if you would be able to help me.....I am enrolled in my doctorate at Macquarie Uni with Norm McCulla as my supervisor. My research area is the professional development of experienced/established principals - their experiences, expectations and perceptions of their needs. Recently, an invitation to participate in the research, was published in both the SPC bulletin and the PPA What's Hot. I would really like participants in internationalised professional development experiences (eg China) to volunteer for the electronic survey, I was wondering if you would be able to email out the invitation (i would send to you) using your distribution list, to principals who have been to China with the programs you facilitate.
 Many thanks Mandy
Cheers:-))
Sue

Sue Lazenby
Sent from my iPad

APPENDIX 3.7 - Leading Educators Around the Planet P/L email

From: warren marks (warren.marks@det.nsw.edu.au)
Sent: Friday, 9 August 2013 3:57 PM
To: ██
██
██
████████

Subject: Doctoral Research: Internationalised PD

Dear LEAPers

May I encourage you all to accept the invitation from Suzanne Lazenby (see below) to participate in the extremely valuable and worthwhile research project which Suzanne is undertaking as part of her PhD studies through Macquarie University.

The topic "Professional Development for Established Principals" is one which is highly relevant to the demands of the 21st century leadership of schools. I am sure that you will find your participation personally worthwhile; and your perceptions will be invaluable to the research findings.

Regards,
Warren Marks
(Director LEAP NSW)

Hi everyone.................hope this email finds you well.......

Recently both the SPC and PPA published the attached invitation to participate in my doctoral research study into the experiences, expectations and perceived PD needs of experienced/established principals. I apologise if you have already seen this invitation to participate in the research, but, as internationalised professional development experiences are a significant part of this study, I am hoping that you will seriously consider accepting this invitation and participating in the online survey next term.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or would like to discuss the research in any way.
Many thanks

Cheers
Sue :-)))

Reflective Journal entries: 10/4/2014

10.4.2014

Ch2: Planning

Paragraph

(Research Design overview & Methodology)

I "This research examines" – State the phenomena here!

II "The methods employed to achieve this
exploration were both quantitative (a cross-
Check J + Chris → sectional questionnaire) and qualitative
for this (individual interviews).
  • data collected & analysed from
    initial exploratory interviews
  • this analysis, tog c literature
    review, informed the design &
    development of a survey instrument –
    an online questionnaire.
  • Questions guiding the research were
drawn from the lit as outlined in chapter 1 (State
(Research Questions)   questions here)

III "Study is based on ⸺.

      write here about perception, experiences
      etc
      see J + C on perspectives? for info

23/08/2014

Red - Conference
Blue - Networking
Green - Programs
Action Research - Brown
PPA - Orange
ILSN - Purple.

23-8-14.

① Use hard copies to give codes to words.
② Do Table

Q27: Describe which types ...	
CODE	Response

③ Colour words according to category.

Steps to Analyse # Investigate statistics analysis
Q27, Q28, Q38

↓   ut "unsure"

① Using Survey Monkey :- categorise responses using terms
                             utilised throughout survey for
Began Q27.   consistency ie Conf; Mentorp; usw; Netw...
Repeat process for   - Filter for categories noting indivd
Q28 & Q38   responses in each category
                            - Review "My Categories" for response
                               data%
                            - Record in table form, category
                               responses: Top 5 categories
                               and code each one
                               according to format.

See journal p18 for steps to
              emerging themes for interviews
                        ✗.

Research is ī experienced principals. Establish this
         first up in my writing & henceforth refer
              to them as "principals".

         Gets cumbersome using "established" every time
                 I refer to the principals in
                      the study.
Principals reflecting on their Newly Appointed Phase (NAP) and
      their current Experienced Phase (EP)

30/12/2014

288

30.12.14.

Synthesis of Chapters

Chapter 1 → Career Trajectories: Teacher
↓
Principal → paucity of research
into P. C/Traj
What PD is there for EP? (seque...

* Why researching
the PD for EP?
paucity! make sure that is
clearly stated   6/1/2015

Chapter 2 → Prof development: Recruitment / Preparation / Success...
Early - YB Principal
Exp. (mid + late career) Principal
↓
paucity of research into
area of PD for EP
set in context of C21 × i18N (seque...

* Why researching
PD for EP?
paucity! make
sure this is clearly
articulate research of EPship
in other areas of
eg gender, festival   6/1/2015

Chapter 3 → C21 Education/Schooling; Globalisation & i18N
↓
link Eco ō Edu: OECD.
Western countries ed² policies
(Canada, UK, USA, NZ)   6/1/201...
Global ed community sharing
ideas/initiatives   ✓
↓
Australian scene → federal mov...
↓
NSW → public princ
+ changing ro...

PD needed
support C21 P...

APPENDIX 4.2 - SERAP application email

From: Stevens, Robert <Robert.Stevens@det.nsw.edu.au>
Date: Fri, Apr 19, 2013 at 3:13 PM
Subject: RE: SERAP Applications
To: Norman McCulla <norman.mcculla@mq.edu.au>

Dear Norm

Thank you for your inquiry.

Since Sue is not proposing to recruit participants through schools – but rather through PPA and SPC and participants in professional development programs, in my view Sue is not required to lodge a SERAP application.

Please give me a call on 9244 5060 if you would like to discuss.

Have a great week end.

Thanks and all best

Rob

Dr Robert Stevens

Manager, Quality Assurance Systems

Policy, Planning and Reporting

Level 1, 1 Oxford Street Darlinghurst NSW 2010

Locked Bag 53 Darlinghurst NSW 1300

T (02) 9244 5060

E robert.stevens@det.nsw.edu.au

APPENDIX 4.3 - First ethics application email

On Wed, May 29, 2013 at 12:11 PM, Fhs Ethics <fhs.ethics@mq.edu.au> wrote:

Dear Dr McCulla,

Re: "The professional learning of established principals"(5201300326)

Thank you for your recent correspondence. Your responses have addressed the issues raised by the Faculty of Human Sciences Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee, effective 29th May 2013. This email constitutes ethical approval only.

This research meets the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). The National Statement is available at the following web site:

http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/e72.pdf.

The following personnel are authorised to conduct this research:

Dr Norman McCulla
Mrs Sue Mary Lazenby

APPENDIX 4.4 - Second ethics application email

Dear Dr McCulla,

Re: "The professional learning of established principals (Phase 2)"(5201400075)

Thank you for your recent correspondence. Your response has addressed the issues raised by the Faculty of Human Sciences Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee and approval has been granted, effective 3rd March 2014. This email constitutes ethical approval only.

This research meets the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). The National Statement is available at the following web site:

http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/e72.pdf.

The following personnel are authorised to conduct this research:

Dr Norman McCulla
Mrs Sue Mary Lazenby

School of Education
MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY NSW 2109 AUSTRALIA

Phone **+61 (0)2 9850 8650**
Fax   +61 (0)2 9850 8674
Email   norman.mcculla@mq.edu.au

22/05/2013
Suzanne Lazenby
PO Box 71
18 Wattle Ridge Rd
Hill Top NSW 2575

Participant Information and Consent Form

Project: The Professional Learning of Established Principals

I am writing to invite your participation in the above research project.

You are invited to participate in a study of the professional learning of principals in the established phase of their careers. The purpose of the study is to specifically focus on the professional development of established principals: their experiences and the perceptions of their professional development needs.

The study is being conducted to meet the requirements for a doctoral degree under the supervision of Dr Norman McCulla, Faculty of Human Sciences, Department of Education. He can be contacted on either 02 9850 8650 or by email at norman.mcculla@mq.edu.au.

Participation in the study is voluntary. If you decide to participate, I will arrange a suitable time for a telephone interview using the attached questions to guide our conversation. During that initial contact I will outline the types of questions I will be asking and an approximate duration of the interview. An audiotape will be made of our conversation for the purpose of confirming the accuracy of the data I collect and possible transcription. Participation in the study is voluntary and no payments will be made to participants in the research.

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study are confidential, except as required by law. No individual will be identified in any publication of the results. You will not be identified in the study. Data will be accessed by both Dr Norm McCulla and the researcher. A summary of the results of the data can be made available to you on request and will forwarded to you electronically.

www.mq.edu.au

Everything that you say will be treated in the strictest confidence by me. Any personal information or details gathered in the course of the interview will be confidential. You will not be identified in any way. I am interested in identifying the broader themes that arise from the personal stories of those that I interview. Our interview will take approximately 30- 45 minutes. It can be scheduled at the time of day that best suits your needs.

You will be provided with a draft report arising from the interviews, and your comments invited. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to participate and if you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

If you agree to participate, a consent form is attached for your signature and return to me. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

I invite your participation in the study.

Yours sincerely

Suzanne Lazenby

MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

Consent Form

PROJECT: The Professional Learning of Established Principals

I _____ have read and understand the information above, and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this research, knowing that I can withdraw from further participation in the research at any time without consequence. I have been given a copy of this form to keep.

Participant's
Name:_____
__
(Block letters)

Participant's Signature: _____ Date: ____/_____/2013

Investigator's Name:

_____
(Block letters)
Investigator's   Signature: _____   Date: ____/____/2013

The ethical aspects of this study have been approved by the Macquarie University Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any ethical aspect of your participation in this research, you may contact the Committee through the Director, Research Ethics (telephone [02] 9850 7854, fax [02] 9850 8799, email: ethics@mq.edu.au). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated, and you will be informed of the outcome.

(INVESTIGATOR'S [OR PARTICIPANT'S] COPY)

APPENDIX 4.6 - Third ethics application email

From: "Fhs Ethics" <fhs.ethics@mq.edu.au>
Date: 18 May 2015 11:49:56 am AEST
To: "Dr Norman McCulla" <norman.mcculla@mq.edu.au>
Cc: "Mrs Sue Mary Lazenby" <suzanne.lazenby@students.mq.edu.au>
Subject: RE: HS Ethics Application - Approved (5201500162)(Con)

Dear Dr McCulla,

Re: "The professional learning of established principals"(5201500162)

Thank you very much for your response. Your response has addressed the issues raised by the Faculty of Human Sciences Human Research Ethics Sub-Committee and approval has been granted, effective 18th May 2015. This email constitutes ethical approval only.

This research meets the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). The National Statement is available at the following web site:

http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/e72.pdf.

The following personnel are authorised to conduct this research:

Dr Norman McCulla
Mrs Sue Mary Lazenby

APPENDIX 4.7 - Categorisation and collation of responses for Phase 1

PD Useful in Preparation	PD Useful Newly Appointed Principals	PD Useful Experienced Stage
mentoring & 360	none	LEAP[1:] shadowing
mentoring; networking	ISER Consultant Leaders Program[1]	Action Research; sustained progs
QT Award[1]; self-assess; reflection; discussion	CAProgs[2;] networking; collaborative discussion; engaging; in situ; relevant	TLSIP[2]; relevant; in-situ; action learning;
informal mentoring; relieving; role models	mentor & coach training; collegial networking	*powerful learning*; self-directed; *purposeful*
TPPP-hypotheticals[2]; role models; relieving; delegation	visiting colleagues to see best practice; collegial networking	small school networking; needs -based; relationship building
Masters[3]; CSLM[4]; on the job learning; DET courses	Induction prog[3]; collegial networks; informal mentoring; SEG meeting	formal mentoring; iPIE self-directed PD; Community of Schools (CoS) networking
informal mentoring; relieving; role models	just in time; networking; ISER L'ship Strategy[4]; SEG compliance	ongoing; long term; relevant; collegial networking
reflection; informal mentor; role modelling; demonstration school	learning communities; principal collegial groups; relationships; action research	Action Research; sustained progs
learning on the job; reflection; deep discussion; informal mentoring	mentoring; role modelling; networking; dialogue & feedback	relevant to current personal need; networking; *big picture*
exec network; PSP[5] agenda & action research project; ELDP[6]	Covey[5]; Leading Aust Schools project[6]; LEAP[7]; networking; site based learning	Leadership Fellowship[3]; self-driven, research based; *motivating*
networking = 2	networking = 8	networking = 4
mentoring = 6	mentoring = 3	mentoring = 2
reflection = 3	reflection =1	reflection = 0
self-directed = 0	self-directed = 0	self-directed = 3
relieving and on the job= 5	over time = 0	over time = 3

relevant = 0	relevant = 3	relevant = 4
role modelling = 4	role modelling = 1	role modelling = 0
challenging = 0	challenging =	challenging = 0
relational = 0	relational = 1	relational = 1
active = 4	active = 5	active = 3
Programs = 6	Programs = 7	CoS meetings = 0
Self-assess = 2	SEG Meetings = 1	Programs = 3
		research based = 1
		descriptive

