Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The establishment of a parent-controlled school in Kingston, Tasmania in 1962 heralded the birth of the Australian new Christian schooling movement (Magill, 1986: 59). These schools are distinctive in that they all seek to put their children in the hands of God in addition to providing a broad-based education that will equip them for adult life.

Chapter 1 outlined the aims of this research, namely to understand the nature of the success of one case study Christian school. This chapter will seek to survey the literature in areas that will be examined in specific detail in succeeding chapters. The background to the Australian new Christian schooling movement is reviewed followed by an examination of the governance practices of these schools. The key function of leadership is considered, culminating in a detailed assessment of the role of the school principal.

The next section seeks to understand the process of building a school culture followed by the main section in this literature review, namely, an investigation of the concept of successful Christian schooling. It is envisaged that successful Christian schooling will be the outcome from the foundation of a new school, through the establishment of sound governance practices, the institution of a distinctive leadership style and the building of a unique culture.

Finally, a number of case studies will be reviewed from both the United States and Australia in order to establish the context for this case study of a successful Australian Christian school that claims to have been putting their children in the hands of God.

2.2 The new Christian schools

2.2.1 Some Facts

A definitive definition is very hard to find as these schools vary a great deal, however most writers do agree that there is a distinct group of schools that make up the new Christian schools. They are found in most Western nations, but they have local variations. In the Australian context, Long describes them as a new kind of conservative low-fee Protestant private school (1996b: 5). He goes on to say that they wish to be more distinctively Christian than the older more traditional Christian schools. Evangelical churches notably the Baptists, Church of Christ, Reformed Church of Australia and Pentecostal Churches often sponsor them (Long, 1996b: 7).

Again, in the Australian context, Hill (1991: 146) described these schools as comprising three sub-groups:

1. *individual schools each controlled by a local church*
2. *a few instances of inter-denominational schools controlled by a local consortia of churches*
3. *a number of parent-controlled schools often Presbyterian, Reformed or using the American Accelerated Christian Education curricula or Life Packs*

From a broader perspective, the definitions of Christian Education encompass parental assertive action (De Ruyter, 1999: 214; Weeks, 1988: 6), the practice of assisting children to acquire and deepen Christian beliefs and attitudes (De Ruyter, 1999: 217) and the idea of the school being an organism more than an organisation (Kew, 1993: 76). The definitions frequently emphasize the spirit and purpose of the community with which they wish to impact the lives of the students in terms of their Christian character (Chen, 1972: 68).

The new Christian schools are much more ubiquitous in the United States than in Australia. In the mid-1980s, one eighth of American children attended private schools. Twenty per cent of these schools, more than 15,000, were described as fundamentalist or evangelical Christian schools, with a total estimated enrolment in excess of one million students (Parsons, 1987: x; Rose, 1988: 1). Bollar Wagner reported that estimates of enrolments in the new Christian schools doubled between 1965 and 1975 and had reached 1.5 million children in up to 18,000 – 25,000 schools by the late 1980s (Gangel, 1984: 106; Bollar Wagner, 1990: 8).

In Australia, Magill estimated that there were more than 200 new Christian schools with more than 20,000 students enrolled in the mid-1980s (Magill, 1986: 59). The Australian Association of Christian Schools' records claimed to represent 250 Christian schools at the national level in 2004 (AACS, 2004).

A further characteristic of the new Christian schools has been their remarkably rapid period of growth in the second half of the twentieth century:

Christian Schooling was the fastest growing segment of Education in America at the start of my study. Such schools were growing at a rate of two or three and even four a day, partly due to the fundamentalist resurgence and also due to political changes (Peshkin, 1986: 24).

The largest new Christian school umbrella organisation in the United States, the American Association of Christian Schools (AACS) began in 1972 with 125 member schools and 25,000 students and by 1982 there were 1000 schools and 150,000 students (Peshkin, 1986: 35). However, some of these growth statistics need to be studied in more detail as many of these schools had very small enrolments, with totals as few as 30 spread over seven grades (Smith, 1984: 155).

The growth in the Australian schools is following a similar trend. Following small beginnings in the 1960s in Tasmania, the period of most rapid growth was from the mid-1970s till the late 1980s (Long, 1996c: 21; Magill, 1986: 59). Not surprisingly, one of the largest new Christian schools umbrella organisations in Australia, Christian Community Schools Limited (CCSL) saw its most rapid growth during this period. Since then there has been a marked slowdown in the foundation of new schools; however, the size of the existing schools has continued to grow strongly (Kew, 1993: vi).

One of the indications that the Australian new Christian schools have some of their roots back in the United States is illustrated by the fact that between 1977 and 1978 more than 110 new schools were established in Australia based on Accelerated Christian Education (ACE), an American curriculum. ACE was probably the most widely used curriculum in the new Christian schools on both sides of the Pacific during the period of rapid growth (Smith, 1984: 157). It began in Texas in 1970 with 45 students, and by 1980 there were 275,000 students worldwide. It was ideal for the rapid establishment of new schools as it relied heavily on *works books* prescribed individually to students for them to study alone, bridging the divide

between the Home Schooling Movement and the new Christian schools (Rose, 1988: xiii). Notwithstanding the ACE schools' significance in the growth of the Australian new Christian schooling movement, those schools that have retained ACE into the mid-1990s have tended to remain relatively small, as evidenced by the fact that they only account for eight per cent of the students (Long, 1996a: 20).

2.2.2 Some Roots of the Movement

The new Christian schooling movement has received comparatively little research (Kew, 1993: 93; Long, 1996a: 12; Riding, 1997: 7) and within this research the consideration of its roots has usually only been very cursory with the exception of some of the studies from the United States (Gilling, 1993: ix). The movement's roots can be considered from a variety of perspectives. There are basic philosophical positions, local and international stimuli and push and pull factors. This section will attempt to provide a broad international perspective as it tries to tease out the essential motives and aspirations of those who have birthed the movement.

John Calvin, believing that education should be a ministry of the church, founded the Geneva Academy in 1559 and his ideas made their way to the New World with the Pilgrims and the Puritans (Gangel, 1984: 103). This church basis for education has been carried right up to the present day with the colonisation process (Long, 1996a: 22). For example, the Dutch migrants to Australia, who knew Christian Schooling in their motherland, founded the Christian Parent Controlled Schools in Australia in the 1950s (Magill, 1986: 59).

A mobilisation of parent power has been one of the key local factors in the founding of the new schools. They have exerted their constitutional rights to send children to the schools of their choice (De Ruyter, 1999: 214), and acted together to achieve what they could not do alone (Norman, 1980: 6; Wackes, 2001: 1; Weeks, 1988: 6). The parents had understood that the responsibility for the nurture and education of their children rested with them and that the school's role was to support them (Magill, 1986: 58). However, their motivation was often not a cry for Christian schooling on religious grounds *per se,* but a reaction to their perception of moral decline in existing schools. They were seeking an alternative to the exposure to drugs, sex, violence and a lack of discipline (Norman, 1980: 5; Rose, 1988: 26, 33).

In Australia, Long has arguably conducted the most exhaustive work on the origins of the movement. He cites the work of Brodinsky in the United States who concluded that parent's perceptions of the local need for change was the overriding factor (Brodinsky, 1977, cited in Long 1996c: 24):

1. *An emphasis on the 4R's, reading, writing, arithmetic and religion,*
2. *In secondary schools an emphasis on 'traditional subjects' taught from clean texts,*
3. *No nonsense approach to teacher directed activity,*
4. *A methodology that includes drill, recitation, daily home-work and frequent testing,*
5. *Report cards that carry traditional marks and numerical values,*
6. *Strict Discipline, with Corporal punishment accepted,*
7. *Promotion and graduation dependent on mastery of skills and knowledge shown in tests,*
8. *Elimination of 'frills', non-traditional sports and sex education,*
9. *Emphasis on 'fact', not 'concept' and*
10. *Emphasis on the basic curriculum e.g. no driver instruction or drug education.*

Long's summary of the Australian factors show many similarities to the American scene, emphasising parents' perceptions of the need for change coupled with a number of local factors (Long, 1996c: 23):

1. *Funding associated with the Karmel Report 1973, enabling the non-government sector to grow,*
2. *Anxiety over communism and teacher strikes, particularly in Victoria in late 1960s and early 1970s,*
3. *The move in the government sector towards comprehensive schools,*
4. *Increased moral permissiveness in society,*
5. *Changes in the government sector, e.g. the move to indirect teaching methods*
6. *The drive to outlaw corporal punishment in schools,*
7. *The decline in the strength of the church and its inability to successfully lobby to halt change and*
8. *The move in several states to discontinue Religious Education in government schools.*

While Norman (1980) and Rose (1988) both disparage the religious grounds for starting the new schools, a number of other writers have demonstrated that the parental concerns cited above do have their roots in the parents' deeply held Christian values. This can be encapsulated by the concern for coherence between the nurturing environment of the home and the school on the one hand (Coleman, 1987: 5; Kew, 1993: 76; De Ruyter, 1999: 223), and between the church, the home and the school on the other (Rose, 1988: 26; Bollar Wagner, 1999: 106). Clearly, it is the parents' desire that their children will be trained under the same values system and in the same culture as their home.

One of the features frequently highlighted in church sponsored schools by the administrators and church staff has been the desire to establish a Bible-based, Christ-centred curriculum (Ballweg, 1980, cited in Rose 1988: 34). The aim is not to simply add a subject, Christianity, into a secular curriculum but rather to create a whole Christian ethos where every subject and every policy is Bible-based and Christ-centred (Gangel, 1984: 89, 90; Magill, 1986: 58; Riding, 1997: 6). The leadership in the Christian schools claim that the state schools indoctrinate by default, by avoiding the consideration of religious issues, while the Christian Schools provide a broad education that includes a sympathetic inspection of the Christian faith and expression. This leaves the students genuinely free to choose whom they will worship and serve (Hill, 1982: 6).

The logical progression from this position is theological fundamentalism, namely a desire for schools which model Biblical order and a tangible separation from the rest of society. Some of the literature implies that this is the key distinctive and central aim of the new Christian schools, however, the research implies there has been much compromise with modern cultural norms in many of the schools (Bollar Wagner, 1990: 104). It is Long's belief that the rhetoric and ideology of theological fundamentalism is the most distinctive hallmark of the movement, much more so than any uniformity of style or structure (Long, 1996a: 13). A revival of fundamentalism across the churches in the latter part of the twentieth century coinciding with increasing parental dissatisfaction with state and private schools may more accurately describe what some have called the desire for theological fundamentalism (Jones, 1983: 93). Certainly schools have used the goal of theological fundamentalism as the battle-line in disputes with government authorities (Parsons, 1987: xvii; Bollar Wagner, 1990: 119; Weeks, 1988: 55). All this seems to suggest that there may be more in the rhetoric than the reality, because sadly in some schools, theological fundamentalism may have merely

surfaced internally to stifle individuality, thought and healthy development rather than provide the ethos of the parents' dreams (Parsons, 1987: 135).

Some writers seem to have dug even deeper than theological fundamentalism in their search for the origins of the movement. They say that the new schools are being set up to counter the philosophy of secular humanism (Jones, 1983: 93). The tenets of secular humanism are explained in the Humanist Manifesto, which was first published in 1933 and updated in 1973. The central features of which include atheism, a belief in evolution, no life after death, ethics are personal and situational and an abolition of the ideas of good and evil as relics of Biblical faith (Brinton, 1989: 5). John Dewey, a philosophy professor of Columbia University in New York was the principal author of the 1933 edition of the Humanist Manifesto. He used the American public schooling system to advocate secular humanism and by his death in 1952, the overpoweringly Protestant character of the early public schools was barely visible (Gangel, 1984: 105; Weeks, 1988: 50).

A subtext to the cause against secular humanism is to seek to provide the children in the new Christian schools with frameworks within which they can form their own identity in the wider society that offers such a myriad of choices and experiences. As the children are educated in schools with the same values and norms as the home, this will increase their sense of stability and is defensible in a pluralistic society as long as the school endorses liberal democratic values as well (De Ruyter, 1999: 215).

What about the motivation, depth of feeling and level of commitment of the parents and teachers? Surely without this, no high minded philosophising will actually build one new school. Naturally, this is difficult to measure, but a consideration of parent attitudes to fees and teachers attitudes to wages, may be a useful mirror. Some parents who can barely meet their mortgage payments view Christian schooling as an essential for their children (Parsons, 1987: xviii) and some teachers get lower pay than their counterparts in the state systems (Gangel, 1984: 149; Weeks, 1988: 59). The new Christian schools' philosophy seeks to provide schooling to all levels in society, hence most of them would be described as low-fee, however in this context, one example from the United States was known to charge no fees at all. Instead, it required a tax-deductible donation to the church of roughly $80 per month per child, claiming that it was not a private school but a ministry of the church (Parsons, 1987: 24). In order for the schools to survive and grow they must be able to generate a growing enrolment that reflects a continuing passion for their ideal education.

To conclude this review of the factors that have stimulated the growth and development of the new Christian schools, it is appropriate to consider the most radical goal of all. Some have emphasised the historical link between the church and education and say the present movement is merely redressing the balance. Others focus on the impact of a cohesive group of parents who are willing to pay fees they can barely afford while exerting their constitutional rights in a pluralistic society to have a school of their choice for their children. Church and school leadership often emphasise firstly, the conformity between the home, church and school and secondly, centrality of Bible-based, Christ-centred education. They also champion their cause with the rhetoric of theological fundamentalism and the war against secular humanism. However, over and above their desire to provide today's youth with moral and academic education, they ultimately seek to impact and transform the state and health of society at large as more and more students pass through their gates (Gangel, 1984: 89, 106; Peshkin, 1986: 167; Rose, 1988: 2; Twelves, 2000: 89).

