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Developing tomorrow's school leaders: The Western Australian Catholic education  
Aspiring Principals Program

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## Chapter Three: Literature Review

### 3.1 Introduction

The purpose of the research was to explore aspirant perceptions of Catholic principalship before, during and upon completion of the Aspiring Principals Program together with the influences provoking discernible perception changes. Specifically, four aspirant perceptions were explored by the research: Catholic principalship role components and the capabilities required for effective performance; factors enhancing interest in principalship; factors diminishing interest in principalship; and self-efficacy to commence principalship. Considering this purpose, literature relevant to these four perceptions was examined using the conceptual framework provided in Figure 3.1.

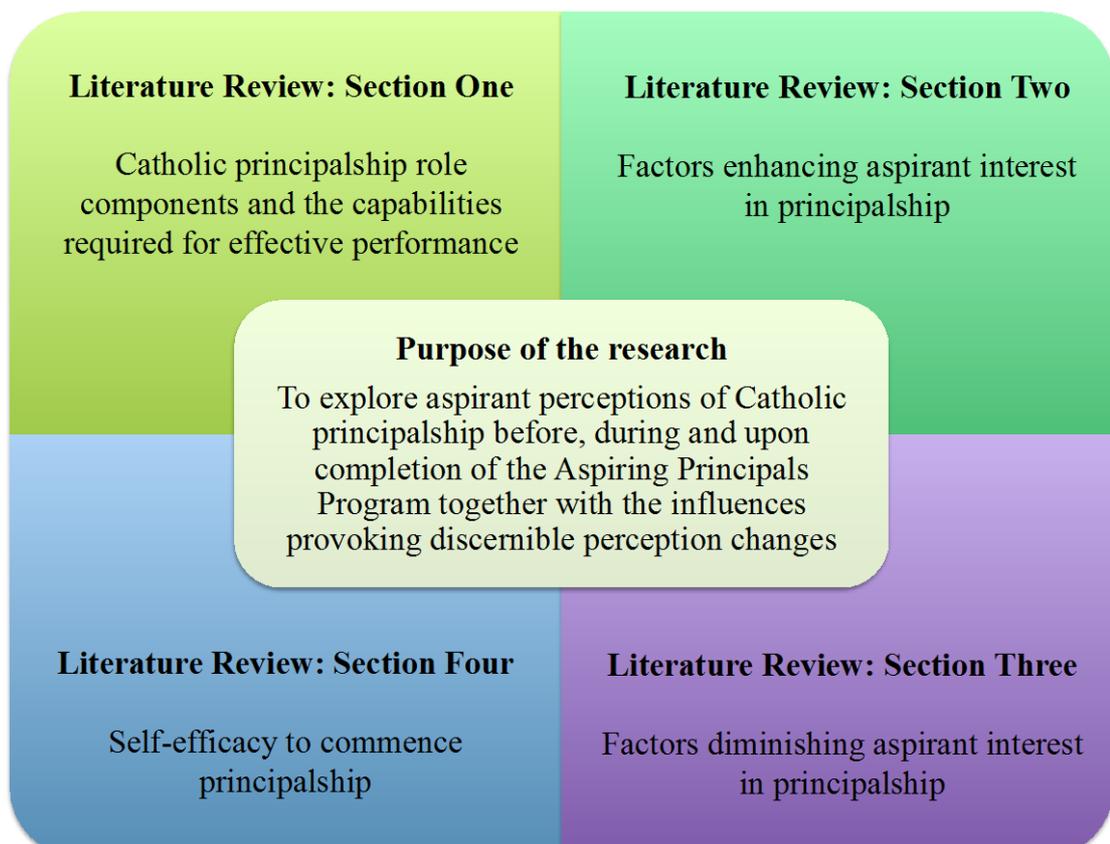


Figure 3.1: Conceptual framework for the literature review

As detailed in Chapter One, the four sections of the literature review were considered important because each influenced the formulation of one specific research question

that, combined, were used to guide the study. The structure of the literature review, based on the conceptual framework, is provided in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1  
*Overview of Chapter Three: Literature Review*

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### 3.2 Section One: Catholic Principalship Role Components and the Capabilities Required for Effective Performance