APPENDIX 4.8 - Phase 1: Interview recording sheet

DIMENSION 1 – Individual profile

<u>**Item 1:**</u> **Personal Profile**

Name: _____   **School: _____**

Date of interview: __/___/20__

Gender: M / F   **DoB: ___/___/_____**   **School's address: _____**

Contact details: email: _____   Ph: _____

Question	Response/Comment
Thank you for volunteering your time to meet with me to talk about your career – in particular, the professional development that has supported you through this time and the challenges you face in the role.	
DIMENSION 1 – Professional profile	
<u>**Item 2**</u>: (Teaching Profile) Would you like to begin by telling me about your career: * your path to the principalship; * the schools you have been principal of; * the length of time in the principalship; * about your current school; how long you have been in your current school?	Pathway: Previous schools (as principal) and size: Length of time in prinicpalship: No. of years at current school: _____ Size: P1 P2 P3 P4 P5 P6 SSP PH1 PH2 Central _____ Region: _____ Spec Ed units: _____ OC classes:_____ Number of Staff: _____ Socio-economic status: _____ Additional funding/programs: _____ Multicultural programs_____ Other e.g. mature staff/young/mix; P & C:
DIMENSION 2 – Professional development processes	
<u>**Item 3:**</u> Can you tell me a little about what	

stands out in your mind about the kinds of professional development that was useful to you in **preparing** to be a principal? In your **first five years** as a principal? (1.3) (8.1)	PD most useful in preparation: PD in first 5 years: Less useful:
Item 4: If you were to conceive of professional development as emanating basically from local, regional, state, national and international sources, what proportions **have characterised** your own professional development? • What proportion **would you like** to have seen characterise your professional development? • If there is a difference, what makes this so?	<u>Actual</u> <u>Would've liked</u> Local: Regional: State: National: International: Difference? Yes/No…………………….Why?

DIMENSION 3 – Professional development program experiences

Item 5: Have you participated in any internationalised professional development programs? (5.1)
  * Would you name them please?
 	
  * How did you hear about the program/s? (5.2)
  * What were your expectations about the professional development you were about to experience **– prior** to program commencement? (5.3)
  * How, and in what ways, if at all, did the program **meet** those expectations? (5.4)
 	
  * Is there any connection between what you learnt; the teaching and learning programs; and teacher development in your school?
 	
  * Can you tell me about **your** professional learning as a result of participating in the program/s? (5.5)
	Program names:
	_____
	
	Heard about programs:
	
	Expectations:
	
	School changes?
	
	Prof learning as a result of program:

Item 6: Thinking about your professional development during your experienced years:
   * What type of professional development resulted in significant professional learning for you?
   * What type of professional development do you value the most?
	Activities/strategies producing significant learning:

DIMENSION 4 - Change

Item 7: At this current stage of your career, given what you know now: (8.3) * What do you now look for in your professional development?	Challenges: Preparation for challenges

• What are the major challenges that face principals generally **now**? In the **future**? • In what way, if at all, has your professional development prepared and supported you in addressing these challenges? • What types of professional development would you see as being more appropriate in meeting those needs?	PD appropriate to meet challenges?
Thank you very much for your time today. Before we finish, is there anything else you would like to add?	

Notes:

Dimension 1: Items 1 & 2

 Dimension 2: Items 3 & 4

Dimension 3: Items 5 & 6

Dimension 4: Item 7

APPENDIX 4.9 - Phase 3: In-depth interview questions' recording sheet

Item 1: Personal Profile

Name: **School:**   **Date of interview:**

Gender: **School's address:**

Contact details: email: **Ph:**

Thank you for volunteering. Would you mind if we taped our interview? It will assist me in ensuring that I get the words correct in your responses.

Can I start by asking whether you have you worked past your optional retirement age?   Yes/No

[Item numbers relate to survey item numbers]

 # What does self-reflection look like for you?

 # Do you source much PD locally/regionally?

INTERVIEW QUESTION	RESPONSE
(Item 2.2) 1. As an experienced principal, have you (or are you) being mentored? Why/why not? [PROBES: 73.24% indicated more heavily involved in early years. Do/have you mentored less experienced principals? Issues: availability; willing to accept; relationship based]	
(Item 2.4) 2. The survey indicated that experienced principals rely less on the DEC to provide their PD than they did in their early years? Is this your experience? Why do you think this is/is not so? [PROBES: Why do you look outside DEC? Availability of PD? Experience has taught you about options? Taking more responsibility for your PD so are more confident in seeking your own PD?]	
(Item 2.5) 3. The survey indicated that 40% of Principals are engaged in action research projects. Are you – or have you been – engaged in action research? Why do you think only 40% are engaged in action research?	

[PROBES: Availability of action research years ago was less. Would you be interested in engaging in an action research project?] Observe – reflect – act – evaluate – modify – implement – observe – reflect….	
(Item 2.6) 4. *"Structured, formal PD programs: goal oriented; have intended outcomes; are relevant to your current career stage; have a framework; occur over time; have tasks set within the course of the program."* As an experienced principal, have *you personally* undertaken any structured, formal PD programs? Why/why not? [PROBE: How effective have those programs been? Why do you think this is the case? How would you have modified the program/s?] As an experienced principal, have you been engaged in any internationalised PD programs? Can you please describe them for me: what did they look like? [PROBE: What, if any, were the outcomes for you; your staff; your school?]	
(Item 3.1) 5. As an experienced Principal how effective, if at all, do you find conferences in your PD? Why/ why not? [PROBE: What aspects of the conference do you find effective? Networking; motivational speakers; self-directed; how useful? Attendance at conferences in the absence of other PD?]	
(Item 3.3) 6. How and in what ways, if at all, have your professional learning needs changed across your principalship? [PROBE: as an early years' principal what did you look for or engage in? Is it still the same? Do you now look for coaching? Networking? Formal programs?	

(Item 4.1/2/5) 7. Principals in the survey indicated that they would rank Leadership PD (3.30) and Change Management (2.95) as priorities. Do these match your preferences? What would be your other preference areas? [PROBE: Principals also indicated that they would be interested in being coached. Would you be interested in being coached?]	
(Item 4.5) 8. If you were to design a PD program for your experienced principal colleagues - drawing from your past professional learning and PD experiences – what would it include? (e.g. mentoring, coaching, shadowing, action research, research, data, a framework, a time frame, assessment tasks, reflection etc etc etc) [PROBE: use cards – select the 5 most preferred components………..have some blank cards]	

NOTES:

APPENDIX 4.10 - Themes linked from Phase 2 questionnaire item numbers to Phase 3 follow-up in-depth interview questions

SURVEY ITEM NUMBERS	EMERGING THEME	POSSIBLE FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
2.4.1, 2.4.2 3.1.1, 3.1.2 3.2.1 3.3.1, 4.1.1, 4.1.2 4.2.1, 4.2.2 4.5.1, 4.5.2 [interview questions Q#2 (Item 2.4); Q#5 (Item 3.1); Q#6 (Item 3.3); Q#7 (Item 4.1/4.2/4.5); Q#8 (Item 4.5)]	Theme #1: Established principals take ownership of their professional development Theme #5: Established principals are unsure of what they consider are essential elements in their PD programs.	(2) The survey indicated that experienced principals rely less on the DEC to provide their PD than they did in their early years. Is this your experience? Why do you think this is/is not so? (5) As an experienced principal, how effective, if at all, do you find conferences in your PD? Why/why not? (7) Principals in the survey indicated that they would rank Leadership PD (3.30) and Change Management (2.95) as priorities. Do these match your preferences? What would be your other preference areas? (8) If you were to design a PD program for your experienced principal colleagues - drawing from your past professional learning and PD experiences – what would it include? (e.g. mentoring, coaching, shadowing, action research, research, data, a framework, a time frame, assessment tasks, reflection etc etc etc)
2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.5.3, 2.5.4 2.6.1, 2.6.2, 2.6.3 [interview questions Q#3 (Item 2.5); Q# 4 (item 2.6)]	Theme #1: Established principals take ownership of their professional development Theme #2: Established principals find that structured, formal PD programs are less useful in the experienced stage of their career.	(3) The survey indicated that 40% of experienced principals are engaged in action research projects. Are you – or have you been - engaged in action research? Why do you think only 40% are engaged in action research? *"Structured, formal PD programs: goal oriented; have intended outcomes; are relevant; have a framework; occur over*

		time; have tasks set within the course of the program." (4a) As an experienced principal, have *you personally* undertaken any structured, formal PD programs? Why/why not? (4b) As an experienced principal, have you been engaged in any internationalised PD programs? Can you please describe them for me: what did they look like? What, if any, were the outcomes for you; your staff; your school?
2.1.1, 2.1.2 2.2.1, 2.2.2 2.3.1, 2.3.2 [interview questions Q#1 (Item 2.1/2.2/2.3); Q#6 (Item 2.3)]	Theme #3: Principals remain interested in participating in mentoring, coaching, shadowing and networking throughout their career. Theme #1: Established principals take ownership of professional development.	(1) As an experienced principal, have you (or are you) being mentored? Why/why not? (6) How and in what way, if at all, have your professional learning needs changed across your principalship?
2.1.1, 2.1.2 2.2.1, 2.2.2 2.3.1, 2.3.2 2.4.1, 2.4.2 2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.5.3, 2.5.4 2.6.1, 2.6.2, 2.6.3 3.1.1, 3.1.2 3.2.1 3.3.1, 4.1.1, 4.1.2 4.2.1, 4.2.2 4.5.1, 4.5.2 [interview pre-question & Q#8 (Item 4.5)]	Theme #4: "Staying on" in the principalship will change the landscape of professional development provided for late-career principals. Theme #5: Established principals are unsure of what they consider are essential elements in their PD programs.	(Introductory question) Have you reached or are you working beyond your retirement age? (8) As a principal who has reached retirement age or has worked past their retirement age, what would your ideal professional development model look like?

APPENDIX 4.11 - Phase 2: Dimensions, categories and emerging themes

DIMENSION	CATEGORY	EMERGING THEME
1. Individual Profile		
2. PD Processes	Networking	Networking is less important in the neophyte stage.
	Mentoring	Mentoring became less important as my career progressed.
	Self-reflection	Self-reflection is an important component of principal preparation.
	Responsibility	Experienced principals search for their own professional development.
	Active Learning	Types of active learning vary across career stages.
	Programs	Formal, structured programs are more relevant inn earlier career stages.
3. PD Program Experiences	Articulation	The capacity to articulate what works in principals' professional learning, is linked to the amount and variety of PD programs already experienced.
	Evaluation	Experienced principals use descriptive terms when evaluating professional learning experiences.
	Experiences	Experienced principals' PD experiences inform their preferred model of PD service delivery.
4. Change	Change Management	Managing change is a current challenge for NSW DEC principals.
	New Paradigm (LSLD)	Understanding and implementation of LSLD is an issue for principals.
	Politicisation	The political agenda is posing a challenge to principals.
	21st Century Education	Current changes in NSW DEC schools are based on global movements in education.
	Evaluation	Experienced principals do not feel their PD has prepared them for the current changes.