Christian Schools were producing patriotic young people who had good character, a real difference from what the public schools of the country were producing (Peshkin 1986: 4).

2.3 The Governance of the new Christian schools

2.3.1 Sometimes Seriously Dysfunctional

The literature contains numerous references to internal conflict within the new Christian schools. This section will explore some examples with a view to possibly identifying some of the root causes. The following section will consider some of the developments of school boards that are beginning to make a difference to this situation.

Peter Cameron's story, while not in a Christian school environment, nevertheless clearly illustrates a number of pertinent themes. He arrived from Scotland in 1991 to take up his appointment as Principal of St. Andrews College, University of Sydney. It was a traditional all male residential college riddled with problems, financial uncertainty and secret agendas. The governing council was a self-perpetuating body, with an average age of sixty, average length of service of fifteen years, no women, predominantly business backgrounds and no academics (Cameron, 1997: 39, 90).

In the mid-1980s, an appointment had been made of an operations manager who was to be directly accountable to the college council; so much so that on Peter's arrival as the new principal, he soon found that he was actually only responsible for student affairs, everything else came under the operations manager (Cameron, 1997: 97-98). Despite the college council's desire to maintain the traditional character of the institution at all costs (Cameron, 1997: 193), Peter set about trying to modernise the place and save it from financial collapse. His primary objective was to restructure the college council and introduce female students making it a coeducational institution in order to generate sufficient income to guarantee survival (Cameron, 1997: 103-133).

Needless to say, the council did not take kindly to the new principal's ideas and methods and soon sought unorthodox ways to remove him. Peter gained the impression that the oblique way of deposing those who stand in disagreement is more common in Australia than reasoned argument and debate (Cameron, 1997: 193). Peter also noted that even though he had received hundreds of letters of support, almost no one at all defended him in his unfair dismissal trial or his subsequent appeal. He noticed that there was a tendency for a herd instinct where individuals seemed paralysed or disinclined to work things out for themselves. He also found that loyalty to ones mates or the institution seemed to be more prevalent than the importance of individual merit or creativity and he aligned this with the tall poppy-syndrome and the general desire to see an egalitarian society. Despite all his efforts, he failed to bring positive change to St. Andrews or to save his position (Cameron, 1997: 194-195). Eventually, he resigned as he had lost drive for the fight and being disliked by people at such close quarters (Cameron, 1997: 180). Ironically, since Peter's departure in the mid-1990s, St. Andrews has become financially secure, has admitted women and begun to break with some of the traditions of the past.

In the new Christian schools context of 1980s United States, Rose reported on a sponsoring Baptist church having had four pastors and its school having had three principals in ten years (Rose, 1988: 115). In this case, the church supplied the buildings and the heating and the

school provided the remainder of the running costs. Church problems resulted in a high turnover of pastors and a halving of the congregation and the tensions obviously spilt over into the school. The church culture did not encourage overt discussion about authority. Consequently, when conflicts did erupt, they tended to be quite volatile and threatened the community's very survival (Rose, 1988: 116).

Again in the 1980s, Parson's four-year study of the emerging Christian Schools of the United States found much evidence of discord within the schoolhouse. He observed that the internal difficulties increased as the number of students increased and with increasing maturity of the schools. Parsons quoted one educator as saying, *Christian Schools may be God's School System, but they still must be operated by humans. This necessary human element can lead to doctrinal disputes and school rifts* (Parsons, 1987: 127-135).

Parsons, using actual names, unlike this study that uses pseudonyms, outlined two particular conflicts associated with Christian High in El Cajon, California, a ministry of Scott Memorial Baptist Church. Tim La Haye was the senior pastor and founder of the school. Tom Barton, one of the principals appointed by La Haye, objected to the overtly political stand the school was making in the community and also upset the board over a discipline issue. In response, La Haye called a special school board meeting, to which Barton was not invited, and there he proceeded to describe Barton as a *poor leader, a liar and an individual who lacked emotional control* and as a result the board voted 10:1 to dismiss the principal immediately. Barton left quietly after the school board agreed to pay him his salary and benefits until the end of the school term. At least five teachers resigned in protest but there was no school wide split. Soon after this, Tim La Haye left Scott Memorial Baptist Church to take up full time work with Family Life Seminars Ministries. La Haye was asked if the Christian School communities should not expect more harmony on account of the operation of their Christian faith in action. His response was that public schools have problems too and we Christians are not infallible (Parsons, 1987: 126-132).

Barton's successor was Bob Olson but after two years, he too was fired. Parsons reported that the *blame* this time was laid at the feet of the new leader of the church, the Reverend David Jeremiah, on account of his authoritarian leadership style. Olson's comment to Parsons, with a sigh, was: *Well it happens! The average life of a Christian School principal is less than three years. You ought to find out why.*
After studying new Christian schools in thirty states, Parsons concluded that essentially pastors are authoritarian by nature, and that fundamentalist pastors, in particular, expect to run their new schools like their churches and that conflicts with the way that career educators are accustomed to operating (Parsons, 1987: 132).

It is evident from the examples of conflict quoted above that each case is unique and that the individual players in each community would see their problem as a major mountain that obscured any objective assessment of the bigger picture. Therefore, it is not surprising that the same type of conflicts continually recur. Laffin (1995: 2), commenting on the Australian new Christian schools, observed that *there is evidence, which suggests that tension and conflicts between boards and their principals is frequent and sometimes seriously dysfunctional* (Laffin, 1995, cited in Beavis 1997: 290).

While most of the literature merely describes the dysfunctionality, some have attempted a more comprehensive examination of the issues. Maslin-Ostrowski (2000) provides a physiological examination of the individuals concerned; Cunningham (1994) offers a model

of organisational development to aid understanding and Long (1996a,b,c, 1997) offers some remedies.

Maslin-Ostrowski examined the stories of school leaders who have experienced serious conflict, dilemma or critical events in their leadership practice that has profoundly affected or wounded them in a similar way to an illness with characteristics such as loss of control, predicability and functioning as well as disassociation, fear and anger. She went on to report that the astounding numbers of school leaders who have experienced serious conflict, dilemma or critical events should constitute, in their own right, a previously poorly researched branch of leadership. The fact that they are centre stage in the spotlight provides them with a perfect platform to lead but also to be vulnerable. She found that some of the wounded leaders interviewed used the difficult circumstances to transform themselves into better leaders. She also found that the telling and retelling of the story provided structure and order for what had happened and the chaos of the crisis could eventually be translated into a recognisable form (Maslin-Ostrowski, 2000: 216). This positive perspective offers hope to schools where conflict may be happening, in that it can lead to growth and resolution given time.

Secondly, Cunningham's (1994) research focussed on Christian church founded tertiary colleges in the United States. His study proposed a model that reflected the changing relationship of church and college with the passage of time, that may have implications for some of the conflict situations described above in the fledgling new Christian schools.

Around 1900, there were just under a thousand church colleges. They were small, with only a few hundred students, commonly strapped for cash and kept alive by generous, sacrificial church folk. Their academic program was also very weak and church attendance was deemed the symbol of college unity and community life (Cunningham, 1994: 27-28). This was regarded as the first stage with the partnership tilted towards the churches. It lasted until the Depression and World War II in some cases. The second stage was generally between the 1930s and the 1960s. This was described as the even Steven period with neither side gaining the upper hand. The third stage followed from the 1970s to the present day, when the church's role was always the junior partner (Cunningham, 1994: 33). The parallels with the modern day new Christian schooling movement are obvious; however, no church is likely to admit that they will ever become the junior partners to their school. Nevertheless, these communities would do well to learn from the experiences of those who have gone before.

Cunningham warned against a number of sources of conflict: church distrust of academics, leadership in church and college needing different styles, the support being too much or too little and the style of governance. He commented that the successful church related college was the one that faced up to the strains in its relationships with the church and overcame them, while subservience never secured success. Cunningham found that where discord had corroded relationships, the fundamental reason was often a mutual desire for control or an effort by the church to recapture governance decision-making for the college. He also found that discord easily attracts attention but concord goes unnoticed for years and, in terms of the nature of conflicts, that the church gets upset sooner and stays upset longer than the college (Cunningham, 1994: 82-89).

Thirdly in this section, the most comprehensive study of the development of the new Christian schools in Australia was carried out in the mid-1990s by Long (1996a; 1997). He was not content to merely describe their formation and growth, but in addition to that, he

attempted to understand their internal dynamics and to prescribe a series of potential remedies that could be applied to their perceived dysfunctionality.

Long noted that these schools were stressful places to be employed in on account of the role conflicts that blur the functions of church and school, exacerbated by a lack of capacity for critical thinking. He believed that this lack was linked to insecurity, authoritarianism and a pre-occupation with obedience and the quest for absolutes founded in the subconscious of the communities. He observed that this lack of critical analysis often allowed the management to *unconsciously use manipulation and exploitative practices on its employees* (Long, 1997: 25).

Sadly, the final conclusion of Long's thesis was his damning belief that these organisations were *schools of confusion, fear and contradiction* and if they were to become truly successful communities both individually and as a movement, they needed to address the specific problems that he had identified (Long, 1996a: 433).

For example, in the philosophical foundations of the schools, he felt that there should be less *imperative for dogma.* In other words, these schools needed to be more flexible in dealing with internal relationships without compromising their stand (Long, 1996a: 427). This is allied to another of his conclusions that they should move away from the *binary approach,* that is that their use of terms needed to develop beyond the simplistic right and wrong, black and white approach; to encompass various shades of grey while developing greater use of reasoned argument in their philosophical position (Long, 1996a: 431).

At the individual level, Long was also concerned about the issue of the staff's role conflict. He argued that it was a matter of urgency that these schools examine the ambiguity that he found existed between the roles of teacher as minister and principal as priest. His argument was that this confusion has lead to lowering job satisfaction and signs of psychological and physical illness and stress and that staff under stress are less reflective and less able to cope. In this context, he also singled out for comment the conflicts relating to staff, children and spouses, especially where these relationships span several Christian settings (Long, 1996a: 432). In order to begin to address these issues, Long also advocated greater staff association and unionisation, especially as the schools become larger. He felt that the prohibition on staff having representative power and industrial knowledge was *naïve* and a pressing problem (Long, 1996a: 429).

Finally, in terms of the organisational dimension, Long was very intrigued with the uniqueness of the K-12 model and argued that there was a great need for further research and publication in this field. He also linked this to the issue of the organisation's size and its relationship with the true nature of Christian Education. Long had observed organisational confusion, which in his mind could be linked with a poor understanding of the K-12 model whereby the primary and secondary staff were confused about each other's roles and the nature of the students in their care. He also noted a high degree of staff stress associated with staff trying to achieve too much from too little. Long suggested that to reduce stress, schools needed to clarify what they do best and admit what they cannot do (Long, 1996a: 428-429). This latter issue may, on reflection, be more related to the school's rapid growth phase rather than a poorly understood K-12 model. In any event, it bears out Long's call for further research. In this regard, he called on the Christian schools themselves as well as government agencies to fund more research along the lines of Peshkin (1986), Bollar Wagner (1990) and Rose (1988), whose case studies focussed in depth on small numbers of schools as opposed to the broad brush philosophical approach such as his own (Long, 1996a: 426).

The literature has recognised a number of examples of serious dysfunctionality but has been unable to discover with any precision the key root of the problem or to find suitable solutions. The researchers have raised far more questions than they have answered. For example, Long asked whether a further factor that might have contributed to internal conflict was the patriarchal, authoritarian management style that underpins most new Christian schools. He pointed out that 60 per cent of the staff are women but only three per cent of principals are women, demonstrating the male dominance in the highest level of leadership (Long, 1996a: 401).

Davies (1993: 1) and Andersen (1990: 32) noted that many communities exhibit the classic bureaucratic, hierarchical model of administration. Is this the preferred style of management - patriarchal, authoritarian leadership that seeks to exercise control on the basis of superior knowledge (Weber, 1924: 14)? Further, is the preferred style of organisational control one that is dominated by a single individual? Parsons (1987: 132), Coleman (1993: 176) and Long (1996a: 22) all suggest that this is true and that as so much power is vested in one individual it is more likely to result in irreconcilable conflict. In any event, historically, too much control results in a drive for unionisation (Agyris, 1964: 59), a move resented in the new Christian schools (Twelves, 2000: 64) but strongly advocated by supporters of the movement (Long, 1996a: 429).

The role ambiguity between church and school responsibilities towards the young may hold another key (Parsons, 1987: 132; Long, 1996a: 432). Surely the bureaucratic structure with dominant authoritarian leadership contradicts Biblical principles of community (Davies, 1993: 1)? However, if conflict does break out, the Christian community should be able to effectively resolve their differences (Horsfield, 1990: 20). Consequently, the style of governance is critical to the successes of these schools, especially as they grow to maturity (Long, 1995: 38).

2.3.2 Seriously Functional Governance

The aim of every effective organisation should be trust, openness, individuality and flexibility, which sadly are often the exception rather than the rule (Agyris, 1964: 194). Agyris stressed flexibility as the imperative to enable organisational structures to vary over time with the type of decisions needed in the various stages of growth (Agyris, 1964: 211).

What are the functions of school councils? The government school councils generally hire the principal, establish the curriculum policy, administer the buildings, grounds and cleaning, the financial management and the general accountability to the school community (Knight, 1995: 265). However, at a more philosophical level, councils must ensure that the functions of management, leadership and governance occur in harmony with each other (Beavis, 1997: 292).