APPENDIX 4.12 - Phase 3: In-depth interview questions linked to dimensions, categories, item numbers and themes

DIMENSION	CATEGORY	SURVEY ITEM NUMBERS	EMERGING THEME	INTERVIEW QUESTION
1. Individual Profile	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2. PD Processes	1. Networking	2.1.1, 2.1.2	Networking is more important in the neophyte stage than in preparation.	[Included in question linked to Item 3.3.1]
	2. Mentoring	2.2.1, 2.2.2	Mentoring became less important as my career progressed.	As an experienced principal, have your expectations about being mentored changed in any way? (Probes: Were you mentored in preparing for the principalship? In your early years in it? Are you being mentored at present? If so, how? 73.24% of Principals responding to the survey indicated that they were heavily engaged in Mentoring in their earlier years. Would you like to comment on this in relation to your own experiences?)
	3. Self-reflection	2.3.1, 2.3.2	Self-reflection is an important component of principal preparation.	Survey results are explicit and clear.
	4. Responsibility	2.4.1, 2.4.2	Experienced principals search for their own	As an experienced principal, how much and in what ways do you now rely on the DEC for your

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			professional development	professional development? (<u>Probe:</u> 96.50% of principals in the survey indicated that as experienced principals they were relying less on the employing authority (the NSW DEC) for the provision of their PD? Would you like to comment on that?) Principals indicated that as experienced principals they rely less on the DEC for the provision of their PD? Is this your experience? Why do you think this is/is not so?
	5. Active Learning/School Visitations	2.5.1, 2.5.2, 2.5.3, 2.5.4	Types of active learning vary across career stages.	As an experienced principal how and in what way do you engage in action research projects? (<u>Probe:</u> 23.08% of principals in the survey indicated that they were involved in action learning projects in their early years of the principalship. 40.56% of principals indicated that they are engaged in action research projects in the experienced stage of their career. Would you like to comment on that?)
	6. Structured PD Programs	2.6.1, 2.6.2, 2.6.3	Formal, structured programs are more relevant inn earlier career stages.	As an experienced principal, to what extent have you engaged in structured, formal PD programs? Has this in any way, if at all, changed from your early years as a principal?

				(Probe: 46.48% of principals in the survey indicated that their engagement in structured, formal PD programs their earlier years in the principalship was very useful. 26.57% of these principals indicated that these programs were very useful in the experienced stage. Would you like to comment on this?) As an experienced principal, to what extent have you engaged I internationalised PD programs? Has this in any way, if at all, changed from your early years as a principal? (Probe: 27% of principals in the survey indicated that they had participated in internationalised PD. Would you like to comment on this?)
3. PD Program Experiences	**1.Articulation**	3.1.1, 3.1.2	The capacity to articulate what works in principals' professional learning, is linked to the amount and variety of PD programs already experienced.	As an experienced principal how effective, if at all, do you find conferences in your professional development? (Probe: 55.0% principals indicated that conferences work best for them as PD. Would you care to comment on this?)
	2. Evaluation	3.2.1	Experienced principals use descriptive terms when evaluating professional	[Included in 4.1, 4.2 & 4.5]

			learning experiences.	
	3. Experiences	3.3.1	Experienced principals' PD experiences inform their preferred model of PD service delivery.	What is, or are, your preferred ways of learning at this stage of your career? (<u>Probe:</u> Principals ranked Networking first (5.64) and self-directed learning second (4.76) as their preferred ways of learning at this stage of their career. Do you have any comment on this in relation to your own experience?)
4. Change	**1. Change Management**	4.1.1, 4.1.2	Managing change is a current challenge for NSW DEC principals.	If the DEC as your employing authority was to offer to support your professional development, in what area(s) would you like it to be?
	2. New Paradigm	4.2.1, 4.2.2	Understanding and implementation of LSLD is an issue for principals.	(<u>Probe:</u> Around 90% of experienced principals in the survey indicated that they wanted access to targeted PL to support current system changes.
	5. Evaluation	4.5.1, 4.5.2	Experienced principals do not feel their PD has prepared them for the current changes.	Do you have any comment that you would like to make on that? Principals in the survey indicated that they would rank Leadership PD first (3.30) and Change Management second (2.95). What might this PD look like? 30.22% of experienced principals in the survey indicated that they would be interested in being coached. Would you be interested in being

				coached? Would you be interested in being coached? If so, why? Have you worked past your retirement age? [As a principal who has worked past their retirement age, what would your ideal professional development model look like?]
	3. Politicisation	4.3.1	The political agenda is posing a challenge to principals.	Survey results are explicit and clear.
	4. 21st Century Education	4.4.1	Current changes in NSW DEC schools are based on global movements in education.	Survey results are explicit and clear.

APPENDIX 4.13 - Pilot online questionnaire

Phase 2 Doctoral Research Survey

1. Default Section

*1. Name

[   ]

2. If you would be interested in being interviewed at a later date, please add your contact details below:

[   ]

3. Gender

○ Male

○ Female

4. I was born between

○ 1930 - 1945

○ 1946 - 1964

○ 1965 - 1979

○ 1980 - 1994

5. The geographic location of my school is:

○ Rural (more than 200km from Sydney CBD)

○ Urban (within 50 - 200km from Sydney CBD)

○ City (within 50 km from Sydney CBD)

6. School classification

○ Secondary

○ Central

○ Primary (P/K-6)

Other (please specify)

[   ]

7. As an established principal, I have

○ 5 - 9 years of experience in the principalship   ○ 15 - 19 years of experience in the principalship

○ 10 - 14 years of experience in the principalship   ○ 20+ years of experience in the principalship

8. I have been the substantive principal at my current school for:

○ 0-4 years   ○ 10+ years

○ 5-9 years

9. I have been a substantive principal of:

◯ 1 school

◯ 2 schools

◯ 3 schools

◯ 4+ schools

10. I anticipate retiring

☐ Within the next 5 years

☐ 6+ years

☐ I have no plans to retire at this stage

11. I began my teaching career

◯ 5 - 9 years ago

◯ 10 - 19 years ago

◯ 20 - 29 years ago

◯ 30+ years ago

12. When reflecting on the current established phase of your principalship, please comment on the following statements about sourcing your professional development:

	Strongly agree	agree	unsure	disagree	strongly disagree
I am motivated to find my own professional development activities, from a variety of sources.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
My professional development is provided solely by NSW DEC.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
The provision of my professional development is the sole responsibility of NSWDEC.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
The majority of my professional development is sourced within my local area.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I seek professional development at a state level.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I seek professional development at a national level.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I look for international experiences to enrich my professional development.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

13. During my principalship, I have participated in professional development overseas:

◯ Yes

◯ Not yet; but am interested in doing so (Please go to question 17)

◯ No (Please go to question 17)

14. I have participated in (tick as many as appropriate):

☐ International conferences held outside Australia

☐ International study tours

☐ International peer shadowing programs

☐ Research fellowships involving overseas travel

☐ Cultural exchange programs (eg Korea)

☐ Student visitation programs to other countries

☐ Other (please specify)

[ ]

15. What were your expectations prior to your international experience:

☐ validation of existing practice

☐ reflection of current practice

☐ introduction and exposure to new practice

☐ increased collegial networking

☐ articulate and clarify my educational practice and philosophies

☐ increase my knowledge of global trends in education

☐ Other (please specify)

[ ]

16. Did participation meet your expectations:

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ Other (please specify)

[ ]

17. Please comment on the following statements:

	strongly agree	agree	unsure	disagree	strongly disagree
It is important to be aware of education trends on a global scale.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Experiencing another education system helps me to understand my own.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Striving to understand current educational change supports me in the principalship.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
As educational leaders, we are preparing our students to be global citizens.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Experiencing education internationally helps me lead my school community in the 21st Century.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Comment:

18. At this stage of your career, what do you look for in your professional development?

☐ networking opportunities

☐ mentoring/coaching

☐ shadowing

☐ programs over time

☐ action-research learning based programs

☐ relevance

☐ site-based specific

☐ self-directed

☐ Other (please specify)

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19. When reflecting on your professional development as a principal, please comment on the following statements as they apply to you?

	strongly agree	agree	unsure	disagree	strongly disagree
There never seems to be enough time to participate in PD for myself.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I have taken responsibility for finding my own professional development from a variety of sources.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Systemic bureaucracy values compliance ahead of creativity and risk taking.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I regularly discuss my professional learning needs with my colleagues.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I have only participated in NSW DEC mandatory professional development.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
There is difficulty in finding professional development activities/programs that cater for experienced principals.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I look for professional development that challenges me.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
My professional learning is greatest when it involves site relevant, current, active participation over time.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

20. As an employee of the NSW Public Service:

	strongly agree	agree	unsure	disagree	strongly disagree
I feel that my employer should provide all my professional development.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I feel constrained in what professional development I am allowed to undertake.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
I feel that government policy restricts me in my principalship.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
The political agenda frustrates me in my role.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

21. Currently, I see the role of a NSW Government School Principal as:

	strongly agree	agree	unsure	disagree	strongly disagree
Implementing government education policy.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
More management than leadership.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Supporting my staff through unprecedented change through accessing my own relevant professional learning opportunities.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Supporting my community through unprecedented change.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Leading my school in a globalised community in the 21st century.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Providing my staff and students with up to date technologies.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯
Ensuring that my own professional learning accesses current, relevant, up to date content.	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

Please comment on your current role:

[   ]

* 22. What types of professional development work for you?

[   ]

* 23. Why does this type of professional learning work for you as an established principal?

[   ]

* 24. Given what you know now about the types of professional development that works for you, what do you see as your priorities for your professional learning?

[   ]

25. How, and in what way, have you been able to satisfy these priorities?

[   ]

Phase 2 Doctoral Research Survey

*26. When reflecting on the professional development throughout your principalship, what, if anything, would you do differently?

[text entry box]

Thankyou very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Your participation in this valuable research project will provide much needed data around the experiences, perceptions and needs of established principals in the area of their professional learning. Reporting on data collated will be made available to both the PPA and the SPC once the analysis has been completed.

APPENDIX 4.14 - Final questionnaire

Phase 2 Survey

1. Dimension 1: Individual & Teaching Profile

FINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

*1. Participant Information and Consent Form

Project: The Professional Learning of Established Principals
Ethics Reference #5201400075

You are invited to participate in a study of the professional learning of principals in the established phase of their careers. The purpose of the study is to specifically focus on the professional development of established principals: their experiences and the perceptions of their professional development needs.

The study is being conducted to meet the requirements for a doctoral degree under the supervision of Dr Norman McCulla, Faculty of Human Sciences, Department of Education. He can be contacted on either 02 9850 8650 or by email at norman.mcculla@mq.edu.au.

Participation in the study is voluntary and no payments will be made to participants in the research. There will be the opportunity for you to volunteer for a possible follow-up interview should you wish to provide additional information for the research. You can withdraw from the research at any time.

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study are confidential, except as required by law. No individual will be identified in any publication of the results. Data will be accessed by both Dr Norm McCulla and the researcher. A summary of the results of the data can be made available to you on request and will be forwarded to you electronically.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to participate and if you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

If you agree to participate, please acknowledge consent by choosing the appropriate response below.

◯ Consent

◯ Do not consent

2. (Item 1.1.1)
Name (Optional)

[   ]

Phase 2 Survey

*3. (Item 1.1.2)

Gender

○ Male

○ Female

*4. (Item 1.1.3)

I was born between:

○ 1930 - 1945

○ 1946 - 1964

○ 1965 - 1979

○ 1980 - 1994

*5. (Item 1.1.4)

As an established principal, I have:

○ 5 - 9 years of experience in the principalship   ○ 15 - 19 years of experience in the principalship

○ 10 - 14 years of experience in the principalship   ○ 20+ years of experience in the principalship

*6. (Item 1.1.5)

I have been the principal at my current school for:

○ 0-4 years   ○ 10+ years

○ 5-9 years

*7. (Item 1.1.6)

I have been a principal of:

○ 1 school

○ 2 schools

○ 3 schools

○ 4+ schools

*8. (Item 1.1.7)

I anticipate retiring:

☐ Within the next 5 years

☐ 6+ years

☐ I have no plans to retire at this stage

Phase 2 Survey

*9. (Item 1.1.8)

I began my teaching career:

◯ 5 - 9 years ago

◯ 10 - 19 years ago

◯ 20 - 29 years ago

◯ 30+ years ago

*10. (Item 1.2.1)

School classification

◯ Secondary

◯ Central

◯ Primary (P/K-6)

Other (please specify)

[   ]

*11. (Item 1.2.2)

The geographic location of my school is:

◯ Rural (more than 200km from Sydney CBD)

◯ Urban (within 50 - 200km from Sydney CBD)

◯ City (within 50 km from Sydney CBD)

2. Dimension 2: Professional Development Processes

1. (Item 2.1.1)

As a newly appointed principal I found networking with my colleagues:

◯ Very important

◯ Important

◯ Less important

◯ Not important at all

2. Item 2.1.2

As an established principal, I find networking:

◯ Very important

◯ Important

◯ Less important

◯ Not important at all

3. (Item 2.2.1)

As a newly appointed principal, I found mentoring to be:

◯ Very useful

◯ Somewhat useful

◯ Not useful

◯ Did not access any mentoring - either formal or informal

4. (Item 2.2.2)

As an established principal, my mentoring experiences have been:

◯ Very useful

◯ Somewhat useful

◯ Not useful

◯ Not applicable to me at this stage of my career

5. (Item 2.3.1)

As a newly appointed principal I found that I utilised self-reflection:

◯ Regularly as a part of my role

◯ Occasionally

◯ Never

◯ Did not see it as a useful tool then

6. (Item 2.3.2)

As an established principal I utilise self-reflection:

◯ Regularly as a part of my role

◯ Occasionally

◯ Never

◯ Do not see it as a useful tool at this stage of my career

7. (Item 2.4.1)

As a newly appointed principal, I:

◯ relied on my employer to provide me with all my PD

◯ Sourced my PD from a variety of sources - including my employer

◯ Sourced my PD from a variety of sources - excluding my employer

8. (Item 2.4.2)

As an established principal, I:

( ) Rely on my employer to provide me with all my PD

( ) Source my PD from a variety of sources - including my employer

( ) Source my PD from a variety of sources - excluding my employer

( ) Other

Other (please specify)

[   ]

9. (Item 2.5.1)

As a newly appointed principal, I found that:

( ) Visiting colleagues' schools very beneficial to my professional learning

( ) The opportunity to participate in action research/learning projects very beneficial

( ) There were no opportunities for me to take part in any action research/learning projects

10. (Item 2.5.2)

As an established principal, I find that:

( ) Visiting colleagues' school very beneficial to my professional learning

( ) The opportunity to participate in action research/learning projects very beneficial

( ) There have been no opportunities, to date, for me to take part in any action research/learning projects

11. (Item 2.5.3)

As a newly appointed principal, I found that:

( ) Action research/learning projects very beneficial

( ) Action research/learning projects of no benefit to me

( ) I have never taken part in any action research/learning projects

12. (Item 2.5.4)

As an established principal, I find:

( ) Action research/learning projects very beneficial

( ) Action research/learning projects of no benefit to me

( ) I have never taken part in any action research/learning projects

( ) I would be interested in participating in an action research/learning project

Please comment on the importance of action research/learning projects in relation to your professional learning - if appropriate:

[   ]

13. (Item 2.6.1)

As a newly appointed principal, I found that participation in structured, formal professional development programs:

◯ Very useful

◯ Somewhat useful

◯ Not useful to me at all

◯ Did not participate in any

14. (Item 2.6.2)

As an established principal, I find that participation in structured, formal professional development programs:

◯ Very useful

◯ Somewhat useful

◯ Not useful to me at all

◯ Do not participate in any structured formal PD programs at this stage of my career

Please comment on any programs that have significanatly contributed to your current PD - if appropriate:

```
[                                        ]
```

15. (Item 2.6.3)

As an established principal:

(you may select more than one answer)

☐ It is hard to find structured, formal programs that meet my needs

☐ Most of my PD is sourced at a local and/or regional level

☐ Some of my PD is sourced through internationalised programs

☐ I look for PD that is relevant, up to date, and meets my particular needs

☐ I don't have any trouble sourcing PD that meets my needs at the time

Please enter a comment - if appropriate:

```
[                                        ]
```

3. Dimesion 3: Professional Development Experiences

325

Phase 2 Survey

*1. (Item 3.1.1)

As an established principal, please describe which types of professional development, you have found work best for you, during this experienced stage of your principalship: (eg meetings; conferences; particular programs...)

```
[                              ]
```

*2. (Item 3.1.2)

As an established principal, which types of professional development do you now look for?

```
[                              ]
```

*3. (Item 3.2.1)

As an established principal, I would describe my professional development:

( ) By specific programs (eg Covey; TLSIP; CSLM; LEAP)

( ) Using descriptive words (eg powerful; purposeful; motivating)

*4. (Item 3.3.1)

As an established principal, please prioritise (with 1 being the most important) your preferred professional learning models:

[ ]	Self-directed learning
[ ]	Networking
[ ]	Mentoring/Coaching
[ ]	Shadowing
[ ]	Online modules/learning
[ ]	Relationship-based learning experiences (other than those mentioned)
[ ]	Professional learning experiences based on self-reflection

4. Dimension 4: Change

Phase 2 Survey

1. (Item 4.1.1)

Pease respond to the following statements as they apply to you.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am finding the current changes within NSWDEC (LSLD; RAM; LMBR etc) are providing me with an exciting new challenge in my principalship.	○	○	○	○	○
I would like to access additional professional learning to assist me in managing those changes	○	○	○	○	○

2. (Item 4.1.2)

I would like to broaden/deepen my knowledge and understanding of the current NSW DEC changes, in relation to:

(you may choose more than one answer)

☐ What is happening in other Australian states

☐ What happens in other countries (eg Hong Kong; Finland; Canada; UK; Singapore)

☐ Global movements in education

☐ None of the above

Other (please specify)

[text box]

3. (Item 4.2.1)

When reflecting on the current changes LSLD; RAM; LMBR etc) being implemented across NSWDEC schools, please comment on the following statements as they apply to you:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
LSLD will provide my school and community with the opportunity for creative leadership	○	○	○	○	○
As an established principal, I feel I have the necessary skills and experience to lead my school through the current changes	○	○	○	○	○
The new structural alignment will allow me to pursue individualised professional development programs more than ever before	○	○	○	○	○
The new finance and resources allocation to my school will help me to implement the changes effectively	○	○	○	○	○
I feel that I have the necessary skills to implement LSLD, RAM, LMBR initiatives effectively	○	○	○	○	○

4. (Item 4.2.2)

Please select in priority order (1 being the most important), your professional development needs:

[＿＿]	Leadership
[＿＿]	Change management
[＿＿]	Curriculum implementation
[＿＿]	Financial processes and management
[＿＿]	Sourcing appropriate PD for both principal and staff

5. (Item 4.3.1)

Living in the 21st century, in a time of globalisation and internationalisation:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Major education decision making is occurring at a political level	○	○	○	○	○
The role of the principal is being impacted on by government decision making	○	○	○	○	○
Countries are increasingly sharing their education initiatives	○	○	○	○	○
A country's national test scores in relation to another country's informs politicians' policy decision making	○	○	○	○	○
Over the years, the education agenda has become politicised	○	○	○	○	○

Comment (if needed)

[   ]

6. (Item 4.4.1)

The current changes being implemented within the NSWDEC are:

(you may choose more than one answer)

☐ Part of a political agenda

☐ Designed to bring NSW public schools in line with other Australian states

☐ Modelled on existing systemic structures in other countries around the world

☐ Based on successful models of schooling in other countries

☐ None of the above

Other (please specify)

[   ]

Phase 2 Survey

7. (Item 4.5.1)

As an established principal, do you feel that your professional development has prepared you to meet the current NSWDEC changes that you are experiencing?

◯ Yes

◯ No

◯ Unsure

Other (please specify)

[ ]

✱8. (Item 4.5.2)

Please describe the types of professional learning activities you would like to access to help you lead your school through the current system changes (eg coaching; structured, formal programs; online learning; action research/learning project; internationalised professional development; compliance; conferences etc)

[ ]

9. (Item 1.1.1.1)

There will be an opportunity for some participants to be interviewed, in addition to answering this survey. Please add your contact details below, if you are interested in participating in a follow up interview:

[ ]

Thankyou very much for taking the time to complete this survey. Your participation in this valuable research project will provide much needed data around the experiences, perceptions and needs of established principals in the area of their professional learning. Reporting on data collated will be made available to both the PPA and the SPC once the analysis has been completed.

APPENDIX 4.15 - Email with link to the questionnaire

3/4/14

Dear Colleague,

I hope that 2014 has begun well and that you are settling well into the new year.

Many thanks for volunteering to participate in the research study that centres on the professional learning needs and experiences of established principals in the experienced phase of their career. Your expertise and experiences in principals' professional development are greatly valued and I look forward to your input into the survey.

This research has the support of both the NSW PPA and the NSWSPC. To access the online survey please click on the link below:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/G5TKGKF

Click 'submit' when completed.

Confidentiality and anonymity are central to this research.

If you would like to participate in a follow-up interview, please click on the link below to leave your name, contact details and preferences:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LCQGZBQ

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about this project.

Many thanks for your contribution to this valuable research study.

Regards

Sue Lazenby :-))

APPENDIX 4.16 – Samples of the colour coding of Phase 1 principals' responses for categorisation

	PD Useful in Preparation
MCR1 - 1	mentoring & **360**
FPU1 - 2	mentoring; **networking**
FPR1 - 3	QT Award[1]; **self-assess**; *reflection*; discussion
FPC1 - 4	informal mentoring; **relieving**; role models
MPC1 - 5	TPPP-hypotheticals[2]; role models; **relieving**; delegation
MSU1 - 6	Masters[3]; CSLM[4]; **on the job learning;** DET courses
MPU1 - 7	informal mentoring; **relieving**; role models
MPU2 - 8	*reflection*; informal mentor; role modelling; dem school
MSU2 - 9	**learning on the job**; *reflection*; deep discussion; informal mentoring
FPU2 - 10	**exec network**; PSP[5] agenda & action research project; ELDP[6]

PD Useful Newly- appointed Principals (NAP)
1-none
2-ISER Consultant Leaders Program[1]
3-CAProgs[2]; **networking;** collaborative discussion; engaging; in situ; relevant
4-mentor & coach training; **collegial networking**
5-visiting colleagues to see best practice; **collegial networking**
6-Induction prog[3]; **collegial networks**; informal mentoring; SEG mtg
7-just in time; **networking**; ISER L'ship Strategy[4]; SEG compliance
8-learning communities; **princ collegial groups**; relationships; action research
9-mentoring; role modelling; **networking; dialogue & feedback**
10-Covey[5]; Leading Australian Schools project[6]; LEAP[7]; **networking**; site based learning

PD Useful Experienced Principals (EP)
1-LEAP[1]; shadowing
2-Action Research; sustained progs
3-TLSIP[2]; relevant; in-situ; action learning;
4-powerful learning; self-directed; *purposeful*
5-small school networking; needs -based; relationship building
6-formal mentoring; iPIE self-directed PD; **CoS networking**
7-ongoing; long term; relevant; **collegial networking**
8-Action Research; sustained programs
9-relevant to current personal need; **networking**; *big picture*
10-Leadership Fellowship[3]; self-driven, research based; *motivating*

Preferred PD experience
1-network
2-networking; informal mentoring; sustainable programs
3-investigating best practice; authentic; in situ; active
4-engaging in professional dialogue to learn from others to take back and put into prac
5-needs based; self-directed; professional learning teams - networking
6-organised structure; networks and support networks; CoS meetings; self directed
7-pushing comfort zone; challenges; relevant; ongoing; involves colleagues
8-mentoring; role modelling; discussion; reflection; relationship with honesty, trust
9-those involving reflection, discussion & feedback; informal mentoring/coaching; program over time
10-research based; relevant to site; relationship based; self-starter - takes responsibility for own PD

Preferred PD model of service delivery
1-networking; PLC; mentoring
2-relationship based eg networking
3-networking; reflection; discussion; relevant school based action learning
4-action learning; mentoring; coaching; learning from work of others
5-visiting colleagues to see best prac; networking; reflection thru discussion
6-dev relationships; mentoring; networking
7-relationship rich; networking; opportunities to engage in rich dialogues
8-action learning; mentoring; learning from work of others
9-interactive; over time; involving colleagues, deep discussions with reflection and feedback
10-relationships very NB; site based action research projects

Least Preferred PD
1-one-day wonders
2-SEG meetings; conferences;
3-"chalk n talk" sessions; not relevant;
4-spoon fed compliance; non-differentiated
5-all professional development has been good
6-DEC powerpoints; driven from centre; politically motivated
7-someone else's agenda; politically driven; death by powerpoint
8-compliance; stand and deliver
9-one-day wonders
10-know what I want/need so I only participate in good stuff!