Good management is generally seen as a pre-condition for the effectiveness of an organisation. That is, an emphasis on order and consistency in planning, budgeting, staffing and problem solving. In general terms, good management fulfils the expectations of all stakeholders. The next function, leadership, is concerned with movement and change as an organisation responds in a dynamic way to an increasingly complex environment. A good leader identifies the direction and lines up a group of people to move in that direction in spite of the inevitable obstacles. Finally, governance, probably the least studied and understood

aspect of the three functions, is all about values and perspectives. Governance encapsulates characteristics of the organisation's life that expresses particular ways of doing things or particular attitudes with an emphasis on maintaining the organisational ethos from generation to generation. It is this aspect that is the main preserve of the school board or council, composed of part-time volunteers who are physically removed from the day-to-day activities. However, it is their role to ensure effective management and leadership occurs in harmony with the foundational values and perspectives of the organisation (Beavis, 1997: 292-293).

A model of effective governance that has been increasingly taken up by the new Christian schools is Carver's (1997) *Governance Model for Non-Profit and Public Organisations* (Twelves, 2001: 66). This model cradles the vision of the organisation. It holds and supports the primary focus of the organisation as paramount as it systematically encourages the stakeholders to think the unthinkable and to dream. Such a model will be focussed on externals, more concerned with needs and markets than internal organisation. It is outcomes driven and forward thinking with all decisions being weighed against the mission. It is pro-active rather than reactive, focussed on creativity rather than approval, facilitating diversity and unity without squelching dissent. Above all it delineates the board's role while balancing over control and under control as it defines what information it needs to make efficient use of its time (Carver, 1997: 17-18). Beavis (1997) has applied this philosophy in his view of organisational structures, where school staff carry out the management and leadership functions and the governance functions are the preserve of the voluntary board members (Twelves, 2000: 57).

Cameron's (1997) study of an Australian tertiary college offered the following guidelines for the make up of an effective council:

- The principal and four senior staff should be the nucleus with up to three more senior educationalists from outside the college
- The remainder should represent the wider community:
    - Three women, more if the college goes co-ed
    - A maximum of three ex-college men
    - At least one but not more than two businessmen
    - As many over 45 years as under
    - Compulsory retirement after four years for all except the principal and the senior staff
- The principal must be the Chairman, unless he is *primus inter pares*, first among equals, both constitutionally and in practice
  (Cameron, 1997: 103)

Clearly this recipe is looking for balance but with a strong educational emphasis. There is also a clear message that such a governing council should be made up primarily of current educators, not past students determined to defend their nostalgic memories at all costs.

In contrast, Jones' (1983) study of *The Development of the new Christian schools in Australia – 1975-1981* described the typical make up of the church sponsored school boards affiliated with Christian Community Schools Ltd.:

- The senior pastor of the church
- Four members elected by the local church
- The principal

- One staff representative
- Two parent representatives
  (Jones, 1983: 60)

This model emphasises the predominant role of the sponsoring church where, in contrast to the Cameron model, the emphasis of the board is unlikely to be education *per se.* Rather, it is much more likely to carry the church's vision with the school as a subsidiary or ministry arm (Jones, 1983: 60).

These two extremes illustrate one of the dangers of boards going in the wrong direction, that is, the makeup of the board can so easily influence the future directions and emphases of the school. Also boards face the temptation to move from strategy towards operations and from the long–term challenges towards the immediate concerns and from collective action towards individual initiative. This is in contrast to effective governance that champions collective effort to advance a shared purpose consistent with the institution's mission (Chait et al., 1996: 1).

Above all, boards need to balance the roles of leadership, management and governance. Leadership needs to predominate when an institution needs to make changes necessary to cope with changes in its environment. At times of rapid change, strong management is needed in order to consolidate and stabilise the changes that have occurred and finally, effective governance is required when environmental changes threaten an institution's character. Above all, no particular mix can be prescribed but rather a dynamic approach should be adopted to avoid various over or under emphases that could lead to a *pathological condition that will atrophy* (Beavis, 1997: 298). If the three elements of leadership, management and governance are held in flexible tension then our schools and colleges will be dynamic, healthy institutions, but not if we get it wrong (Beavis, 1997: 299).

Finally, there is one further requirement for functional governance, namely, that the governing boards should be made up only of devout Christians, alert and vigilant to maintain the distinctly Christian vision and ethos of the school. This is the effective bulwark to prevent them from being secularised in the way that the church schools of a hundred years ago were changed with the passage of time (Riding, 1997: 62).

2.4 Leadership in Christian Schools

2.4.1 What is Leadership?

In the twentieth century, secular literature examined leadership from various perspectives, which collectively depicted great complexity and demonstrated leadership's vital significance for the success of any organisation. There was a search for definitions, the characteristics of effective leadership and recognition of the embodiment of the vision in the total life of the leader.

The literature in the 1940s emphasised charismatic leadership and trait theory. This was followed in the 1950s and 1960s with behavioural theories and in the 1960s and 1970s with the contingency theory that emphasised the leadership's behaviour in relation to their followers. This evolved in the 1980s into the attribution theory that emphasised the perspective of the followers and in the 1990s into an emphasis on the total quality

organisation and transformational leadership (Abbott, 1999: 7-11; Robbins, Waters-Marsh, Cacioppe & Millett, 1994: 467-469). Despite these exhaustive secular leadership studies, the actual behaviour of school leaders (Walcott, 1974: 324) and Christian school leadership in particular has been little researched (Davies, 1993: 1; Long, 1996a: 12).

Leadership styles have changed with time. First there was the directive, firm, or headship leadership, which was followed by the democratic phase and finally the more recent, participatory, collaborative, employee-centred leadership. However, as early as the 1960s this model was deemed to be outdated and a fourth scenario was posited, namely that no one leadership style was considered to be more effective than others, it depends on the local context (Agyris, 1964: 214; West-Burnham, 1997: 136). Given that there are so many perspectives to choose from, how can leadership be described?

One survey (Bennis & Nanus, 1985) found more than 350 definitions of leadership, however, there were two common elements. Firstly, leadership was regarded as a group activity that needs the interaction of two or more people and secondly, leaders intentionally sought to influence the behaviour of others (Owens, 1995: 116). Expressed more succinctly, leaders make things happen (Gronn, 1999: 9) but they have a certain restlessness about them (Blumberg & Greenfield, 1980: 7) that keeps them moving on to find new challenges (Gardner, 1995: 286).

Arguably, one of the greatest and most powerful leaders of the twentieth century was the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He did not get things done because of any legal authority compelling his followers to act, yet he had an extraordinary power to influence the behaviour of his followers and ultimately a whole nation. What he had were ideas, transparent *values and beliefs*, and a *clear vision of a better, more just, more morally perfect future*. In essence, leadership establishes a direction by developing a vision, aligning followers who understand the vision and by motivating and inspiring them to implement the vision (Kotter, 1990: 5; Sergiovanni, Burlingame, Coombs & Thurston, 1987: 73; Walner, 2000: xii, 6). King had learned much about leadership from studying the life of Mohandas Gandhi who was a master of the art (Owens, 1995: 117-118).

Maxwell (1993) explored the concept of learning to lead or *developing the leader within.* Unlike others who reported one perspective, namely, that leadership was purely a gift (Gardner, 1995: 22), Maxwell considered that a leader could develop their leadership by gaining the right training and experience. His model proposed that a leader could progress through five levels as measured by their degree of influence. Level 1, recognised leadership on account of position; level 2, recognised relationships have been formed; level 3, considered the results of leadership; level 4, recognised that followers have been changed and a degree of reproduction had begun and finally level 5, focussed on the leader having gained genuine respect from their followers (Maxwell, 1993: 14-15).

Whether innate or acquired, outstanding leadership has naturally emerged as a key characteristic of successful schools and has inspired the quest for the key features of effective leadership (Bear, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989: 99). However, an analysis of such lists does not produce a panacea for improving schools. Effective leadership seems to embrace a wide range of cultures and practices from relatively autocratic to relatively democratic. Nonetheless, a consideration of the literature's recipe does add further dimensions to the question of what is leadership (West-Burnham, 1997: 136). Some of the key features of effective leadership include a sense of belonging to their community and an understanding of

people, while possessing a readiness to confront individuals. They may be risk-taking visionaries intent on team building while making effective use of delegation so that they can have time to reflect on the big picture (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992: 49; Gardner, 1995: 36, 286; Gurr, 1996: 12, 116).

A more detailed consideration of two examples of the *characteristics of educational leadership* serve to illuminate some of the key issues faced by school leaders. Starratt (1986) proposed six essentials in his educational leadership paradigm that are all rooted in vision:

- The leader's power or effectiveness is rooted in vision, which in turn has its foundation in basic human need
- The leader utilises vision to illuminate ordinary every-day activities with dramatic significance
- The leader articulates the vision in a compelling way to their followers
- The leader implants the vision into the structures and processes of the organisation
- The leader ensures that the day-to-day decisions are all made in the light of the vision
- All members of the community celebrate the vision in ritual ceremonies and art forms (Starratt, 1986: 15)

In contrast, Gardner's (1999) approach to the challenges of leadership emphasises the motivations of the effective school leader. He emphasised the necessity for a long-term perspective while working on small-scale victories that build on strengths. Leaders need to be flexible, anticipate setbacks and learn to deal with them effectively. Gardner calls for the leader to pay attention to implicit messages in the institutional culture. For example, he notes that *nothing can boost the cause of understanding more than the sight of the teachers themselves striving to understand new material.* Leadership focuses on creating a caring community, which, according to Gardner, is more effective if it remains small. Finally, he urges time for reflection, an energetic commitment to the process of change and the necessity for frequently reciting of the vision (Gardner, 1999: 230-234).

Perhaps one of the most challenging characteristics of effective leadership that frequently comes through the literature is the call for the leader to *embody* their message (Bolman & Deal, 1993: 3; Gardner, 1995: 290; Gardner 1997: 108; Gardner 1999: 229; Peshkin, 1986: 48; Ulich, 1996: 215). This feature is allied to the leader's integrity and passion for what they are trying to do and their ability to identify with their vision in a uniquely human way. To illustrate this, Gardner traced the lives of Martin Luther King Jr. and Margaret Thatcher emphasising the stories they told both implicitly and explicitly (Gardner, 1995: 203-238). He quoted King, *once you become dedicated to a cause, personal security is not the goal, my cause, my race is worth dying for* (Gardner, 1995: 219). The result of this level of leadership is that the people in the organisation become increasingly connected with each other and a bonding develops between the leader and the followers (Abbott, 1999: 14; Sergiovanni, 1996: 33).

Successful leadership has been recognised in various ways over the years but it has been very hard to define. Perhaps one of the keys is that leaders make things happen because of the vision they carry within themselves and effectively pass on to their followers.

2.4.2 Some Leadership Themes

This next section will examine in a little more detail the leadership themes of the bureaucratic and collaborative styles, and instructional and transformational leadership as they apply to the new Christian schools.

Weber defined bureaucratic administration as *the exercise of control on the basis of knowledge.* He went on to say that this knowledge was of a *technical nature* that *grew out of experience* in the particular organisation. Weber referred to the bureaucratic leader having a *store of documentary material, peculiar to themselves* that constitute the *official secrets* of the organisation, control over which *increases their power* (Weber, 1924: 14).

The consequences for an organisation with bureaucratic control include a tendency towards *levelling* in the *interests of the broadest possible basis of recruitment* and the dominance of *formalistic impersonality, 'sine ira et studio'* (without hatred or passion) and hence *without affection or enthusiasm*. Therefore, everyone in the organisation is treated to the same formal equality (Agyris, 1964: 296-297; Weber, 1924: 14).

In the early 1980s, there was a strong move towards the bureaucratic view as the best way to effect school improvement, despite the prevalence of pressures for equality and access from the 1970s. This style was allied to the *factory model*, dominated by top-down hierarchical authority, mechanical regimentation and going-by-the-book. Policy handbooks, standardised forms and rosters dominated the organisations, along with supervisory functions that reported to the hierarchy (Long, 1996a: 400; Owens, 1995: 66-68).

The term *bureaucratic leadership* describes the style of structures in place, but perhaps the most obvious expression of this style is the emphasis on authoritarianism. Talk of the *headmaster steering a tight ship, marshalling the troops* and *patrolling the corridors* all conjure up military imagery designed to bolster the authority of the leadership. These images may reflect a well-managed institution but *do they produce questioning participants* or merely subservient students and teachers (Davies, 1994: 5)? Long (1996a) did not applaud the benefits of good management either but noted that the new Christian schools have largely adopted the bureaucratic model by default as they have not taken the trouble to analyse the most appropriate structure for their needs.

Long was very much opposed to the apparent focus on authoritarian leadership in the New Christian Schools, proposing that its preponderance was related to a drive, particularly amongst Pentecostal and Charismatic circles, whose theology supports big is good and big is better, as they strive to push their enrolments over the 1000 mark (Long, 1996a: 391). The idea came from American church circles in the 1970s and 1980s and was known as the church growth movement grounded in the American entrepreneurial business mentality. Leaders of this trend power-dressed, emphasised the spectacular and talked about leadership itself building the programs and enrolments of their schools. Long claimed that principals in this mould exaggerated the role of the school principal as the visionary leader, focussed far too much on image and rarely considered deeper educational issues or collegial criticism (Long, 1996a: 391).

Long's thesis also regarded leadership's *loneliness at the top for Jesus' sake* as simply legitimising authoritarianism (Long, 1996a: 400). Bradley (1994) also appeared to justify the authoritarian governance of the Christian Schools in her examination of Machiavellian ideas'

impact on Christian school leadership. She declared that Niccolo Machiavelli was the ultimate realist, the supreme pragmatist, concentrating on what works rather than what ought to work and by implication justifying to some degree, the status quo (Bradley, 1994: 16). Long, however, castigated the use of Machiavelli being brought into any discussion on the leadership debate in the New Christian schools on account of his *indifference to morality and his disposal of principled thinking as a weakness* (Long, 1995: 34; 1996a: 401). Clearly, Long saw no justification for authoritarian leadership within the new Christian schooling movement.