Least Preferred PD
1-one-day wonders
2-SEG meetings; conferences;
3-"chalk n talk" sessions; not relevant;
4-spoon fed compliance; non-differentiated
5-all professional development has been good
6-DEC powerpoints; driven from centre; politically motivated
7-someone else's agenda; politically driven; death by powerpoint
8-compliance; stand and deliver
9-one-day wonders
10-know what I want/need so I only participate in good stuff!

APPENDIX 4.17 - Sample responses for principal preparation stage

Name	Code	Response
	MCR1	Mentoring; 360 survey
	FPU1	Mentoring; networking
	FPR1	Quality Teaching Award; self-assessment; reflection; discussion
	FPC1	Informal mentoring; relieving on the job; role models
	MPC1	Targeted Principal Preparation Program's hypotheticals; role models; relieving on the job; delegation
	MSU1	Master's Degree; Certificate School Leadership & Management (CSLM); relieving on the job; NSWDET courses
	MPU1	Informal mentoring; relieving o the job; role models
	MPU2	Reflection; informal mentoring; role modelling; demonstration school
	MSU2	Learning on the job; deep discussion; informal mentoring
	FPU2	Executive network; Priority Schools Project agenda & Action Research project; Executive Leadership Development Program (ELDP)

APPENDIX 4.18– Sample responses for newly-appointed principal (early-years') stage

Name	Code	Response
	MCR1	None
	FPU1	NSWDEC: ISER Consultant Leaders Program
	FPR1	Country Areas Program (CAP); **networking;** collaborative discussions; engaging; in situ; relevant
	FPC1	Mentor & coach training; **collegial networking**
	MPC1	Visiting colleagues to see best practice; **collegial networking**
	MSU1	NSWDEC Induction Program; **collegial networks**; informal mentoring; NSWDEC School Education Group meetings
	MPU1	Just in time; **networking;** NSWDEC: ISER Leadership Strategy; NSWDEC School Education Group compliance training
	MPU2	Learning communities; **principal collegial groups; relationships**; action research
	MSU2	Mentoring; role modelling; **networking; reflection & feedback**;
	FPU2	Covey training; Leading Australian Schools project; LEAP program; **networking**; site based learning

APPENDIX 4.19 - Sample responses for mid and late-career stages

Name	Code	Response
	MCR1	LEAP; shadowing
	FPU1	Action research; sustained programs
	FPR1	Team Leadership for School Improvement (TLSIP); relevant; in-situ; action learning
	FPC1	*Powerful learning;* self-directed; *purposeful*
	MPC1	**Small school networking;** needs based; relationship building
	MSU1	Formal mentoring; iPIE self-directed PD; **Community of Schools networking**
	MPU1	Ongoing; long term; relevant; **collegial networking**
	MPU2	Action research; sustained programs
	MSU2	Relevant to current personal need; **networking;** *big picture*
	FPU2	Leadership Fellowship; self-driven; research based; *motivating*

APPENDIX 4.20 - Challenges faced

Name	Code	Challenges: 2013	Challenges: future
	MCR1	New PD paradigm	Demographic change management
	FPU1	Leading staff through current changes	The new look NSWDEC with LSLD
	FPR1	Supporting change in school without having ownership of the change	New autonomy and accountability with LSLD
	FPC1	Complex and varied imposed system changes; managing the change	21st century learning; shift in mindset with LSLD; national curriculum
	MPC1	Rate and breadth of change; paradigm shift - LSLD; **uncertainty of change**	Principal's role seems to be moving away from leadership to management under LSLD
	MSU1	**Funds;** role of principal in LSLD; politicisation of education	Politicisation of education; next generation of children; **Society's expectations**
	MPU1	Fight against isolation; managing change; provision of PD in new regime;	Political imperative; **outcomes for kids;** build relationships; mobilise staff; LSLD
	MPU2	Principal's new power – LSLD; **Gonski funding source;** lack of detail in LSLD to allow for creativity	Gen X may able better able to deal with the new paradigm; **ability to be creative**
	MSU2	**Uncertainty**; management; **finances and resourcing;** upskilling with ICT	*Same as now;* change in government; **uncertainty**
	FPU2	Time management; uncertainty; accountability with LSLD; **finances;** leadership	*Same as for now;* change in government; as now but baby boomers leaving with their experience

APPENDIX 4.21 - PD preparation for change

Name	Code	Has your PD prepared you for the current changes?
	MCR1	The system hasn't prepared me
	FPU1	No: perhaps doing my Masters may have helped
	FPR1	No
	FPC1	No
	MPC1	No
	MSU1	Somewhat: have taken responsibility for my own PD
	MPU1	No: not enough; drip method of information re the current changes
	MPU2	Through our Community of Schools; Middle Years Action Research; all are self-directed PD
	MSU2	Eager to embrace the current changes; gives the opportunity to be creative
	FPU2	No: a lot of my colleagues will struggle; many are too insular and not motivated

APPENDIX 4.22 - Colour coded categories for PD

PD Useful as an experienced principal	Preferred PD model of service delivery	Preferred PD experiences
networking = 4	networking = 9	networking = 6
mentoring = 2	mentoring = 4	mentoring = 3
reflection = 1	reflection = 3	reflection = 2
self-directed = 3	self-directed = 0	self-directed = 3
over time = 3	over time = 1	over time = 4
relevant = 4	relevant = 2	relevant = 3
role modelling = 0	role modelling = 0	role modelling = 1
challenging = 0	challenging = 0	challenging = 1
relational = 1	relational = 4	relational = 2
active = 3	active = 6	active = 2
CoS* meetings = 0		authentic = 1
Programs = 3		research based = 1
research based = 1		CoS* Meetings = 1
* NSWDEC Community of Schools		

APPENDIX 4.23 – Extract from the Phase 3: In-depth Interviews –

Theme #1.1: NAP vs EP - Principals discriminate more in their selection of professional learning activities as experienced principals

CODE	1.NAP vs EP	Quotes
FPRN5	✓	- She sourced a lot of PD from the DEC in her early days; - As an EP Narelle feels that the DEC must meet at least some of her PD; experience has taught Narelle that working with a team and using the knowledge of others - can't know it all …much more interested in being a great leader than in management - As a new principal, you don't really have a handle on it. People talk about it but until you have lived in it and created a vision and got to know yourself well…
FPRY3	✓ +T#4 2a	- I have credibility now. I can relax now –take on board what I need to know …the more experienced I become the more I network - As a young principal I had a 'busy head'. I had to prove myself. I had to be the best I could be and I never really gave myself thinking time … does more listening and reflecting later in her principal career
MPCN6	✓ +T#4 AC	- As an early years' principal it is all about survival day to day - As a NAP needs were very much about the mechanical things: the nuts and bolts of it all - You see yourself as irreplaceable (NAP) - As an EP my focus is to develop the atmosphere, culture in the workplace - It's about getting the relationship right - As an EP you have stuff to look back on – in the early years of the principalship its very mechanical – struggling to keep up with the pace of it - Now I take more time to think things through before I do it - I am a much better listener now - If you invest time in the listening and planning a little more you are going to get a better outcome - Lessons learnt, for sure - He doesn't allocate time specifically for self-reflection 6. NAP time is about survival.

		• As an EP I hope I remain open to learning • It is important to learn new things • PL is relevant to the end of the career
MPCN5	✓	• As a NAP I didn't take as much responsibility for my PD as I do now • As an EP I take more time over my decision-making. Give things time • I have developed the skills – whereas earlier on it was all consuming
MPRN2	✓ +AC	• As a NAP it was all about compliance: all around those things needed to survive • As a NAP: it was about day to day; just in time – just for me • As an EP it's the next level: I want to be able to develop staff enough to take on the role of the principal whatever • I am more about relationships now • I didn't have time to worry about personalities back then. I needed a lot of compliance stuff up until recently – but I am over it just now • I always ring that experienced principal – who is sometimes younger than me • Experienced principals rely less on the DEC to provide their PD than in earlier years) Yes: pretty much • In the early years it is pretty much about the mandatory things • Survival in the early days and hoping no one found out what you were doing • In the early years it is about survival and how to use contracts • Whereas in the senior years you know the contract very well: you move on. It's the higher-level stuff – about authentic leadership…and those more challenging issues • As I get older I feel stronger about what we do needs to be authentic with regard to consultation

Theme #1.2: PL needs - Principals discriminate more in their selection of professional learning activities as experienced principals

CODE	2.PL needs (incl staff priority)	Quotes
MPRN2	✓	• Outside of that ie the mandatory training you pretty much look after your own PD • Experience is about longevity • You develop your experiences as you go
FPCY5	✓	• As I've become more experienced I have been looking for the excitement in PD that I had felt as a NAP • There is a commitment to improve students and to engage classroom teachers.
FPCN6	✓	• Trying to get people in school to be big picture thinkers • Obviously my PL needs have changed over time • Sandra is very focused on ensuring that her staff is professionally developed. Her PD is less personal and more focused on what she perceives are the needs of her school and staff.
MSCY1	✓ T#2b	• I know that my deputies in particular benefitted from having i18n in the school
FPCY1	✓	• My PL learning needs have definitely changed • In the early years I really wanted more of the T&D stuff , the 'nuts and bolts'; the mechanics; the things I needed to know to survive • Now – I think I am more interested in innovation; more higher order; outside the square of things. I want to branch out and try different things – and with different people
FPCY4	✓	• And there's so much we need to know and our role is shifting to be instructional leaders. • You can't cater for aspiring leaders and experienced leaders in the same course • I want to know more about less • I want to be ahead of the thinking – it moves so quickly • It's a very different world at the moment – you don't have time to think about your own PL • We are trying to work out where we fit and what we should be doing • Now I am looking at the bigger picture but I am having to do survival stuff as well • (PL needs) I think it is more depth that I want
MPUN3	✓	• Opportunity to meet your own PL needs and interests

FPUY3	✓		• In terms of really rich purposeful PD I was finding very early that it was shallow and not addressing my needs. So I would actively seek out people who could enrich my knowledge and so that's when I began developing networks • I also needed someone to direct me – I valued the fact that someone found the research for me. Now I don't need that
FPUN11	✓		• Send me to a day that's going to change practice in my classroom • Give them (EP) the professional learning that will inspire and change practice • It changes (PL needs) as we get older and get more experienced – 'cos the role change • Role is a lot more complex now – even in my ten years
MPUY2	✓ +T#2b		• I think I've got stuff to offer but I mainly try to pass it on to my executive • I am always interested to see if what I'm doing is a good way of developing myself and others • I want the teachers to develop • I am always looking around for a better way of doing it • The biggest change is having to worry about the professional needs of others and not my own • I am pursuing more the bigger picture; the global picture with my PD • Looking at how to be a better leader: can I pass those skills onto – or give – them an understanding of what it's like • Leadership PD is a priority for me • My focus in terms of leadership is to function as a team • She shadowed me and we exchanged ideas and she gave me an inuksuk • I am pursuing more the bigger picture; the global picture with my PD
FPUN7	✓		• When we went from a region to networking – it became about developing your own PL • So as a network group we decided what we wanted from our Director to provide • As an EP I have a kit bag of skills to call on
MPUN1	✓ AC		• PL is one size fits all – we are told differentiation is important but……..#??? • I think the most important role we've got is to just develop our people
MRSN2	✓ +AC		• Teacher PL and building the skills of the staff – I guess change management is part of that but I think the pedagogy is more significant. The leadership has a number of aspects • I like to look at PL now that concentrates on pedagogy – what happens in the classroom, than when I first did • something I have to coach my deputy out of

Theme #1.3: Discerning - Principals discriminate more in their selection of professional learning activities as experienced principals

CODE	3.Discerning	Quotes
FPRN5	✓	• I am looking at expanded options now (as an EP) • I am more discerning as an experienced principal
FPRY3	✓	• I have always been a learner and created my own opportunities • Now in our current restructure, we are not going to survive if we don't find our own professional development • Looking at my work load how am I going to create my own professional development
MPCN6	✓	• As an EP my focus is to develop the atmosphere, culture in the workplace
MPUY2	✓	• As I've become more experienced I've found there's not – the department hasn't offered a lot of PD for people with a lot of experience and I don't think they cater for the experienced principals enough
MPUN18	✓	• You take on more responsibility • Become more targeted – explicitly what I want • I really need to know what's out there
FPCN10	✓	• (taking more responsibility for your PD now) yes I think so. There isn't any. Sourcing (PD) for myself and for the school too. As a beginning principal there was more there. I do tend to think there was a lot more available and a lot more provided
FPCY6	✓	• As an experienced principal you know where to go for things
FSCY4	✓	• I never relied on the department • I tend to pick and choose
FSCY1	✓	• I am probably the sort of person who would've done department PD but I reached a point where I would go to things and work with people who knew less than I did and who were representing models that had been discredited in earlier times and … we moved from offering genuine professional learning which focuses on the standards much more to compliance
MPUY5	✓	• It was a case of find my own or make my own up. The only thing that I really looked forward to was the state PPA conference. They are a one-off but if you are lucky you can re-engage them into the school. You can get those connections. Choose your own adventure.