Tension was also evident in the American new Christian schools literature. There was implied criticism that authority was often too highly concentrated on the principal, who relied heavily on *obedience* as the bed rock of relationships within the *school's structure of control* (Peshkin, 1986: 48, 92; Rose, 1988: 117). There was also evidence of a polarisation within the New Christian Schooling community as several pastors and principals across the United States expressed concern that too many schools had atmospheres that *stifled individuality* and *constructive thought* (Parsons, 1987: 135).

Larger organisations tended to tolerate and use authoritarian leadership more effectively than smaller groups and may have produced higher productivity but lower morale. Likewise, different personalities appear to have reacted very differently to authoritarian leadership. Participants high in the need for independence thrived much better in a more collaborative environment (Agyris, 1964: 215: Bolman & Deal, 1984: 57). An organisation dominated by the bureaucratic model overstates the *structural frame* of Bolman and Deal's *Reframing Organisations* and consequently overstates the needs of the individual; the recognition of different skills and the development of relationships are ignored or down played (Bolman & Deal, 1997: 15).

Beare and Slaughter (1993) contended that the bureaucratic model should not be operating in schools. They believed that any business operating on such lines couldn't operate in a post-industrial economy, which guarantees survival only to the flexible and creative, and that give due credit to the initiative of local decision-making (Beare & Slaughter, 1993: 78). Bennis (1994) was even stronger in his criticism of the bureaucratic command and control leadership describing it as *silly and obsolete* as it *can't release the brainpower of an organisation by its use of whips and chains* (Bennis, 1994: xiii).

Ever since the Paris riots of 1968, there has been an expectation of worker-participation in management and student and staff participation in academic government (Andersen, 1984b: 3). It is essential that the person at the top of the organisation initiate the core attribute of collaboration. Instead of de-motivating and disenabling the human resource factor as occurs in the most pyramidal, hierarchical power structures, all employees should be empowered and rewarded through horizontal team structures that equally involve them in decision-making processes and give them responsibility for all manner of outcomes (Jones, 1992: 306; Vanderhoek, 1993: 17).

However, it would be wrong to assume that *collegiality is always the best way to run a school.* Collegiality or collaborative leadership has such obvious appeal that it is tempting to regard it as always the best way. However, where there is a shortage of experienced staff, a high percentage of part-time staff, a rapid rate of staff change or a set of conflicting loyalties, the organisation would be poorly served by a collaborative approach (Davies, 1994: 18).

Collaborative leadership is not simply the positive equivalent of the bureaucratic model but rather an integration of all four frames of Bolman and Deal's *reframed organisations.* It is the combination of the *structural frame* (bureaucratic style), the *political frame,* the *human resource frame* and the *symbolic frame* together that constitute the *collaborative style* (Telford, 1996: 25). Therefore, collaborative leadership does not replace the bureaucratic model, but builds upon it. The active participation of people is sought from all levels of the organisational hierarchy. For this reason an organisation with the collaborative style is popularly referred to as having *bottom-up* structures (Owens, 1995: 129). For example, in the Christian schooling context the primary aim of staff should be to *achieve fellowship* and in order to do this, they need to work side-by-side and shoulder-to-shoulder rather than up and down a ladder of hierarchy (Andersen, 1984a: 12; Vanderhoek, 1993: 16).

The presence of collaborative leadership has been equated with succeeding schools (Twelves, 2001: 72). Wallace (1995) cited Rosenholtz' 1989 study of the environment of a sample of American primary schools. She found that the *stuck* schools were bureaucratic in structure, whereas in *moving* schools, teachers believed that they never stopped learning, were supportive of change or improvement and were respected, celebrated and recognised as people and as professionals. The teachers were empowered to define what constitutes a problem and to work together to change the conditions that caused the problem. Wallace believed that developing collaborative structures in schools was a necessary, albeit complex, critical function of school leaders (Wallace, 1995: 16).

The emphasis must shift from *telling people what to do to managing the boundaries and helping others gain skill* (Wallace, 1995: 17; Weisbord, 1987: 369). Perhaps one of the best ways to do this is for the school leader to embody integrity. A leader who does this will inspire trust in others and if integrity is the guiding principle, the leader can trust their employees and in due time open the door to decentralised decision-making, teamwork and empowerment (Jones, 1992: 307; Wallace, 1995: 17).

One application of the collaborative approach was Maggard's (1994) releasing of several interested teachers to write new curriculum outlines in their summer holidays. He ministered to his staff by providing materials, time and opportunity to become competent in the field of language arts and process writing. He saw this as a central aspect of the principal's role as *instructional leader*, an essential ingredient for the success of his Christian school in Kentucky, United States (Maggard, 1994: 60).

The control of the educational programme has dominated the study of leadership in schools. However, in the 1950s and 1960s, advances in management and social science theory brought to centre stage, the technical and human aspects of leadership with the result that educational aspects were neglected. The pendulum has now returned and instructional leadership is once again at the forefront of debate. This new emphasis is a happy by-product of recent school effectiveness and teacher effectiveness research. Effective school leaders have to be strong educational leaders (Sergiovanni, 2001: 102).

Over the years, many principals have aspired to be instructional leaders but relatively few appear to be satisfied that they performed well in this area (Blumberg & Greenfield, 1980: 43). They have had a challenging list of objectives to achieve, for example, the establishment of a high priority for curriculum and instructional issues together with the resources to match these goals. The principals have also been charged with the creation of school cultures that have enhanced learning while recognising that time is always short and

minimising any disruption to learning. They have had to set high expectations of staff, actively involving them in instructional policymaking and establishing good teacher evaluation procedures while effectively monitoring student progress and making frequent class visits. In essence, the instructional leader was seen symbolically as the embodiment of the school's professional purpose and competence with the potential to reassure the teachers about the quality of their teaching (Lortie, 1975: 197; McEwan, 1998: 13; Smith & Andrews, 1989: 8-9).

Instructional leadership has focussed on growth in student numbers but it is obvious that this is only a portion of those activities associated with effective school leadership. In recognition of this, the *problem-solving* view of the leadership process was established as less likely to create ambiguity or confusion. It extends the instructional leadership model to encompass *transactional* and *transformational* leadership. Transactional leadership was based on exchange theory, whereby the leader motivated the follower with an exchange of various incentives and transformational leadership actually shapes and elevates the motives of the followers without any tangible exchange process (Leithwood, Begley & Cousins, 1992: 7-10). An in-depth study of ten secondary school principals also recognised the importance of *instructional leadership* and that it is subsumed within transformational leadership (Gurr, 1996: 185-190).

The introduction of transformational leadership stressed that its followers *become self-directing, self-reinforcing* and eventually become *converted into leaders* themselves (Burns, 1978: 3). Bass (1985) developed his own model of transformational leadership based on Burns' earlier work. He recognised that a transformational leader is one who motivates their followers to do more than they originally expected to do, firstly, by raising their levels of awareness and consciousness and, secondly, by enabling them to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the team or the community and finally, by expanding their capacity in terms of needs and wants (Bass, 1985: 20).

The discussion of transformational leadership has emphasised the transformation of the followers rather than the style of the leader. So it is easily understood why transformational leadership has been equated with the much older term of *charismatic leadership* as though the followers are able to recognise their leader's *gifts* but cannot explain how they work (Gronn, 1999: 129; Sergiovanni, 2001: 137). Nevertheless, four criteria have been recognised to distinguish the presence of transformational leadership: *idealized influence*, the role model; *inspirational motivation*, the arousal of team spirit; *intellectual stimulation*, to be innovative and creative and *individualized consideration*, paying special attention to each individual's needs (Bass & Avolio, 1994: 3-4).

This style of leadership in schools has some resonance with *collaborative leadership* (Telford, 1996: 21) as it has the capacity to work with others in the community to formulate the vision, to communicate the vision in a way that ensures the commitment of the staff, students, parents and the wider community, and to empower others in decision-making (Caldwell & Spinks, 1992: 49). It has also been regarded as a developmental model with some resemblance to Maxwell's (1993) model of *leadership development*. The first stage, *building*, is where the human potential is aroused and expectations are raised. The second stage, *bonding*, is seeking a *transformational breakthrough*, as organisational goals are elevated and the leader and the follower bond together in moral commitment. The final stage, *binding*, promotes self-management with people connected to the vision (Sergiovanni, 2001: 138).

As transformational leadership is rather nebulous it is difficult to define with clarity, partly because it attempts to encompass so many other leadership themes and also because so much of it is rooted in the perceptions of the followers. Nevertheless, meta-analysis of 21 rigorous studies has demonstrated that transformational leadership in schools is associated with improved organisational effectiveness and more collaborative cultures (Leithwood et al., 1996: 798- 799). Providentially, transformational leadership's overarching boundaries seem to include specifically Biblical leadership styles that researchers have longed to see in the new Christian schools (Abbott, 1999: 14). Gronn (1995) also recognised the significance and breadth of this theme in his frequently quoted parody of transformational leadership:

A strong air of human perfectibility inflicts the exposition of transformational leadership, the terminology about elevating people to previously unheard of levels of potential, altered levels of awareness, autonomy, mission and vision and even the very idea of transformed individuals and organisations, carries with it all the hall marks of a religious crusade and being born again (Gronn, 1995: 25).

2.4.3 Christian School Leadership

This last section attempts to focus the first two sections towards an understanding of what really constitutes Christian School Leadership. Very little research has been conducted in this area (Long, 1996a: 12) but what has, clearly concentrates on transformational leadership (Bass, 1985), servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1996) and Biblical leadership.

Abbott (1999) argued that there is a strong compatibility between transformational leadership and Biblical leadership. She examined the common attributes of transformational leadership and proposed a model for administration in Christian Schools (Abbott, 1999: ix). For Christian teachers in particular, the transformational concept resonates with their belief structures, rings true to scriptural principles and echoes the leadership patterns of their Biblical heroes such as Moses, Joseph, David, Paul and of course *Jesus Christ the ultimate transformational leader* (Sharpe, 2000: 31). But what are the distinguishing features of Christian school leadership?

1. *Vision. Where there is no vision the people perish* (Proverbs 29: 18). There are two strands: the first is a deep dissatisfaction with how things are and the second is the dream of the solution.

2. *Hard Work*. Vision alone cannot make a leader; it has to be translated into practical plans that demand thought, energy, enthusiasm and hard work.

3. *Perseverance*. Visions translated into action must be maintained with perseverance, as opposed to stubbornness, when the inevitable obstacles arise.

4. *Submission*. Submission is the most distinctive characteristics of Biblical leadership. The Bible does not concern itself with hierarchical relationships but rather it radically advocates an *inner* attitude of *mutual* submission amongst Christians. Thus, leaders are to give up their own interests in favour of the interest of others. Therefore, a school organisation that is based on *consensus, collegiality, power sharing, appreciation* and *encouragement* is Biblical. The emphasis is not on *lording it* over people, but *whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant* (Matthew 20: 26).

5. *Service*. Service is not merely a qualification for leadership but the *end* of leadership. Jesus said, *whoever would be great among you must be your servant and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many* (Mark 10: 43-44).

6. *Waiting on God*. The discipline of prayer and meditation is an essential component of Biblical leadership. A leader who really understands submission will be painfully aware of their weaknesses. Indeed, many Biblical leaders exhibited flaws in their personality that at times crippled their leadership; Noah (drink problem); Moses (temper); David (adultery and murder); Peter (personal insecurity). Successful Biblical leaders, however, recognise that their weaknesses can be overcome by *waiting on God,* as the Psalmist expressed it (Psalm 40: 1).

(Bradley, 1992: 2-11)

This model of Biblical school leadership is alluded to in much of the literature. For example, Christian school leadership is expected to model gentleness, selflessness, modesty, diligence, professional competence, empathy and trust as it establishes genuine authority rather than resorting to the use of their hierarchical powers (Davies, 1993: 5; Horsfield, 1990: 27). They should also regulate how spiritual and theological insight should affect the way in which the school is run (Lankshear, 1992: 106).

A number of other writers (Bolman & Deal, 1993: 54; Starratt, 1993: 47) recognised that the school principal was in fact a *spiritual leader* and Davies, R. (1957) went so far as to say that the head teacher and all teachers of religious subjects were responsible for *bringing the pupils to a faith in God through Jesus Christ* (Davies, 1957: 9). Others do not go quite so far but admit that school leadership is a *moral craft* (Lortie, 1975: 111; Starratt, 1996: xiv).
One of the key foci of so much of the leadership literature, both secular and overtly Christian, is the philosophy of *servant leadership* (Bolman, Deal & Rallis, 1995: 70; Davies, 1993: 2; Owens, 1995: 138; Sergiovanni, 1990: 152). Greenleaf introduced this philosophy in the 1970s but it failed to receive wide acceptance until after 1990, the year that he died (Greenleaf, 1996: xii), partly as a result of a backlash against economic rationalism and the dominance of management over leadership that prevailed throughout the 1980s (Sharpe, 2000: 30-34).

The pivotal principle of servant leadership is that the servant leader is a servant first, responding to a natural desire to want to serve, and then this is followed by the conscious choice to aspire to leadership. The test of true servant leadership is to judge *what is the effect on the least privileged in society*; *will they benefit or at least not be further deprived (Greenleaf, 1970: 7)?* Further, while they are being served, do they *grow as persons*, become *healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous* and more likely themselves *to become servants* (Bradley, 1999: 46)?

Servant leadership is similar to transformational leadership in that it has few prescriptions but rather it embraces certain key principles. Nevertheless, Spear, the executive director of the Greenleaf Centre for Servant Leadership in Indianapolis, has identified ten critical characteristics: A servant leader will be a good listener, aware of the perspective of others and able to empathise with their situations. They will be known for their powers of persuasion and analytical conceptualisation; committed to people's growth, willing and able

to minister healing for hurts and misunderstandings. They will also exercise responsible stewardship in the light of clear foresight as they build the local community together (Greenleaf, 1996: 4).

Three of the principles that undergird servant leadership are trust, appreciation of others and empowerment. The values of honesty and integrity build interpersonal and organisational trust which is essential for the success of organisational change, employee satisfaction, and long term stability and only develops when shared values permeate a social situation. Servant leaders visibly appreciate, value and encourage their constituents. While authoritarian leadership styles may demean followers, servant leaders respect those they serve and empower them. This empowerment involves entrusting workers with genuine authority and responsibility and in so doing they multiply their leadership. Empowerment is the opposite of the historical management practices that emphasised manipulation, it involves delegating responsibility and nurturing participatory leadership and it is believed that the degree to which the leader is able to delegate is a measure of their leadership success (Russell, 2001: 80-81).

Christian school leadership is very hard to define, however, its presence or absence is easily recognisable. It applies transformational and servant leadership to a Biblical model that has at its heart spiritual leadership. It employs the collaborative style as opposed to the bureaucratic model, demolishes the hierarchical, authoritarian approach and encourages delegated authority and responsibility through empowerment of others.

Christian educators, seeing every person as a child of God, a brother or sister in Christ, simply enhances the clarity with which they see and know the real person in front of them…in a sense, the sources of greatness of the school is in the teachers and the pupils…the leader's job is to nurture their belief in themselves and each other through a vision worthy of them (Starratt, 1993: 4).

2.5 Building School Culture

It is implied throughout this section that effective Biblical leadership will be the primary force behind the building of school culture. However, the literature clearly indicates that this will never be achieved by one authoritarian leader on their own but is much more likely to occur if the whole group is actively involved. Initially, this section attempts to define school culture and then considers how it might be built and by whom. The third subsection inspects a number of examples from the new Christian schools and the final subsection considers how these cultures can be maintained in the future.

2.5.1 Defining School Culture

Organisational cultures cannot be easily defined; they are *perceived or felt* (Handy, 1985: 197). It is a subtle and indescribable feeling, which pervades every school defying analysis and definition (Dorman, 1996: 32). However, whatever it is needs to pervade the whole organisation to be recognised as their culture. It reflects the distinctive character of the organisation, that everyone is proud to be a part of and passionately believes in. These beliefs shape everyone's behaviour with a unity across all departments and their distinctive *culture is no passing fad, as it stands the test of time* (Drennan, 1992: 273).

Schein (1985) has offered a more formal definition of culture from the perspective of leadership:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that a group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to problems (Schein, 1985: 12).

In the context of the new Christian schools' place in the broader society, Hill (1976) proposed a three-dimensional definition of culture. At its heart, the school is a community as opposed to an institution, with rules and procedures that are designed to encourage individualized learning in a supportive and co-operative atmosphere. The members of the community are tied together by a shared interest or common bond, which endures at least for some time. At the second level, the wider community impacts the school community. For example, parents paying fees, offering voluntary labour or working on task forces with the school administration keeping the school ethos under constant review. At the third level, schooling for community, considers how the school community might impact the wider community, from public performances, to acts of service and the common good (Hill, 1976: 25-34).

2.5.2 The Ingredients of School Culture

The leaders' perspective of the visionaries who established the new Christian schools in the United States, saw them as having been searching for ingredients that have been missing in all too many of their institutions, a *sense of control and community*, an *education that responds to the wishes of the local actors*, is *not highly bureaucratic or dominated by top-down mandates* and *provides a system of ethics that can guide the communities conduct* (Rose, 1988: xii).

Perhaps the key ingredient in the New Christian School culture is the battle for faith for succeeding generations. The leadership believed that they were in the most important and crucial religious war in all of history, the struggle between Christianity and humanism and the battlefield was the minds of the students in their schools. If they could build a truly Christian lifestyle in their schools, it would permanently impact the lives of their students, their families and the wider community (Rose, 1988: 1-2).

All schools interact with their broader environment to a greater or lesser degree and as a result there are always pressures from outside waiting to impact the school's culture. Therefore, one of the roles of leadership is to be effective gatekeepers for the community. For example, a study reported by Barnes (1976), indicated that police habitually patrolled the corridors of an American high school at the principal's invitation. The question was asked, *What are the students learning during their time at school about American society and their place in it?* Barnes concluded that what is learned depends far less on what is taught rather than what the students actually experience. No amount of discussion about democracy in history or social studies classes can erase what they experience first hand in the corridors of their schools. How the teachers and pupils talk with each other in corridors and in classrooms, how the headmaster runs staff meetings, how time-table decisions are made and the tone of letters to parents and the notices on notice boards, all impact markedly on the development and maintenance of school cultures (Barnes, 1976: 182-183).

In the Christian school context, the principal should be aiming to *mould* the school into a Christ-like community to some degree. If he or she does not, and accepts the environment as a *given*, then his or her life will be dictated by the pressures from within and without the school community. In order to build the school into a community, the principal's central task is to build the staff into a community, then there is a possibility that *the infection will spread*, for all of us tend to mirror, in our approach to others, the way we have ourselves been approached. The initial ingredients for this approach include the principal's need to be *accessible* and *approachable*, and as far as possible *transparent* in *motivation* and *intention* (Andersen, 1990: 34-37).

So much of the focus of education is on individual achievement and the fulfilling of personal potential, however a Christian school that majors on this philosophy denies the Biblical principle of community. The children's gifts should not be developed individualistically with the hope that one day they might be incorporated into community. Rather, they need to be developed and practiced within community from the outset (Cox, 1998: 5). In this regard, Vanderhoek (1993) focussed on *building community in the school* with reference to one of the key passages from the New Testament:

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully (Romans 12: 4-8) (Vanderhoek, 1993: 12).

This passage illustrates another key ingredient of school culture, namely that every part of the community needs everyone else as each one has an invaluable part to play in the whole. In recognition of this in the primary grades, schools that have instituted buddy systems for assisting the younger children have often found that their functions grow beyond their original design as the older one becomes genuinely protective of the younger and will, at times, become their advocate. Another possibility along these lines would be to see older students become coaches of the younger ones as the latter prepare for class presentations, school assemblies or a school programme. In the secondary schools, mentoring systems can be established in which senior students become involved with integrating incoming students into their new community and peer support programs can vastly enhance the capacity of student care within the community (Vanderhoek, 1993: 13).

This review of the ingredients of school culture will conclude with an examination of what the children learn as a result of being part of the school, the *hidden curriculum.* It is far better that the *hidden curriculum not be hidden* at all! There should be documents written about it so that everyone knows what is being attempted, how and why (Lankshear, 1992: 60).

Lankshear proposed three elements of the hidden curriculum. Firstly, the *school discipline system* should be designed to provide the basis for self-discipline. If it becomes too dependent on staff enforcing acceptable standards, then it does not carry the seeds of future growth to maturity. Secondly, the hidden curriculum encompasses the *things of value to the school*. A cursory examination of school displays and what is mentioned in and omitted from assemblies will quickly provide a glimpse into what is important to the school. For example,

the school's attitude to children with special needs is a good barometer. Are they singled out as a minority who need help or are they integrated into the whole on the lines that many children need special help in at least one area? Finally, the school should be a *therapeutic community*, which is one that seeks to care for more than the intellect of its students. This sphere of care should at least extend to include the parents, as that will have a direct impact on the children (Lankshear, 1992: 60-67).

A further aspect of the hidden curriculum concerns that which is omitted from the overt curriculum. In one sense, the total package presented to the children and students contains messages in a binary code of 1 or 0. The lack of teaching, for the sake of political correctness, in state schools about the Christian World View, actually transmits a message that Christianity is unimportant. This, coupled with the media's reluctance to present too much Christianity for fear of bias, is in fact indoctrination against Christianity (Watson, 1992: 2). The Christian schools' response is to build an adequate framework of understanding in the minds of the students that will enable them to make sense of Biblical perspectives and ultimately to make informed personal choices to accept or reject Christianity (O'Keefe, 1992: 100).

Any attempt to develop the life of a school as a community in the light of the gospel is no soft option. It takes time, energy, commitment and determination and in the end the results might not look very different from a state school down the road, however the basis for the action will be the theological undergirding provided by the gospels (Lankshear, 1992: 68).

2.5.3 Christian School Cultures

Christian school culture has been characterised by the *Three L's;* namely *listening* to the insights of the children and *leading* the community into wisdom in an atmosphere of affirming *love* that honours each person and race (Goudzwaard, 1997: 47). Culture also reflects interdependence, a family atmosphere and the dovetailing of each individual's gifts for the common good (Andersen, 1984a: 7-8; King, 1954: 33). They are communities that focus on the total development of each student in terms of their relationship with God, their fellows, their environment and themselves. They are environments where a carefully monitored balance guides such development between *Christian nurture* and *judicious exposure* to interaction with the outside world (Andersen, 1984a: 19).

The students in Pensecola Christian School, in the United States, had no locks on their lockers as stealing resulted in automatic expulsion. There were only three expulsions necessary over twelve years. The school also emphasised punctuality, cleanliness, truthfulness and respect for adults and property (Parsons, 1987: 26-27). Another glimpse at the Christian school culture can be seen at Bethany Baptist Academy, also in the United States. The Headmaster, McGraw operated an *umbrella policy* of twenty-four hour concern for the student's behaviour. This meant that if he got wind of a party being organised, he would call in the ringleaders and squelch the party. McGraw said, *If the kids thought nobody cared what they did over the weekend, we'd lose all our credibility, the rules at Bethany Baptist Academy have to be there until the love of Christ takes over* (Peshkin, 1986: 94).

Another distinctive feature of Bethany's culture is the operation of the corporal punishment policy. Parents are always notified before the paddle is used. It is only given by the administrator in the presence of an adult witness and is generally only used on the younger

students, from grade eight downwards. Any child who refuses to accept the paddle is expelled and McGraw claimed that *they would close down before giving up the paddling policy* (Peshkin, 1986: 107-108).

In Australia, Tucker (1990) argued that one of the hallmarks of the Christian school culture was that they should have a *clear sense of what culture* they wanted to achieve amongst their students and staff. For example, one of the indications of this culture was that if a staff member was absent, other staff always covered for them because they saw this as their Christian duty *to go the second mile*. He went on to suggest that a key feature should be the *resolution of conflicts* and the *absence of grudges* and *bitterness* in an atmosphere of daily prayer (Tucker, 1990: 20-21).

A number of writers conceived the essence of culture to be an expression of the close association between the *home, the church and the school*. They suggested that where such a partnership existed, the development of a distinctive culture was more likely, as the students would see certain ethical norms being played out in the key environments of their lives, and therefore they would reflect them more consistently themselves (Kew, 1993: 76; Rohrer, 2000: 1; Starratt, 1994: 10).

Finally, from a more philosophical standpoint, Nordin & Turner (1980) saw the Christian schooling culture as a society that was listening to a *different drummer* and that *marched resolutely* towards the *values of their past*. They argued that they were perfectly within their rights to do so but they were forced to question whether such groups should be taking a growing percentage of youth into their control (Nordin & Turner, 1980: 393).

2.5.4 The Maintenance of Christian School Cultures

These schools seem to have been walking a tightrope as they have sought to maintain their distinctive Christian ethos. For example, there is a very real tension between the process of maintaining the Christian culture and the goal of academic excellence, although it is possible to achieve both. Riding (1997) argued that if the subject Christianity is part of the curriculum, there is the clear existence of Christian elements in all subject areas, there are daily class devotions, the protestant work ethic and the atmosphere generated by the Christian teachers, then the Christian ethos can be maintained (Riding, 1997: 58-61).

Some have feared that the distinctive culture will be lost as the new Christian schools grow in size, but Deal and Peterson (1999) claim that this will not necessarily be the case as long as the focus of the organisation remains on people not profits. In order to maintain the culture, they advocate the telling of the stories of the past and the value of cementing the culture in the architecture of the present. For example, they suggest that a small library and a gigantic gymnasium will quite clearly reflect the values held by the community (Deal & Peterson, 1999: 1-63).

The Christian culture will be perpetuated as long as the school's mission is firmly built on the central tenets established in the Bible (Walner, 2000: 3) *and the community's focus is greater than the local including both the national and global contexts as well* (King, 1954: 44).

2.6 Successful Christian Schools

2.6.1 Attempts to Define Success

It is hard to define success but most people can recognise it when they see it (Bolman & Deal, 1993: 48). Most parents make the crucial decision about where to send their children by talking with other parents. This decision is often based on how happy a child appears to be and parental judgments about a child's academic progress (Walsh, 1999: 2).

Unfortunately, no matter how carefully the parents investigate a particular school, their judgements will always be subjective. One of the issues that make it so difficult to define the success of a given school is that it is very difficult to quantify the impact of the continuous and informal training given to children by their families, rather than the explicit and methodical instruction they gain at school (Teese, 2000: 5). This search for a definition of success is made even more problematic in the new Christian schools, as there is often the additional factor of the church to consider as well. Trying to *disentangle the multiple effects of home, school, church and social background is virtually impossible* (Rose, 1988: 156).