APPENDIX 4.26 – Extract from Phase 3: In-depth Interviews

Theme #1.4: Void - Principals discriminate more in their selection of professional learning activities as experienced principals

CODE	4.Void?	Quotes
FPRY3	✓	• In the last ten years particularly, I haven't seen any quality PD • We are creating our own PD. The reason we are doing this is because there's a big hole. Doing it out of need • The void is giving us the impetus to create our own PD so it is a positive in a way
MPRN2	✓ T#2a AC	• When you look at the courses and what's required you think it is a waste of time • There's a big void in PD for EP
FPCY5	✓ +T#2a AC	• (EP) not a lot out there to create yourself or was available for me. • There is absolutely nothing I feel in the last 12 months/2 years that I can see of any value or worth • PD is ad hoc at the moment • . There is nothing that provides me with that buzz of professional dialogue • I am self-directed in sourcing my PD • I have to take responsibility for sourcing my PD • I didn't think that the department offered a lot of high flying PD • There's a void now. It's time to fill that void • There is PD for classroom teachers but not for principals 4 • As an EP she needs intellectual challenge • Need a Director with vision to provide professional learning for experienced principals
FPCY1	✓	• There has been a void (of PD) but I think there's a bit more coming
FPCY4	✓ +AC	• Because there is a void in PL being offered the landscape lends itself to PL providers putting together packages for sale • I don't think the department is offering anything anyway • There's a frustration here – there's nothing happening from the dept – no one is doing anything
MPUN3	✓	• There's a lot of choice now 4 ??? • I think that when I look at the PL that is available it is more focused at that end (ie the early years). There's lots of preparatory and early career support.
FPUY3	✓	• Once I became a principal I think it became fairly obvious to me that what I needed wasn't being offered. And so that's when I started sourcing my own PD • In terms of really rich purposeful PD I was finding very early that it was shallow and not addressing my needs. So I would actively seek out people who could enrich my knowledge and so that's when I began developing networks

		• There is a void • Probably to go to conference 'cos there is a void • My experience of EP is that they struggle educationally; and that they are very good managers; the area that they struggle with most is educational leadership. I think there is nothing there for them
MPUN18	✓	• In systems management there's not much there
FPCN10	✓ +T#2a	• The only professional development that is coming out (from the DEC) is compliance training • It's not PD at all from DEC: and I don't think there has been a lot for a long time • I just don't bother 'cos most of it just isn't relevant • (conferences seen as effective?) it's probably because it's pretty much the only stuff you get. It's pretty much the only thing • There's not much out there • It is unfortunate that it's one size fits all. I get really frustrated because my needs are very different from someone who has been a principal for 2 years
FPCN2	✓ +T#2a	• I have never ever felt a connection with the PLL provided by the department. I think it is very superficial – a lot of it is around compliance • I've never felt attracted to the PD supplied by the department • I don't think there is any depth to it • I feel there's very little for me to go to now • The things that I go to nowadays are really compliance things • The number of times I have gone to stuff and it's just a waste of my time • There's very little for principals at my stage of development 4 • Greatly needed and greatly lacking • Not as an experienced principal • *I don't want to sit in an room with someone who doesn't know as much as I do* • *I don't want to be told you to suck eggs* • I don't know what would be out there for an experienced principal – there's got to be people who want it • got nothing out of it myself – it was pitched too low

Theme #1.5: Coaching - Principals discriminate more in their selection of professional learning activities as experienced principals

CODE	5.Coaching	Quotes
MSCY1	✓ +AC	• One of my goals is around instructional leadership – coaching would benefit me • I feel confident enough now to accept coaching
FPCY1	✓	• I think it is a powerful tool (coaching) • Absolutely – I would be interested in being coached •
FPCY4	✓	• I want to do Growth Coaching because that will actually change me • I need sustained learning • Coaching is so crucial in the new model – it is an area I want to develop • Coaching helps you sustain the practices • Being coached is fantastic – it is changing my practice
MPUN3	✓	• Coaching is a good way forward: I would like to be coached myself – that would be good
MPUN5	✓ +T#4	• I am doing formal coaching and have been both coachee and coached – an incredibly powerful experience
MSUY4	✓	• (be coached?) sure – I suspect I love feedback in the art of principalship more than doing a suspension
FPCN10	✓ +T#2a	• (Covey & Growth Coaching) are the two (programs) that have had the biggest impact on the way I practise • Yes: coaching is just the best thing to be able to work through issues
FSCY4	✓ T#5	• I'd like to spend time with someone who is going to change my thinking rather than something that is going to change my processes
FSCY1	Mentored o/side	(Prefers to e mentored rather than coached)
MPUY5	✓ T#5 +AC	• I am considering re-entering into a coaching program I was involved in • We offered coach in a box and I coached 3 high school principals • Coaching is good
FPCN2	✓ T#5 +2a	• I would like a mentor/coaching relationship so that I could work through the work-based issues and processes with someone who could coach me through it • That would be ideal for me

		- You have to have the right people though - It comes down to the quality of the person doing the coaching. - Coaching is only as good as the person coaching - What I'm looking for is a process where someone can assist me to look at really complex things in a range of different ways - I would love a data coach

Theme #1.6: Reflection - Principals discriminate more in their selection of professional learning activities as experienced principals

CODE	6.Reflection	Quotes
FPRN5	✓ @ conf	• to reflect at a conference • I do my best reflection during and after a conference • I didn't realise until we had this discussion…
FPRY3	✓ +T#2a	• I still have my critical friend in my head • As I have gotten older I have dome some mindfulness training and **reflection is a key part of everything I do** • Reflection time I create during my week – I swim and walk
MPCN6	✓ T#4	• **Self-reflection is a huge part** • Important to chat it out with someone • **That whole concept of reflection is difficult to do on your own: often you need that discussion**
MSCY1	✓	• **Reflections are crucial in the principalship** • Reflection is important –I don't reflect enough. It is crucial and vitally important at every stage (of the principalship) • Reflect when I run
FPCY1	✓ +T#2b	• (LEAP) when the overseas colleague is here asking questions you have to really think about why you did things – it is very powerful. You end up having really rich conversations – and you really analyse everything you do; reflecting on why you do things and then having to explain it • I think the reflection is the most powerful thing to come out of LEAP • (peer shadowing component) being immersed in someone else's job – there are so many things that area universal; conversations; dialogue; reflections; I think that the most powerful thing about it was the reflections – positive and negative • **You have the opportunity to have a conversation with your colleagues which tends to lead you down the pathway of thinking about your own context. It allows you to clarify your thoughts: to reflect**
MPUN3	✓ +T#2b	• Reflection: enforced at times of critical incidents – you are forced to go back and judge your own actions • Reflecting and downloading with a trusted member of the exec • **Develop a relationship with a colleague in order to reflect**

			• As a new principal – I had no one to talk to – remote placement – so I downloaded with my wife
			• The welcomeness of the educational community world-wide is just outstanding. It makes you reflect and share your own expertise.
FPUY3	✓ +T#2b		• That's the strength of that program (LEAP) you have access to like- minded people – who want to have conversations and push the boundaries
			• We had every conversation possible
			• Not only conversations I had over there but the ongoing conversations we have – phone calls, facebook etc
			• Reflection was a huge part of the LEAP program
			• We were reflecting every day – constantly
			• I was watching Lyn's practice over there reflecting on her decisions
			• Leadership and experiences and interactions – and exactly the same thing happened here
			• **So at night time we would reflect on the day – we would sit up until 10 or 11 with a glass of wine and the heater, chatting, talking, mulling things over – that's the richness. The rich conversations; the best PD you can get**
MPUN1	✓ T#2a		• **It involves a lot of reflection – it's the sharing and the collection of evidence that's really interesting**
			• [self-reflection] is different for everybody. Reflect before school – tend to talk through with friends. Participation in the principal credentialing course was a strategic decision because I am going to be a principal for a long time
MPUN5	✓ +T#2b		• **(self-reflection) it's integral – a part of my life**
			• I don't have a designated time. Work is a big part of my life so I am always thinking about it
			• I always wonder if I am doing a good job
			• It's the constant questioning and reflecting that ensures that you do do a good job
			• (why impact) because I think that they are about relationships and I think they focus on how to lead people and have people make their own decisions about things rather than have me give them the answer. The freedom to fail
			• It was beneficial because the questions we asked each other actually prompted reflection on your practice – compared things across systems and in different countries. You are actually digging deep into your actions and beliefs. Very beneficial.

APPENDIX 4.29 – Extract from Phase 3: In-depth Interviews

Theme #2a: Experienced principals report high engagement, low satisfaction in structured, formal professional development programs (100% agreed with the definition)

CODE	1. Effectiveness	2. Participation	3. Hard to find
FPCY5		• I would be interested in one if it was available. It would have to be relevant and meet my needs. Something that you can springboard from • I ask, "How does it connect with me at this point in time?"	• There's a void now – it is time to fill that void
FPCN6	• Programs have been effective because they use adult learning • (Covey) Like all good adult learning you could see the structure and you're told up front what it is about – there's the theory; workshop discussion; a lot of input from the participants. You were constantly learning from others. It wasn't boring. There was a lot of structure in the approach but a lot of variety too. You take out of it what you want.	• I would love to do something like that (structured, formal PD program)	
MSCY1		• (Interested in structured, formal PD programs?) it would have to be the right program. I have got a particular view	

		about the time out of school	
FPCY1	• (Platform program) was very effective … really good self-reflection using the 360 thinking more positively about what you do, do. • Individualised within the structure • A lot of flexibility and facilitated by trained principal colleagues that are trusted and we knew • There was a good framework; one thing built on another – it was well sequenced	• At different times in your career you are looking for different things	
FPCY4	• There was an expectation that you would start here and end up over there. • It resulted in a change in practice • I am looking for sustained learning rather than surface treatment		
FPCY6	• You have to make it contextually appropriate for the clientele you are working with	• (would you have been interested?) Probably - if there had been something – where would the drive have come from?? Some other area? • It was great but it was pitched too low	

APPENDIX 4.30 – Extract from Phase 3: In-depth Interviews

Theme #2b: *Experienced principals see participation in internationalised PD as essential in a globalised education community (100% agreed with the definition of a structured, formal PD program)*

CODE	1. Effectiveness	2. Participation	3. Portfolio
MSCY1	• Main one (outcome) is just the engagement – keeping interested and keeping aware of trends around the world. You talk about specific programs and you pick up specific tips. There's the 'craft' there. • When I see what's happening overseas it reinforces the great things we do here in NSW •	• For me it's the broadening of your view – it's shown me other ways of doing things. The other important things the i18N programs have done for me is to affirm what we do here in NSW	• (i18N): groups of teachers come out to NSW. They are only one-offs. I enjoy doing those. The annual visits from the Auburn Uni. • He participates in i18N PL: LEAP; Japan, Denmark, Holland visit to the school; Alabama, Auburn Uni visits; ETL. The i18N provides engagement; awareness of global trends; broadening of his views; access to specific programs; engagement in the 'craft of the principalship'; and affirms his belief in what we do.
FPCY1	• The thing about LEAP is the two-sided part • When I was in Ontario I was exposed to a whole lot of Canadian speakers • (peer shadowing component) being immersed in someone else's job – there are so many things that area universal;	• (LEAP) when the overseas colleague is here asking questions you have to really think about why you did things – it is very powerful. You end up having really rich conversations – and you really analyse everything you do; reflecting on why you do things and then having to explain it	• I18N – LEAP and the Singapore Conference •