However, in an attempt to provide some objectivity for the endless debate about a school's success, Edmonds (1979) in the United States and Rutter, Maughan, Mortimer and Ouston (1979) in the United Kingdom, founded what has become known as the school effectiveness movement (Townsend, 2001a: 3). The early work was trying to demonstrate that schools do have an effect on student outcomes despite the generally held belief at the time that students' achievements depended almost entirely on out of school factors. Social, economic and environmental factors were believed to account for 80 per cent of variation, while school effect was thought to account for two per cent. However, pupil expectations of their school were seen to be important and largely reflected the catchment of the school (Reynolds, 1992: 1-3). One of the striking conclusions of the Rutter et al. study was that *children were more likely to show good behaviour and achieve good scholastic attainment if they attended some schools than if they attended others* (Rutter et al., 1979: 178). Gradually attitudes were changing.

The Search for Effective Schools Project (Edmonds, 1979) identified a number of characteristics of urban schools in the United States that had positively impacted the whole range of students in their care. They had strong administrative leadership that had created a climate of expectation in which no children were permitted to fall below minimum but efficacious levels of achievement. The schools' atmospheres were orderly without being rigid, quiet without being oppressive and generally conducive to the instructional business and they were places where the *pupil's acquisition of basic skills took precedence over all other school activities* (Edmonds, 1979: 22).

A more recent study, based on specific measures of Literacy and Mathematics in Victoria, Australia, demonstrated that differences between classes within the same school are many more times higher than differences between schools, indicating a high variability in teacher/class effectiveness. The percentage variation attributable to within school variations, such as teacher and class effects, was around 40-55 per cent, while the between school variation, successful schools paradigm, was between four to nine per cent (Hill, 1998: 423).

Manifestly, the school effectiveness research has begun to quantify success, although these figures merely reflect performance in the two curriculum areas of English and Mathematics.

There is much more to a school's success than the study of English and Mathematics. Success can be measured in terms of technical/economic effectiveness, human/social effectiveness, political effectiveness, cultural effectiveness as well as educational effectiveness and each of these can be viewed at various levels; the individual, institutional, communal, societal and international level. Therefore, even with the quantification of some variables, any attempt at understanding success is an exceedingly complex issue (Cheng, 1996: 13).

In keeping with Reynolds (1992) and Hill (1998) school success has been defined in terms of *the progress that pupils make in their learning* (Walsh, 1999: 234). However, reflecting Cheng's (1996) broader perspective, Walsh adds the caveat that *teaching, learning, management* and *governance* also need to be monitored (Walsh, 1999: 235).

However, from the economic rationalist perspective, L. Davies (1994) proposed that for a school to be seen as successful it needs to be competitive and cost-effective. She argued that the primary goal is academic efficiency in a tightening economic climate while not ignoring the needs for greater democracy and the upholding of human rights (Davies, 1994: 1).

Deal and Peterson (1999) suggested a checklist approach. They would look *for extra-curricular success, the teachers doing a good job, students getting into tertiary college, the school surviving and not making waves, keeping up with the latest educational innovations* and *all the students learning effectively* (Deal & Peterson, 1999: 24). However, this definition of success, begs the question, how do you measure the success of the extra-curricular programme or the teachers doing a good job?

Perhaps a more realistic measure of success would be to consider the *extent to which the school's desired level of output has been achieved* (Sheerens & Bosker, 1997: 4). A similar approach was taken in the Christian schooling context by Chen's (1972) study of a hundred years of Christian education in China. He defined their schools' success as the *extent to which the schools' stated aims and objectives had been achieved in the several phases of the schools' history* (Chen, 1972: 3). Such approaches to the problem of defining success remove the unnecessary and misleading comparison between other schools, as the only measurements are against the schools' own target performance levels. Bear et al. (1989) warned against the dangers of seeking academic excellence in the light of league tables, as they believed a concentration on basic academics could sideline music, art, speaking skills, personal growth and self-esteem (Bear et al., 1989: 15). Another criticism of this emphasis on league tables was that they could turn the school's focus inward on itself to the detriment of its potential for serving the wider community (Townsend, 2001b: 122).

No comprehensive review of the success or failure of the new Christian schools has been undertaken. Smith (1984: 42), Peshkin (1986: 13) and Rose (1988: 156) in the United States and Kew (1993: 99) and Long (1996a: 12) in Australia all called for more research in this field, frequently citing the fact that these schools were too new to allow any meaningful study of the impact on their students. However, the literature has reported a wide range of qualitative definitions of success while they await a more objective analysis sometime in the future.

Those that emphasised the schools' long term goals included the suggestion that students should be surveyed when they have *left school and settled into their adult activities of work, marriage, post-school friendships and child rearing etc*. (Peshkin, 1986: 13), and an even

broader definition was that true success is to *ultimately change the state and health of a nation* (Parsons, 1987: 6). In contrast, some definitions focussed on the current situation. For example, *success means keeping one's integrity and faithfulness in the midst of a corrupt and corrupting world* (Rose, 1988: 199), and *success is seeing progress with handicapped children because of the love and encouragement found in the Christian school community* (Weeks, 1988: 43).

This section has shown that all schools need to clearly establish the criteria by which their success will be judged. This is all the more important for the new Christian schools as their role is much broader and more complex than the traditional school aim to develop the full potential of each student. If the primary distinctive of Christian education is to bring children to a personal knowledge of God, the teaching of scripture and the Christian faith, in so far as it leads to that knowledge, is the only other essential part of it. The purpose of History, Science, English etc, is simply to train the mind and to provide the means of making a living (Davies, 1957: 5; Elliott, 1994: 2; Peshkin, 1986: 155).

However, if the primary emphasis is on learning subjects to gain marks in order to beat others into higher education places and subsequently into better jobs, students are being encouraged to develop a very self-centred and consumer oriented values system. These values, which are more than mere beliefs or feelings, in due course determine the students' disposition and choices and as such run counter to the desired ethos of the new Christian schools (Hill, 1991: 1-4). This illustrates the tensions inherent within these schools as they seek to provide the best possible academic education while at the same time promoting and modelling the Christian life style.

The new Christian schools continue to exist in an educational context where there is a growing call for objective measures of academic attainment coupled with the demand for economic success. These pressures are creating tensions between the broader goals of spiritual transformation in their students' lives and changes in society at large (Twelves, 2001: 72). Therefore, perhaps the best definition of success for these schools would be similar to that of Chen's (1972) study that called for measures of the *extent to which the schools' stated aims and objectives have been achieved*. A further reason that this school specific approach would be preferable is the fact that the movement contains so much diversity that no single definition could possibly be suitable for all schools (van Brummelen, 1988: 38-39).

2.6.2 Prerequisites for Success

This section will consider some of the prerequisites for success, having established that the most practical way to gauge the success of a New Christian School is to seek to measure the extent to which their stated aims and objectives are being fulfilled.

Some of these schools have been able to satisfy the many competing demands and still claim to be successful because they have had a selective enrolment policy. Very little has been written about this in the Christian schooling literature but the fact that one example can be found suggests that some schools may still be using this philosophy to their advantage. In the early 1980s, one handbook for an Australian New Christian School stated that, *only those students who will meet our high achievement and behaviour standards will be comfortable in our school. We will gladly accept children of all learning abilities, however only those of the*

highest behaviour and morality are admitted or retained. Admittedly, the wording seems to be non-selective at face value, however in practice, the outworking of such a policy must have seen careful selection in the enrolment and the annual re-enrolment process. The handbook continued more bluntly, stating that although the school offers a *high quality of Christian training, it is not designed to be a corrective institution for problems arising beyond those usually found in average school children. While we love delinquent children and emotionally unstable children, the school is not equipped to meet their needs* (Maslen, 1982: 262). To be fair to the school concerned, this degree of selection was probably not designed with their success in mind, as the school was only four years old at the time. Instead, the selective enrolments were presumably in place in order to ensure survival through their early years.

In contrast, the literature has had much more to say about the right principal being a key factor that determines success. The appointment of a strong instructional leader was seen as vital (Caldwell & Spinks, 1998: 63; Rutter et al., 1979: 203; Walsh, 1999: 3) and Walsh stressed this further in arguing that this appointment was the most important decision a governing body ever has to make (Walsh, 1999: 41).

According to a survey of eight successful principals in the United States, conducted in the late 1970s, the school leaders were all *eager and desired to make their schools over in their image* while typically working 15–18 hours a day. They were *proactive and quick to assume the initiative* while being *resourceful in balancing the competing demands on their time* (Blumberg & Greenfield, 1980: 201, 256-7). Adding to this impressive list, successful schools tended to have principals who remained at their posts longer than most, giving them time to effect meaningful change in the school culture (Bolman & Deal, 1999: 42), personal relationships being the most important feature of that culture.

The quality of relationships between teachers, and between teachers and administrators, has been correlated with school success (Barth, 1990: 15-18). In a similar vein, the quality of student and staff relationships, fostered by vertical pastoral groupings of thirty students each, where the older mentor the younger, has been linked with success (King, 1954: 35-36). Some schools even go so far as to say that success is dependent on the degree to which the individual is cared for and feels cared for (Livermore, 1990: 18).

Others have placed greatest emphasis on the development of partnership between parents and teachers. Stoll and Fink (1996) have argued that the best schools have majored on building true partnership between parents and teachers, since there is ample evidence to suggest that students succeed where there is an active involvement of interested parents in the life of the school (Stoll & Fink, 1996: 134-135). The break down of this relationship is commonly quoted as a key reason for school failure. However, failure in this regard should not be seen as a fatal flaw in the new Christian schools, as they have habitually sought to build partnership, unlike some state schools that have lacked the inclination to address the effective involvement of parents in the school community (Weeks, 1988: 79).

The value of effective relationships for achieving success has also been championed by Long (1995) in his proposal that small Christian schools are to be preferred. He argued that small schools are more attractive to parents and that many parents are far more interested in finding a school with effective pastoral care than a wide range of facilities. Parents have a higher participation rate in the life of small schools where their input can be truly appreciated rather

than in larger more impersonal communities where their efforts might be seen more as simply a duty on a roster that has to be done (Long, 1995: 42).

All Christian schools undoubtedly want to succeed. Some may have manipulated their enrolments but all will have sought the service of an effective principal who was prepared to remain long enough to engender healthy relationships within the school community.

2.6.3 Successful Christian Schools

Most people can recognise success when they see it (Bolman & Deal, 1993: 48), however success takes many different forms in Christian schooling. The literature speaks of success in terms of academic achievements, spiritual development, citizenship and compromise.

Very little has been written about the academic standards attained by these schools, probably on account of their recent development and due to the fact that comprehensive studies have not yet been completed. However, the staff from many Christian schools are pleased that *their students regularly exceed national norms on standardised achievement tests* indicating academic success while at school (Peshkin, 1986: 155). An indication of intellectual success in the longer term has been provided by evidence that *many graduates from Christian schools are holding key positions in almost all sections of society* (Ho, 1996: 32).

A more objective measure of their success has been provided in Chen's (1972) study of True Light Seminary, Canton, China; Christian education for Chinese children in a totally non-Christian culture. The study found that in the first 45 years of their history from 1872 to 1917, 3,764 students had been enrolled, 69 per cent girls. After graduating from school, of the 29 per cent of these girls who went out to work, 42 per cent became bible women (missionaries), 39 per cent became teachers, 15 per cent became physicians and four per cent became nurses, indicating that their academic attainment must have been quite respectable in a society where few women worked (Chen, 1972: 83).

The second measure of success is the degree to which the students adopt the Christian faith. Figures from the True Light Seminary in China, indicated that in 1917, there were 312 students enrolled, of whom 95 per cent were Christian (Chen, 1972: 84). True Light believed that it had successfully achieved its primary evangelistic aim as 25 per cent of all those who enrolled during the first 45 years became Christians while at school, not including those who may have become Christians in adulthood (Chen, 1972: 106). The following quotation illustrates the dominant Christian culture:

Before the long summer vacation, meetings were held to prepare students for missionary work, urging them to take every opportunity to give the gospel message to as many people as they had a chance to meet. When school opened again in September, they (the children) *were eager to report what they had done – one little girl of eight years astonished her parents by reading the scriptures to them and praying for them daily* (Chen, 1972: 87).

Again from Asia, Ho's (1996) study of Christian schools that had started after 1970 found that almost all the teachers were committed Christians and that *more than half the students had become Christians after five to seven years of intensive spiritual nurture*. Over 150 Christian churches were involved in primary Christian education in Hong Kong and 40 of them had oversight of secondary schools as well (Ho, 1996: 32).

Unfortunately, no comparable figures were readily available for other parts of the world, however, the story of how an American Christian school principal handled a clever but increasingly rebellious teenage girl for talking back to her teacher illustrates one of the tactics employed in the school's spiritual mission:

We put her in the room by herself, gave her a Bible and told her to read the Proverbs. She didn't read any that morning because she was so mad at the world. But before the day was over, she decided she'd rather read than just sit there. She read the book of Proverbs and really broke. The Spirit of God really dealt with her. God got a hold of her life that day. Her days of teenage rebelliousness abruptly ended in an insolation room in a Christian school (Parsons, 1987: ix).

Parsons related this story to a number of people and their reactions were diametrically opposed. One mother saw it as a marvellous testimony from a Christian school and commented that she hoped that she could find such a good Christian school for her daughters, while another thought it was *very scary* and reminded him of *punitive isolation used on prison inmates years ago* (Parsons, 1987: ix). Nevertheless, at face value, it does demonstrate the success of the school at bringing the girl to a tangible Christian experience.

Peshkin's (1986) study of Bethany Baptist Academy, United States, noted that one of their crowning achievements was that the students accepted the school's mission to make them better persons. He was impressed with a school whose 14-year-old student could claim: *Everyone I know, knows that I go to this school. If they see me doing something wrong, they'll think, 'well, why pay so much to go to a school when it does not make you a better person?'* (Peshkin, 1986: 179).

These statistics and anecdotes suggest a generally positive picture, however, there is some literature that probes further. Astill (1998) conducted a study of social values in the schools of South Australia. His primary conclusion was that there were distinct differences in the value systems of pupils from active Christian families and those who professed no faith. However, whether their school was Christian or not, did not have any great influence on the underlying social values of either Christian or Non-believer students. In other words, *he found no evidence of the schools having any effect on the values systems of the students, but rather, most students adopted the values of their parents* (Astill, 1998: 43).

The further measure of success concerns the schools' ability to produce model citizens who positively impact their communities in adult life. Arguably, the reformed girl or the 14-year-old student from Bethany would graduate one day and should become model citizens. So the objective of bringing students to a personal Christian faith should also impact their role in society.

The American Baptists who oversaw the operations of their Christian school, Lakehaven Academy, were pleased that they were producing *disciplined, punctual, obedient, conforming and self-intrusting students who were growing up to be good workers* (Rose, 1988: 144). Rose went on to develop this theme by suggesting that, in her experience, the Christian schools were a tool in the hands of evangelicals who wished to establish *greater control over the socialisation and education of the young, and therefore, over the future of society* (Rose, 1988: 199).

Peshkin (1986) held a similar perspective. The staff believed that the graduates from their school would have been inculcated with attractive personal qualities such as loyalty, honesty, industriousness, punctuality and reliability. In addition to this impressive list, they believed that they would be *deferential to authority and as such have the makings of productive employees* (Peshkin, 1986: 279). In both Lakehaven and Bethany's case, the emphasis seemed to be more on decent, orderly and compliant young adults. There was no suggestion that they were training the leaders of tomorrow.

The final measure of the Christian school's success, compromise, can perhaps be seen as failure depending on one's perspective. The typical American culture, for example, can be seen as dominantly individualistic and task oriented, however, there are some subcultures that would be described as collective, the indigenous Americans and the Amish to name but two. Where should the Christian schools sit? Should they endeavour to be cut off from the mainstream as they seek to practice their Christian counter culture or should they compromise a little in order to maintain access to potential converts and doors of opportunity for the schools' graduates to find employment?

An example of compromise with mainstream culture has been seen in Bethany Baptist Academy. The school has clearly taught the students *not to store up treasure on earth* (Matthew 6: 19) that is this side of heaven; on the other hand, the apparent affluence of some church members and the church pastors has raised some questions in the minds of the students:

You look at the Lowes, Mr McGraw (Academy Headmaster), *Pastor Muller – they've got all those wonderful houses, two cars, the whole bit. Man, they're in the preaching business for the money. I see Pastor Muller and it seems he is wearing a new suit at least once a week. I know our family struggles to make the car payments* (Peshkin, 1986: 243).

Clearly the student has a point. Has this situation arisen by default with no-one conscious of its happening? Does this indicate a successful school or a failing school? Rose (1988) recognised in her study that there was neither total rejection of secular society but rather an *act of compromise* involving a *myriad contradictions* as the school communities *selectively reject, accept and appropriate modern ideas, conveniences and life styles* (Rose, 1988: 199). The result is a dynamic tension as the leadership of the day responds to the rapidly changing school environment.

Bollar Wagner (1990) conducted an anthropologic, ethnographic study of nine new Christian schools in the south-eastern states of the United States. They were regarded as examples of an educational alternative to public school education, the first widespread alternative since the establishment of the Catholic schools in the nineteenth century (Bollar Wagner, 1990: xi-8). Her main thesis was that these schools represent compromise with the popular American culture and as such they existed as a *transition culture* to take society to the *goal culture* of *no competition, forbearance, forgiveness and the fruits of the Spirit* (Bollar Wagner, 1990: 20; Galatians 5: 22-23).

The schools associated with the Holiness Churches, those most akin to the puritan movement, were the most separate from mainstream society, while the Evangelical and Charismatic schools were at the opposite extreme, more accepting of worldly goals. As an illustration of this, Bollar Wagner noted that she was the only female above five years of age without

pierced ears, in all but the Holiness schools. She also observed that she never saw a boy with pierced ears at any of her case study schools (Bollar Wagner, 1990: 120-124).

It seemed as though the parents were taking the blame for *allowing the worldly things* into their children's lives with the result that these schools were not the *total institutions* most of the literature claimed for them, but rather a mixture of Christian and popular culture. She found that competition and materialism were co-existing or compromising with the gentle fruits of the Spirit that conservative Christians identified as *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance* and the justification for this stance was the notion that these schools were *equipping children to handle the world if they knew what was out there* (Bollar Wagner, 1990: 137, 203).

It is not clear to what extent the new Christian schools are meeting all their aims and objectives and therefore to what extent they can be regarded as successful. Undoubtedly, they contain examples at all levels of performance, from the excellent to the failing. However, the fact that increasing numbers of parents continue to enrol their children suggests that most of them must be doing something right.

2.7 Case Studies

2.7.1 The Scope of the Case Studies

This final section of this literature review will survey some of the more significant case studies that have been carried out into the phenomena of the new Christian schools. Thirteen studies have been reviewed that include six doctoral studies, four masters and three published books. Six of these considered Christian education in the United States, five in Australia, one in China and one in Indonesia.

There were a number of common themes running through many of these studies. For example, there were studies that examined the attributes of successful Christian leadership and management (Abbott, 1999; Davies, 1993; Twelves, 2000). Others were concerned with how these schools were attempting to maintain their Christian ethos (Barnett, 1988; Long, 1996a; Riding, 1997; Walner, 2000), while others majored on the outcomes of Christian education (Chen, 1972; Oentoro, 1997; Rose, 1988). Three studies attempted broad national overviews, Parsons (1987) and Bollar Wagner (1990) for the United States and Long (1996a) for Australia.

The most typical methodologies included participant observation (Barnett, 1988; Long, 1996a; Riding, 1997; Rose, 1988), semi-structured interviews (Chen, 1972; Long, 1996a; Parsons, 1987; Peshkin, 1986; Riding, 1997; Twelves, 2000; Walner, 2000;), questionnaires (Bollar Wagner, 1990; Chen, 1972; Davies, 1993; Oentoro, 1997; Peshkin, 1986; Walner, 2000) and documentary analysis (Chen, 1972; Long, 1996a; Riding, 1997; Twelves, 2000). When students were directly studied, both primary and secondary students were used but the lowest age cut-off varied. Riding (1997) used students from year 2 upward, Oentoro (1997) from year 5 upward. Only one study surveyed past students, an attempt to gauge the educations' impact on adulthood (Chen, 1972).

The most common feature of the masters case study findings was the writers' presentation of lists of distinctive features, usually six in total (Davies, 1993; Riding, 1997; Twelves, 2000),

whilst the doctorates and the published works tended to draw broader conclusions. For example, Bollar Wagner (1990) majored on the tensions created by compromise between Christian education with the secular world but Oentoro (1997) preferred to concentrate on the balance needed between academic aims and Christian values, the balance between spiritual and educational objectives and the imperative for faith and learning to go hand-in-hand. In contrast, Parsons' (1987) perspective focussed on some of the shortcomings of Christian education, alluding to the voices of nostalgia that were crying out for the old fashioned virtues of past generations. However, he did conclude his study by suggesting that *any success of Christian schools would be a source of embarrassment for the public schools* (Parsons, 1987: 183).

Four case studies have been chosen for closer analysis, two American and two Australian. The first one (Peshkin, 1986) has many similarities with this research, for example, Peshkin focussed on one school and sought to make clear what an exemplary Christian school was like. The second case study by Rose (1988) was quite similar to Peshkin's work, but contrasted two very different Christian schools, one that overtly sought to influence the wider community and one whose focus was on producing hard working compliant American citizens. Rose's title, *Keeping Them Out of the Hands of Satan: Evangelical Schooling in America* has been adapted by this research into *Putting Them In The Hands of God: A Successful Christian School in Australia*, a distillation of the primary aims of the new Christian schools in Australia. Long's (1996a) work is the third case study to be considered in this chapter. He treated the whole movement in Australia as a case study and sought to clarify their theological foundations, concluding that, as a whole, the new Christian Schools of Australia were not distinctively Christian or distinctively educational institutions. The final case study (Twelves, 2000) took up some of Long's (1996a) challenges, as it considered the leadership and management of three exemplary non-government Australian Christian Schools.

2.7.2 God's Choice: The Total World of the Fundamentalist Christian School - Alan Peshkin, 1986

A student was in need of a ride home after an evening class during a 1978 midwinter blizzard in the mid west of the United States. The student was the Reverend David Housholder, whose son attended a Christian school, and the driver was Alan Peshkin (Peshkin, 1986: 11). This chance, blizzard-prolonged encounter led Peshkin to undertake this case study, which is the story of Bethany Baptist Church and its school, the pseudonymous Pastor Muller and Headmaster McGraw, the teaching staff and several hundred children. Peshkin, a Jew, and his research assistants, Glesne and Franz were participant observers for four semesters, nearly eighteen months, in a close knit community located in a rural city of fifty thousand in the state of Illinois. The Spenser Foundation funded the research for over three years.

Pastor Muller started service in Bethany in 1964 and by 1968 they had established several goals for the church, first, to buy a new bus, second, to start a Christian radio station and third, to start a Christian school. In a climate of growing dissatisfaction with their local state schools, the church ran a survey of its members and concluded that they could start their own school, a K-6 program, with 65 students. They started with 88 students and four teachers in 1972 (pp. 2-4, 32[1]).

[1] References in this section indicated by pp. refers to the page number in the case study in question.

By 1980, Bethany Baptist Academy (BBA) had grown to 358 students from kindergarten to twelfth grade. Its enrolments had remained relatively unchanged from then until 1986, demonstrating a hard won stability in the face of hard economic times. Its school buildings were split, K-6 levels occupying the south wing built in 1976 and its 7-12 students occupying the north wing built in 1973. A gymnasium connected the two wings, built in 1970 as a church activities centre, and provided space for church services as membership rose from 130 to 1,500 over eighteen years. The academy's buildings were separated from the church by a parking lot that was used for recess activities and physical education, though the entire church-school complex operated as an organic whole (pp. 32-3).

A pilot study was conducted in 1978-79 in Roman Catholic, Lutheran and Seventh-day Adventist schools in addition to BBA who thankfully invited Peshkin and his team back for the major focus. Previous studies had focussed on the impact of these religious schools and Peshkin now wanted to emphasise *the nature of the school* whose impact was being investigated. His intention was to make clear what an *exemplary* Christian school was like, of the variety that was Independent Baptist and affiliated with the one-thousand-member American Association of Christian Schools (AACS). His subsidiary goals included the discovery of what made such schools attractive to many Americans and what were the consequences of this type of education for American education and American society as a whole (pp. 11-15).

During the first semester the researchers simply observed. In the second and third semesters they conducted interviews and in the fourth semester they ran questionnaires for all students and teachers and one parent of each student in order to verify the data that had previously been collected (p. 24).

Peshkin's findings revolved around the notion of the *total institution.* The church set out to establish a *school with a difference* and they have succeeded. On a number of occasions, he compared BBA with boarding schools where the students live within their educational community and penal institutions where the inmate's whole life is played out inside even tighter boundaries. However, unlike the penal establishment, Bethany's students volunteer to join their community and unlike a boarding school, they each leave the *total institution* at night to go home to their families in the outside world. Consequently, there are no physical boundaries to delimit its participants' physical movement, though the staff did consciously seek to exert the broadest possible control of their students, extending as far as nearly all their behaviours and thoughts, wherever they went and at all times of day and night, term time and holidays. Despite this invasion of privacy, BBA still produced characteristic Americans even though the rigidity of their beliefs and behaviours placed them outside the mainstream of American life (pp. 257-75).

This case study also examined the cost to the wider community of operating such institutions as Bethany. If the academy succeeded according to its own assumptions, the fundamentalists rejoiced, while Peshkin and the world of non-believers mourned the loss of intellectual vitality and artistic creativity that they believe adherence to Biblical principle curtails. Those who rejected such communities as BBA quoted the perils of such groups as Scientology, the Unification Church and Hare Krishna, but Peshkin found such groups to be worlds away from what Bethany was seeking to do. His research found no basis for alarm in the activities of the fundamentalist institutions (p. 292). However, he did find Christian schooling divisive.

As evidence of this, some of the results of the students' surveys were quoted. The Bethany students' views were very striking, showing how counter cultural they had become:

- *30 per cent say interracial marriage was OK*
- *29 per cent believed that books by communists should be in school libraries*
- *27 per cent considered it good that the United States had so many religious groups*
- *26 per cent said that homosexuals should have the same rights as heterosexuals* (p. 292)

Bethany Baptist Academy has applauded multiculturalism and pluralism as wonderful and instrumental in their survival but according to Peshkin, they have not championed these virtues with their students. Here lies a paradox. The more groups like BBA thrive, the more everyone knows that America's pluralism is alive and well. Yet the more successfully each group proselytises, the more pluralism comes under threat. An open society allows parents the freedom to educate their children as they desire but the imperative for diversity will always compete with the objective of unity (p. 278).

Bethany certainly exemplified internal unity on many fronts. For example, its teachers were known for their hard work and caring attitude, teaching as though it was definitely their 'calling'. And consequently, the large majority of parents who sought a pervasive fundamentalist Christian community have been delighted with its operational concomitants:

- *Yes sir, no sir behaviour*
- *Clock-ticking silence*
- *Uncomplaining, committed teachers*
- *Pre-lunch prayers with bowed heads and closed eyes*
- *Obedient, Bible-toting students*
- *Conservative dress and hair styles*
- *Graffiti-free restroom walls*
- *Kids on a field trip bus spontaneously singing religious songs for thirty minutes at a time* (pp. 280-1)

On account of the internal unity between the home, the church and the school, the students *could be themselves* in an environment that was designed for them. The researchers sensed a marvellous order, an enveloping peace and an abundance of meaning and community that so often accompanies collective religious experiences. Peshkin went so far as to suggest that, perhaps, Christian schools could even inspire public schools to restore policies that would benefit their own students and teachers, yet without the religious overtones of the fundamentalist total institutions.