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	conversations; dialogue; reflections; I think that the most powerful thing about it was the reflections – positive and negative •	• (peer shadowing component) being immersed in someone else's job – there are so many things that area universal; conversations; dialogue; reflections; I think that the most powerful thing about it was the reflections – positive and negative • When you visit an overseas school and observe something, you think about it and decide whether you like their way of yours, better • It's a good process – it is confirming • (Singapore Conference) I came back with bulging ideas – food for thought. My head was spinning • But I think there's this big world opening it's not just about your own little network anymore – it's global or glocal or whatever you want to call it. It's so easy to tap into other things – the technology helps us	

APPENDIX 4.31 – Extract from Phase 3: In-depth Interview

Theme #3: Principals know what effective professional development looks like for them in the experienced stage of their career

CODE	Component	
FPRN5 (NL)	• **Networking** • **Timeframe** • **Reflection** • **Inspirational presenter/s** • **Tasks**	
FPRY3 (JC)	• **Data** (Why) with **reflection** • **Action research** (What) • **Tasks** (How) • **Framework** (Who, where) • **Networking, shadowing, inspirational presenter/s**	
MPCN6 (AH)	• **Data**: • **Time frame**: • **Tasks**: • **Inspirational Presenter/s**: • **Reflection**:	
MPCN5 (DR)	• **Reflection** • **Shadowing**: • **Inspirational presenter/s** • **Data:** • **Time frame**:	
MPRN2 (MH)	• **Data** • **Framework**: • **Reflection**: • **Networking** • **Inspirational presenter/s**	
FPCY5 (DH)	• **Academic partner:** • **Data** • **Networks**: • **Time frame** • **Reflection**	
FPCN6 (SP)	• **Time frame** • **Inspirational speakers** • **Reflection** • **Knowledge and understanding:** • **Fun**	
MSCY1 (LW)	• **Networking** • **Online** • **Tasks** • **Reflection** • **Relevant**	
FPCY1 (SF)	• **Fun and networking** • **Inspirational speakers** **reflection** • **Innovations** • **Framework**	

	• Action Research	
MPUN18 (DL)	• Framework & timeframe • Working outside the comfort zone Relevant; data; tasks • Mentor/coach- • Networking & reflection; shadowing	
FPCN10 (SW)	• Data • Reflection • Framework & timeframe • Tasks & networking • Feedback	
FPCY6 (HC)	• Networking/reciprocal • Framework & timeframe • Observations and discussion • Reflection • Tasks	
FSCY4 (SF)	• Framework and timeframe • Purpose • Networking; reflection & conversations (honest) • Tasks • Data	
FSCY1(CC)	• Data • Framework & timeframe • Action research • Tasks; networking, reflection • Present the outcome	
MPUY5 (AB)	• Reflection • Framework • Action research; networking • Sharing • Evaluation/feedback	
FPCN2 (RM)	• Action research/spirals Professional dialogue Feedback/feed forward • Ongoing/evolve/adaptive • External driver.	
MPRY2 (SB)	• Shadowing • Reflection • Networking • Action research	
FPUN16 (JQ)	• Shadowing • Data • Reflection • Open-ended framework; • Planned cyclical	
MSUN4 (SH)	• Networking & reflection • Framework • Data • Tasks • Timeframe	

APPENDIX 4.32 – Extract from Phase 3: In-depth Interviews

Theme #4: Experienced Principals report high engagement and high satisfaction in networking (as a professional learning strategy??)

CODE	1. @ conferences	2. @ other times	3. Relevance (the WHY?)
FPRN5		• Involved in strong collegial stuff	• **You can't beat networking: there's nothing like it** • …the excitement that's generated
FPRY3	• Conferences create networks that can be reconnected somewhere else…at a different conference when we meet • Like-minded people come together at a conference and so automatically network • Conferences connect people	• **The older I become and the more experience I have: the more people I network with becomes more powerful**	• People connections are amazing
MPCN6	• (Conferences) help with connections to establish relationships and mentoring • (Conferences) provide a safe space to meet and network • PPA Conference effective because you get a critical mass of principals together; a lot of networking opportunities goes along with that; reconnect with colleagues	• Networking: a sounding board outside of your school and staff • **Colleagues can be your critical friend when needed** • With the new role of the Director there is a vertical disconnect • In the past we could develop a relationship and give them a ring • (Local group of principals) a good group of people to work	

		with and learn from	
FPUY3	• I think the value in conferences is the networking • **It's the connectedness and collegiality at conferences. The conversations that happen are the PD** • **So I would actively seek out people who could enrich my knowledge and so that's when I began developing networks**	• Networks are wide and varied • **Different kinds of networks come together for different reasons** • **Relationships underpin everything – there's no networking without a relationship** • **When you have rich conversations with people – that's the best PD you can have**	• When you have rich conversations with people – that's the best PD you can have
MPUN5	• I learn almost as much in the social occasions as I do when I'm sitting in a keynote because as well as talking about other school stuff you do unpack what you saw during the day	• **I love working with my principal colleagues**. If I don't know it I know where to find it	• **Professional relationships are essential: mutually respectful; respect for knowledge and ideas; the development of trust**
MSUY4	• (networking) yes – tomorrow night I am going to have dinner with people I genuinely admire (at our SPC regional conference). I always go to the SPC dinner	• Networking is important. The Curriculum Networks Illawarra is a great sharing network.	• I have good conversations with all sorts of people
FSCY1			• **You can never have enough networks – it's important to always go and seek them**

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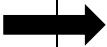
APPENDIX 4.33 – Extract from Phase 3: In-depth Interviews

Theme #5: Engagement in mentoring appears less important in the experienced stage of the principalship

CODE	1. NAP	2. EP	3. Relevance
MPRN2	• Not officially (mentored) • Never have been: not now • As a principal when you first start out you go looking for those people…and I certainly did that early on in my career…probably for the first 2 to 3 years • I picked a principal who I respected • I think it was imperative in those early stages • In his early years he sought informal mentoring	• **He now has 2 unofficial people of lesser experience that he mentors**	
FPCY6	• I don't know that I have ever been mentored • There was no mentoring in my early years (1994--)	• I've probably searched for informal mentoring with some colleagues • **I'm actually more mentoring some younger principals that again is informally. Instigated by the less experienced principals.**	
FSCY4	• Not in a formal sense	• Not in a formal sense • For my principalship I have worked with a principal for a week every term: he comes to my	

		school and works with me and my executive and asks me really hard questions. You could call him my coach 5. He pushes me to say why I made my decisions. He's never been a principal – he's actually an academic and a consultant.	
FPUN16	• Mentored – not regularly. As required if I had a situation then I would seek advice	• Currently no • **(less experienced?) yes: people approaching really. Individually coming and seeking advice** • **Suggested they have a few principals on their 'call for support' list**	
MPCY4	• NAP mentored • It was a relationship decided for us – because I had other resources and contacts I also developed my own	• EP no • I don't have a formal mentor; I certainly have colleagues I draw upon. One of them is probably not a mentor but the closest colleague I have – to bounce, sort, put my words into thoughts. A critical friend is probably how I would describe her • **[mentored less experienced] yes – asked to look after a group – it didn't work – they drifted away from me – I don't think I did it well.** •	• I'm not a good mentor. I want to do it for what reasons I want. I don't use the formal structures that exist.

APPENDIX 4.34 - Themes emerging across the research

	Themes emerging across the research		
	Phase 1	**Phase 2** ➡	**Phase 3**
Professional Development: sources	Experienced principals search for their own professional development.	1. Experienced Principals take ownership of their professional development and rely less on the employer to provide their professional development.	Theme #1: Principals discriminate more in their selection of professional learning activities in mid and late-career.
	Types of active learning vary across career stages.		
Professional Development: programs	Formal, structured programs are more relevant in earlier career stages. Experienced principals engage in internationalised professional development programs and experiences. Experienced principals do not feel their PD has prepared them for the current changes.	Experienced Principals seek engagement in structured, formal PD programs: 2. Principals report structured, formal PD programs less useful in the experienced stage of their career. 3. Principals' involvement in i18N programs increases in the experienced stage of their career.	Theme #2a: Experienced principals report high engagement, low satisfaction in current structured, formal professional development programs. Theme #2b: Experienced principals see participation in i18N PD as essential in a globalised education community.
	The capacity to articulate what works in principals' professional learning, is linked to the amount and variety of PD programs already experienced.	4. Experienced principals remain unsure of the essential elements of their PD programs.	Theme #3: Principals know what effective professional development looks like for them in the experienced stage of their career.
Professional Learning: processes	Networking is more important in the neophyte stage than in preparation. Self-reflection is an important component of principal preparation.	5. Principals' interest in mentoring, coaching, shadowing and networking continues throughout their career.	Theme #4: Experienced principals report high engagement, high satisfaction in networking.

	Mentoring became less important as my career progressed.		Theme #5: Engagement in mentoring appears less important in the experienced stage of the principalship.

APPENDIX 4.35 – SPSS data from Phase 2 attached separately

APPENDIX 4.36 – Phase 2 and 3 participant letter coding

	Explanation
MPUY	Male Primary Principal: Urban school: International PD experience
MPUN	Male Primary Principal: Urban school: No International PD experience
FPUY	Female Primary Principal: Urban school: International PD experience
FPUN	Female Primary Principal: Urban school: No International PD experience
MSUY	Male Secondary Principal: Urban school: International PD experience
MSUN	Male Secondary Principal: Urban school: No International PD experience
FSUY	Female Secondary Principal: Urban school: International PD experience
FSUN	Female Secondary Principal: Urban school: No International PD experience
MPRY	Male Primary Principal: Rural school: International PD experience
MPRN	Male Primary Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience
FPRY	Female Primary Principal: Rural school: International PD experience
FPRN	Female Primary Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience
MSRY	Male Secondary Principal: Rural school: International PD experience
MSRN	Male Secondary Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience
FSRY	Female Secondary Principal: Rural school: International PD experience
FSRN	Female Secondary Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience
MPCY	Male Primary Principal: City school: International PD experience
MPCN	Male Primary Principal: City school: No International PD experience
FPCY	Female Primary Principal: City school: International PD experience
FPCN	Female Primary Principal: City school: No International PD experience
MSCY	Male Secondary Principal: City school: International PD experience
MSCN	Male Secondary Principal: City school: No International PD experience
FSCY	Female Secondary Principal: City school: International PD experience
FSCN	Female Secondary Principal: City school: No International PD experience
MCRY	Male Central Principal: Rural school: International PD experience
MCRN	Male Central Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience
FCRY	Female Central Principal: Rural school: International PD experience
FCRN	Female Central Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience

APPENDIX 4.37 – Data Stories 10+ and SPSS data analysis attached separately

APPENDIX 5.1 - Phase 1: Audio recording request

From: Lazenby, Suzanne
Sent: Friday, 28 June 2013 2:22 PM
To: ███████████

Subject: Sue Lazenby - Uni research

Hi ████

I am writing to ask if you would be interested in volunteering to participate in the research project I am conducting with Macquarie University.

In the first phase of my research I am making contact with a purposively selected cross sectional group of 10 principals across the state to seek their interest in participating in an interview. These interviews will inform an electronic survey (phase 2) that I will distribute state-wide. I have made contact with the NSWDEC and they are aware of the project and have stated that I don't need SERAP approval to conduct the research.

The research is a study of the professional learning of principals in the established phase of their careers. The purpose of the study is to specifically focus on the professional development of established principals: their experiences and the perceptions of their professional development needs.

The study is being conducted to meet the requirements for a doctoral degree under the supervision of Dr Norman McCulla, Faculty of Human Sciences, Department of Education Macquarie University.

During phase 1 of the research an audiotape will be made of the conversations for the purpose of confirming the accuracy of the data I collect and possible transcription. Participation in the study is voluntary and no payments will be made to participants in the research.