2.7.3 Keeping Them Out of the Hands of Satan: Evangelical Schooling in America - Susan Rose, 1988

Rose was raised as a p.k. (preacher's kid) in a liberal Methodist home that meant that she was a stranger to evangelical culture. Therefore, her foray into the lives of the people of the Lakehaven Community, a working class, fundamentalist, Baptist church and school, and Covenant Community, a middle class, independent charismatic church and school was an eye-opening experience. The people of both communities were extremely generous with

their time and their caring which made the study possible. The Lehman Foundation, Sage Graduate Fellowship and Sigma Xi Dissertation Research Grant were acknowledged for their financial support over the four years of the study (pp. xxv-xxvi).

The author became interested in the Evangelical movement and the rise of the new Religious Right in the early 1980s while undertaking research on domestic violence and the sources of stress and support for families in the United States. She was intrigued by groups that proclaimed themselves *pro-family*, yet simultaneously protested against mandatory child abuse reporting, shelters for battered women and the International Year of the Child, declaring it *one of the most demonic things to have come along in the past decade*. Rose considered that the Evangelical movement signalled a return to *patriarchal parenting and protestant supremacy* (p. xviii).

She was intrigued to find out why evangelicalism was so appealing to so many people, in fact, to approximately 22 per cent of Americans, eighteen and older. She wanted to find out how they made sense of their lives and to achieve this broad aim she undertook an in-depth ethnographic study of two communities located in upstate New York within 30 miles of each other, between the springs of 1982 and 1984. Each community was approximately of the same size and both had established their schools in 1974. Rose's aims were to examine the values, commitment and actions of contemporary evangelicals and to undertake a comparative analysis of the two communities and their processes of socialisation, primarily by using the tools of field notes and observation.

Her preliminary study to establish the context had involved her visiting and surveying eighteen schools in Virginia and upstate New York, primarily by simply walking in without writing a formal letter of introduction or calling in advance on the phone. A number of communities were resistant to academic research, but their emphasis on evangelicalism meant that Rose was seen as a potential convert by others who wanted to win her over to Christ (pp. xvii-xxiv).

Covenant people considered themselves as pilgrims travelling through a foreign *worldly* (hostile, unclean) land in search of the Kingdom of God. They recognised that their Christianity may be only one generation away from extinction and consequently one of their key objectives was their role in socialising their children *into the ways of the Lord*. Further attributes of this community were their willingness to submit to authority, the authority of the scriptures and of Christ the King, and the typical charismatic emphasis on the Holy Spirit living *within* man (pp. 48-50).

The initial motivation for their school came from the pastor, who like many in his fellowship, had children approaching school age. The school initially operated in a one-room schoolhouse setting and grew from six children in its first year, 1974, to 110 in 1981. At this time, the school ran to grade eight at which age they considered the students were sufficiently spiritual to make the transition to public school (p. 70). They believed that the children should be exposed to worldly things and secular materials in order to teach them discernment between what is Godly and ungodly (p. 75). The parents were actively involved in the direction of the school, having many opportunities to express their opinions and to participate in its daily operations (p. 150).

Covenant school served as an *experiment in cultural production* on the part of the sponsoring church. The Covenant people were communicating through the school their worldview as a

place in which each individual was an actor, who in co-operation with each other could affect their world. Their schooling stressed the acquisition of analytical skills, flexibility and self-direction as they prepared their students for professional jobs where they would be able to exercise their Christian influence (p. 98).

In contrast to the pioneering Covenant people, the Lakehaven Baptists saw themselves as guardians of the past, preserving traditional values and lifestyles. Here patriotism was an integral part of their Christianity, with tangible reminders of this in the form of the stars and stripes in the sanctuary, the cafeteria and even on men's ties. For them, the world was defined in terms of a good and evil dichotomy; there was little grey matter to muddle the mind. There was little in-depth debate with each other for fear of confrontation, nor did they want to test the degree of consensus. Instead, they respected people's right to privacy and they shied away from analysis (pp. 99-100). They employed guilt as an effective means of social control and, in this context, disapproved of any alcoholic consumption or attendance at movies or dances. This was not because they felt all alcohol was poisonous and all movies depraved, but because they harboured doubts about their own self-control (pp. 101-2).

Just like the Covenent School, Lakehaven Academy opened in 1974, but with the full twelve grades and they had 100 students within the first three years, however, this fell to 76 students by 1983. They bought in their curriculum, by using the Accelerated Christian Education (ACE) system. This enabled them to start with a wide range of grades and only three teachers as this system made use of individual learning books that the children worked through at their own pace. They gave major emphasis to the ACE system, which was ideal for children with learning difficulties, as each child had their own tailored curriculum (pp. 113-22).

The students were taught to restrict their bathroom visits to 10.00 a.m. each morning and lunchtimes only. Despite the very rigid and predictable regime, resembling a military model that came with the ACE system and reflected the Baptist church culture, there were very few behavioural problems and no one could recall any corporal punishments in the two years previous to Rose's visit (pp. 131-43).

Rose found that the children of these working, lower-middle, and agricultural-class Baptists were being trained to take over whatever jobs they could find in their rural communities, typically to follow in their parents' footsteps. Their parents and teachers stressed obedience, respect for authority, conformity and an ability to follow directions. They did not expect their children to revolutionise society nor to become distinctive individuals, but rather that they would become upstanding citizens and Christians, able to support themselves and their families in a reasonable manner (pp. 143-4).

In conclusion, Rose questioned the success of these schools. She asked if they were actually undercutting the wellbeing of the children and the common good of society? However, from the positive perspective, she recognised that these schools were still flexible and not yet entrenched in any older traditions or self-perpetuating bureaucracies. She postulated that these schools could be forerunners of a new kind of social reproduction which offers commercial solutions to the educational needs of consumers, all neatly packaged to the expectations and fears of different social classes.

Both schools in her study argued that public education had failed because it attempted to offer value-free or value-relative education and that Christian education remedied that

problem. However, on balance, Rose found these schools to be more limiting than liberating, though she highly respected the people who had become so actively involved in something they deeply believed in (pp. 218-21).

2.7.4 The Development of Themelic Schools in Australia - Robert Long, 1996a

Long was a teacher in government schools for many years, a theology student/minister in a conservative Protestant denomination, the vice-chairman of a regional committee to establish a new Christian school, a consultant for the Inter Church Commission On Religious Education In Schools (ICCOREIS)(NSW), a teacher in a Christian Parent Controlled School (CPCS) for seven years and a regional representative on a CPCS national curriculum committee. These experiences helped him generate his hypotheses and questions from a friendly but critical point of view with a liberal theological perspective (p. 14).

He coined the term *themelic schools* based on the Koine Greek that literally means *Christ is the foundation.* It referred to the new, low-fee, Christian schools that first emerged in Australia after 1962 and encompassed schools in CPCS, Christian Community Schools Limited (CCSL), Light Education Ministries (LEM, that typically use an ACE curriculum), independent themelic schools and themelic home schools. The Australian Association of Christian Schools (AACS) represents the majority of these schools, with financial services and a significant lobby group in Canberra.

Unlike the previous two case studies that examined respectively, a single school and two contrasting schools in the United States in the mid-1980s, Long's study sought to examine the whole movement as it had developed in Australia by the mid-1990s. It attempted to clarify the schools' theological positions, to evaluate their theological and social positions and to offer criticisms and recommendations regarding their educative value. One of Long's more significant subsidiary aims, that reflected his perspective, was his desire to contribute to a deeper understanding of the movement in Australia on account of the *movement's inability to criticise itself from within* and partly because it had not yet developed *a critical understanding of its own history* (p. 66).

The methodology integrated a diversity of thinking from various disciplines, namely, theology, philosophy, history, psychology and sociology. It was partly ethnographic with some elements of participant-observation reflecting Long's teaching years inside themelic schools. However, there were elements that reflected his more detached, outsider perspective of more recent years.

At the heart of his methodology was a *descriptive, analytical and critical history* of the movement in Australia, incorporating the methods of oral history that employed *in-depth, semi-structured interviewing* of a broad selection of personalities, including significant founders of the movement and a variety of personnel representing all models of themelic schooling. Those interviewed included principals, executive staff, board members, parents, past-staff, past-parents and past-students. He used his findings to test various hypotheses that he had developed over the seven years he was employed in themelic schools (pp. 78-93).

Long's research proposed that the themelic schools were distinct and different but not distinct in the themelic sense of the term. He argued that these schools were neither distinctly Christian nor distinctly educational. Long's argument went on to suggest however, that they

had a *distinct themelic language, naïve realist epistemology, a psyche of fear and confusion and policies and practices that have emerged from these characteristics* (p. 88), such as:

- Authoritarianism
- Separatism
- Underlying contradictions
- Lack of openness
- Fear of criticism
- Adversarial reactionism and
- Managerial myopia (p. 425)

Long's recommendations for the new Christian schools of Australia:

1. On account of the scarcity of research on the movement in Australia, the umbrella organisations and government institutions should fund research

2. The themelic schools should give up their imperative of dogma

3. The themelic schools should look carefully into support and promotion of prophetic thinking in the movement

4. There should be further exploration of the relationship between size of the organisation and the nature of Christian education

5. There is a need for political equity, in particular, the need for staff to associate and unionise

6. There is a need to further research into the K-12 model of school design

7. There should be encouragement of debate about the meaning of terms in themelic schools. Binary thinking tends to close rather than open people's minds and

8. The clarification of roles along with the eradication of role conflict should be a matter of urgency in themelic schools. Confusion over the role of teacher-as-minister and principal-as-priest cause the most damaging outcomes in relationships (pp. 426-33)

Long felt that these schools urgently needed to address these recommendations if they were to develop as educationally sound institutions, because he considered that at the time of writing, they were schools of *confusion, fear* and *contradiction.*

2.7.5 Leadership and Management in Three Exemplar Non-Government Australian Christian Schools - James Twelves, 2000

Twelves acknowledged that Long's (1996a) thesis of *confusion, fear* and *contradiction* might have been true of some schools but disputed that the accusation could be levelled at the entire new Christian schooling movement in Australia. Accordingly, he set out to identify some of the keys to success in three case study schools that had been nominated by an expert panel for being successful. They were two Christian Parent Controlled Schools (CPCS) and one church sponsored school.

Information was gathered by using qualitative methods of in-depth interviewing, together with a documentary study. Eleven interviews were conducted comprising three chairpersons, principals and deputies; one school general manager and one sponsoring church general manager. Twelves postulated that the leadership and management styles created the necessary structures for effective schools that in turn led to the school's success.

Six keys to successful non-government Australian Christian schooling were identified across the three case studies. Each key was found in all three schools to a greater or lesser degree and are not presented in any specific order of importance (pp. 88-9):

1. **Collaborative Leadership Style**
   A marked move away from bureaucratic, hierarchical structures was observed and has been replaced with collaborative, collegial teamwork.

2. **Board Governance and CEO Model**
   The management of change had been effective as the boards' roles had evolved from 'hands on' management towards the implementation of the Carver Model of Governance for Boards of Non-Profit Organisations, or similar, together with the clarification of the role of the principal as a modified CEO.

3. **Clear Enrolment Policy Rationale**
   The implementation of an enrolment policy that was firmly established in the foundational philosophies of the schools, either 'open' to any applicants or 'closed' to children of Christian homes only. Whichever policy was adopted, it was the consistency and the resonance with the foundational philosophy that was significant.
4. **Recruitment of Committed Christian Teachers**
   The attraction to the school of a totally committed Christian teaching faculty, whose primary focus was the sharing of their faith in God with the students in their care.

5. **Focus on Transformed Lives of Students**
   After the staff had cared for and nurtured the children through their primary years, they began to prepare their students in the secondary grades for the challenges of adult life, so that they would be able to make a positive difference in their communities and grow in their faith towards God as adults.

6. **Implementation of a Dynamic Vision**
   The communication of a progressive vision to the whole school community, building on the founders' vision, inspiring all with the confidence that their school is meeting the needs of their children and making an ongoing positive impact on the wider community.

All three schools were justifiably described as successes and confirmed the nominating panel's recommendations; however, they all had known significant challenges in the past that they were successfully overcoming. They placed great emphasis on their vision statements

and being true to their founders' intentions, while being able to reflect the changing demands of the modern day (p. 89). Staff relations with their boards had been strained in two of the schools in the mid-1990s and consequently they had begun to implement a Certified Agreement in order for them to build better ongoing relations. They had seen moderate success at the time of the study but the most positive outcome was that they had recognised the need for change (p. 90).

Twelves made three recommendations. Firstly, that *a detailed case study should be undertaken of one successful Christian school in Australia.* The current study was a response to this suggestion. Secondly, that there should be *an examination of the foundational philosophies of the Australian new Christian schooling movement.* Finally, the third recommendation was that *research should be undertaken into the unfolding position of the teachers in Australian new Christian schools* (pp. 91-2).

The most significant findings of the research were that a collaborative leadership style dominated the three organisations and that the school boards were now concentrating on governance rather than management and they had begun to implement a modified CEO model for their principals (p. 92).

2.8 Summary

This chapter began with a consideration of the roots of the new Christian Schooling Movement and moved on through a review of the governance and leadership models employed in its schools. In order to understand the essence of these schools, the building of their distinctive culture was examined, followed by an attempt to describe and define success in their contexts. The chapter concluded with summaries of four contrasting case studies, two from the United States and two from Australia.