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study are confidential, except as required by law. No individual will be identified in any publication of the results. Data will be accessed by both Dr Norm McCulla and the researcher. A summary of the results of the data can be made available to participants and principals' associations on request and will forwarded to you electronically.

If you are interested in having a discussion with me about your experiences (what has worked; what hasn't; and what you would like to see happen), your perceptions and needs in professional learning, then can I give you a ring sometime to organise a suitable time?

Regards
Sue Lazenby

APPENDIX 5.2 - Phase 1: Interview questions

Question
Thank you for volunteering your time to meet with me to talk about your career – in particular, the professional development that has supported you through this time and the challenges you face in the role.
Item 2: (Teaching/Professional Profile) Would you like to begin by telling me about your career:
Dimension 2 – Professional development processes
Item 3: Can you tell me a little about what stands out in your mind about the kinds of professional development that was useful to you in **preparing** to be a principal? In your **first five years** as a principal?
Item 4: If you were to conceive of professional development as emanating basically from local, regional, state, national and international sources, what proportions **have characterised** your own professional development?   • What proportion **would you like** to have seen characterise your professional development?   • If there is a difference what makes this so?
Dimension 3 – Professional development program experiences
Item 5: Have you participated in any internationalised professional development programs?
Item 6: Thinking about your professional development during your experienced years: * What type of professional development resulted in significant professional learning for you?   * What type of professional development do you value the most?
Dimension 4 - Change
Item 7: At this current stage of your career, given what you know now: * What do you now look for in your professional development?   • What are the major challenges that face principals generally **now**? In the **future**?   • In what way, if at all, has your professional development prepared and supported you in addressing these challenges?   • What types of professional development would you see as being more appropriate in meeting those needs?

APPENDIX 5.3: Exploratory interview sample population variables

Variable	Variable component	Sample population
Gender	Male	6
	Female	4
Geographic Location	Rural (>200km from CBD)	2
	Urban (50-200km from CBD)	7
	City (0-50km from CBD)	1
Career Stage	Preparation	0
	Newly Appointed	0
	Experienced	10
School Setting	Primary	8
	Secondary	2

APPENDIX 6.1 - Participant Information and Consent Form in questionnaire

✱1. Participant Information and Consent Form

Project: The Professional Learning of Established Principals
Ethics Reference #5201400075

You are invited to participate in a study of the professional learning of principals in the established phase of their careers. The purpose of the study is to specifically focus on the professional development of established principals: their experiences and the perceptions of their professional development needs.

The study is being conducted to meet the requirements for a doctoral degree under the supervision of Dr Norman McCulla, Faculty of Human Sciences, Department of Education. He can be contacted on either 02 9850 8650 or by email at norman.mcculla@mq.edu.au.

Participation in the study is voluntary and no payments will be made to participants in the research. There will be the opportunity for you to volunteer for a possible follow-up interview should you wish to provide additional information for the research. You can withdraw from the research at any time.

Any information or personal details gathered in the course of the study are confidential, except as required by law. No individual will be identified in any publication of the results. Data will be accessed by both Dr Norm McCulla and the researcher. A summary of the results of the data can be made available to you on request and will be forwarded to you electronically.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary: you are not obliged to participate and if you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without having to give a reason and without consequence.

If you agree to participate, please acknowledge consent by choosing the appropriate response below.

◯ Consent
◯ Do not consent

2. (Item 1.1.1)
Name (Optional)

APPENDIX 6.2 - First-time principal appointment data

Dear XXXXX

Attached please find the data on 'first-time principal appointments' from January 2010 up until 4 November 2013 as requested.

Please advise me if you want the list of schools and the names of the principals included in this data.

Summary of first-time principals appointed from 2010 as at 4 November 2013	
School Level	**Count of first-time principals appointed**
Central	29
Primary	437
Secondary	151
Special School	36
TOTAL	**653**

Regards

NSW Education & Communities

APPENDIX 7.1 - Table of Emerging Findings from Phase 1 and Phase 2

	Emerging Findings
1	In the experienced stage of their principalship they perceived Networking as very important/important irrespective of the stage of the principalship with only a small fall off in level of importance across their career.
2	Experienced principals acknowledged the importance of networking with their colleagues as a source of professional learning and to reduce their isolation.
3	The more experienced the principal, the less useful they found mentoring: with almost twice (40.28%) as many finding mentoring only 'somewhat' useful at the experienced stage, than in early years.
4	More Primary principals perceived mentoring as very useful at this stage of their career than do their Secondary colleagues.
5	Secondary principals reported that they were less likely to engage in mentoring across their career: either as mentor or mentee.
6	Principals engagement in self-reflection increased as they moved through their career.
7	Principals appeared less reliant on their employer (NSW DE) to provide their professional development as they moved through their mid and late-career stages also looking outside the NSW DEC for professional development.
8	Principals increased their participation in action research/action learning in their experienced years.
9	School visitations were seen to provide significant, appropriate and relevant professional learning for principals.
10	Experienced principals appeared less satisfied with structured, formal PD programs at this stage of their career, than they did as early years' principals.
11	The more experienced the principal, the harder it appeared to find effective structured, formal professional development programs.
12	The most experienced of the principals in this research reported that as they became more experienced, sourcing this type of professional development became more of an issue.
13	Principals seemed less likely to source their professional development locally/regionally as they moved through the principalship.

14	Participation in internationalised PD programs increased as principals became more experienced.
15	Principals with 20+ years of experience appeared more likely to look for PD that is personally relevant and met their particular needs at the time.
16	Principals with 10-14 years of experience seemed "out of step" with the trends for 5-9, 15-19 and 20+ years cohorts, in participation in internationalised PD sourcing PD locally/regionally; and in "hard to find" structured, formal PD programs
17	Experienced principals reported conferences and networking provided the best professional development
18	Experienced principals sought leadership development through conferences, networking, structured programs and internationalised professional development programs.
19	Experienced principals sought networking and research-based PL strategies ahead of conferences and structured PD programs.
20	Experienced principals continued to find it problematic in explaining the types of professional development they wish to access.
21	Relationship-based professional development experiences rated highest as preferred PL models among experienced principals.
22	Online modules/learning consistently ranked as the least preferred PL model for these principals. PL via online modules occurred without face-to-face relationship development.
23	Nearly 50% of experienced principals feel that they faced an exciting new challenge in implementing the changes.
24	Over 87% wanted access to professional learning to support them during this climate of unprecedented systemic change.
25	Principals appeared more interested in what happens around the world than in what happens closer to home (NSW).
26	The large amount of "unsure" (28.26% - 39.42%) registered in all components of this question indicated a lack of confidence among a significant proportion of principals in the new systemic structural realignment.
27	Over 80% of experienced principals feel confident in leading their schools through the current changes.
28	Principals desired professional development in the areas of leadership and change management.

29	Principals perceived that more decision-making has been occurring at a political level than in the past.
30	Principals perceived current NSW DE changes as a part of a political agenda and not based on bringing NSW in line with other Australian states.
31	Nearly 40% of experienced principals felt the NSW DE modelled current system changes on existing structures in other countries.
32	Principals, while feeling they possessed the skills to lead their schools through a time of change, also felt unprepared to do so.
33	Over 30% of experienced principals identified access to coaching as a desired professional development strategy.
34	Principals seemed aware of their position in a globally connected education community and desired access to professional development that would keep them abreast of global trends in education.

APPENDIX 8.1 - Phase 3: In-depth Interview Questions

Theme	Qu	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
5	1.	Have you reached or are you working beyond your retirement age? As an experienced principal, have you (or are you) being mentored? PROBE: Why/why not?
1	2.	The survey indicated that experienced principals rely less on the DEC to provide their PD than they did in their early years. Is this your experience? PROBE: Why do you think this is/is not so?
1	3.	The survey indicated that 40% of experienced principals are engaged in action research projects. Are you – or have you been - engaged in action research? PROBE: Why do you think only 40% are engaged in action research?
2 3	4.	*"Structured, formal PD programs: goal oriented; have intended outcomes; are relevant; have a framework; occur over time; have tasks set within the course of the program."* **4a:** As an experienced principal, have *you personally* undertaken any structured, formal PD programs? PROBE: Why/why not? **4b**: As an experienced principal, have you been engaged in any internationalised PD programs? PROBES: Can you please describe them for me: what did they look like? What, if any, were the outcomes for you; your staff; your school?
1	5.	As an experienced principal, how effective, if at all, do you find conferences in your PD? PROBE: Why/why not?
1	6.	How and in what way, if at all, have your professional learning needs changed across your principalship?
1	7.	Principals in the survey indicated that they would rank Leadership PD (3.30) and Change Management (2.95) as priorities. Do these match your preferences? PROBE: What would be your other preference areas?
4	8.	If you were to design a PD program for your experienced principal colleagues - drawing from your past professional learning and PD experiences – what would it include? (e.g. mentoring, coaching, shadowing, action research, research, data, a framework, a time frame, assessment tasks, reflection…)

APPENDIX 8.2 - Phase 3: In-depth Interview questions' handout

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this the third phase of data collection for the research project: the in-depth interview. Please find our discussion questions below. Many thanks ☺

	INTERVIEW QUESTION
1.	As an experienced principal, have you (or are you) being mentored? Why/why not?
2.	The survey indicated that experienced principals rely less on the DEC to provide their PD than they did in their early years. Is this your experience? Why do you think this is/is not so?
3.	The survey indicated that 40% of experienced principals are engaged in action research projects. Are you – or have you been - engaged in action research? Why do you think only 40% are engaged in action research?
4.	*"Structured, formal PD programs: goal oriented; have intended outcomes; are relevant to your current stage; have a framework; occur over time; have tasks set within the course of the program."* 4a: As an experienced principal, have *you personally* undertaken any structured, formal PD programs? Why/why not? 4b: As an experienced principal, have you been engaged in any internationalised PD programs? Can you please describe them for me: what did they look like? What, if any, were the outcomes for you; your staff; your school?
5.	As an experienced principal, how effective, if at all, do you find conferences in your PD? Why/why not?
6.	How and in what way, if at all, have your professional learning needs changed across your principalship?
7.	Principals in the survey indicated that they would rank Leadership PD (3.30) and Change Management (2.95) as priorities. Do these match your preferences? What would be your other preference areas?
8.	If you were to design a PD program for your experienced principal colleagues - drawing from your past professional learning and PD experiences – what would it include? (e.g. mentoring, coaching, shadowing, action research, research, data, a framework, a time frame, assessment tasks, reflection etc. etc. etc.)

APPENDIX 8.3 - Four letter reference code

	Explanation
MPUY1	Male Primary Principal: Urban school: International PD experience
MPUN1	Male Primary Principal: Urban school: No International PD experience
FPUY1	Female Primary Principal: Urban school: International PD experience
FPUN1	Female Primary Principal: Urban school: No International PD experience
MSUY1	Male Secondary Principal: Urban school: International PD experience
MSUN1	Male Secondary Principal: Urban school: No International PD experience
FSUY1	Female Secondary Principal: Urban school: International PD experience
FSUN1	Female Secondary Principal: Urban school: No International PD experience
MPRY1	Male Primary Principal: Rural school: International PD experience
MPRN1	Male Primary Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience
FPRY1	Female Primary Principal: Rural school: International PD experience
FPRN1	Female Primary Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience
MSRY1	Male Secondary Principal: Rural school: International PD experience
MSRN1	Male Secondary Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience
FSRY1	Female Secondary Principal: Rural school: International PD experience
FSRN1	Female Secondary Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience
MPCY1	Male Primary Principal: City school: International PD experience
MPCN1	Male Primary Principal: City school: No International PD experience
FPCY1	Female Primary Principal: City school: International PD experience
FPCN1	Female Primary Principal: City school: No International PD experience
MSCY1	Male Secondary Principal: City school: International PD experience
MSCN1	Male Secondary Principal: City school: No International PD experience
FSCY1	Female Secondary Principal: City school: International PD experience
FSCN1	Female Secondary Principal: City school: No International PD experience
MCRY1	Male Central Principal: Rural school: International PD experience

MCRN1	Male Central Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience
FCRY1	Female Central Principal: Rural school: International PD experience
FCRN1	Female Central Principal: Rural school: No International PD experience