- 3.2.1 The unique identity of the Catholic school.
- 3.2.2 Role component one: Catholic identity.
- 3.2.3 Role component two: Teaching and learning.
- 3.2.4 Role component three: Stewardship of resources.
- 3.2.5 Role component four: Community engagement and development.
- 3.2.6 Role component five: School improvement.
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- 3.3.1 Internal rewards.
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- 3.3.3 High self-efficacy.
- 3.3.4 Exposure to positive role models.
- 3.3.5 Personal qualities and professional competencies.
- 3.3.6 Engagement with professional learning.
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- 3.4.1 Personal disincentives.
- 3.4.2 School and system disincentives.
- 3.4.3 Community and society disincentives.
- 3.4.4 Section three summary.

### 3.5 Section Four: Self-efficacy to Commence Principalship

- 3.5.1 Principal self-efficacy and role effectiveness.
- 3.5.2 Sources of self-efficacy.
- 3.5.3 Principal preparation programs and aspirant self-efficacy.
- 3.5.4 Section four summary.

### 3.6 Chapter Conclusion

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### **3.2 Section One: Catholic Principalship Role Components and the Capabilities Required for Effective Performance**

The first section of the literature review describes the role components of Catholic principalship and the capabilities required for effective performance. Specifically, this section examines five possible, interrelated role components through which the Catholic principal leads and manages and three suggested capabilities that could be applied when doing so. The role components are Catholic identity; teaching and learning; stewardship of resources; community engagement and development; and school improvement. The capabilities are vision and values; knowledge and understanding; and leadership competence.

Some of the detail provided in this section of the literature review was drawn from one local, eight national and eight international Catholic and secular leadership and capability frameworks. The frameworks examined are provided in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

*Literature Review Section One: Leadership and Capability Frameworks Reviewed*

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1. Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn (2009). *Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn Catholic Education Office: Leadership framework for school leaders*. Canberra, Australian Capital Territory.
  2. Australian Catholic University (2004). *A framework for leadership in Queensland Catholic schools*. Strathfield, New South Wales.
  3. Australian Council for Educational Leaders (2009). *Leadership capability framework*. Surry Hills, New South Wales.
  4. Australian Council for Educational Research (2004). *Standards of practice for leaders in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne and the Diocese of Sale*. Melbourne, Victoria.
  5. Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (2011). *Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership Australian professional standard for principals*. Carlton South, Victoria.
  6. Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (2013). *Leadership standards framework*. Melbourne, Victoria.
  7. Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (2008). *Leadership framework for Catholic schools in Western Australia*. Leederville, Western Australia.
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8. Catholic Education Office Hobart (2005). *Framework for leadership in Catholic education*. Hobart, Tasmania.
  9. Catholic Education Office Sydney (2010). *Catholic schools leadership framework: A vision for the development and practice of leadership*. Leichhardt, New South Wales.
  10. Department for Education and Skills (2004). *National standards for headteachers (England)*. Nottingham, UK.
  11. Department of Education Northern Ireland (2005). *National standards for headteachers (Northern Ireland Edition)*. Belfast, UK.
  12. National College for School Leadership (2005). *Learning to lead*. Nottingham, UK.
  13. New Zealand Ministry of Education (2008). *Kiwi leadership for principals: Principals as educational leaders*. Wellington, New Zealand.
  14. Scottish Executive Education Department (2005). *Ambitious, excellent schools: Standard for headship*. Edinburgh, UK.
  15. The Council of Chief State School Officers (2008). *Educational leadership policy statements: ISLLC 2008*. Washington, DC.
  16. The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership. (2013). *The Ontario leadership framework*. Ontario, Canada.
  17. Welsh Assembly Government (2006). *Revised national standards for headteachers in Wales*. Cardiff, UK.
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A significant framework examined was the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) Australian Professional Standard for Principals (the AITSL Standard). AITSL is a public company, founded in 2010 and funded by the Australian Government. AITSL provides national leadership for the Australian Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments in promoting excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership. The AITSL Standard is noteworthy because it was endorsed by all Australian State and Territory Ministers for Education for use in Australian government, Catholic and independent systems, sectors and schools from January 2012. The AITSL Standard explicitly states what principals are expected to know, understand and do to achieve in their work (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011).

### **3.2.1 The unique identity of the Catholic school.**

The Catholic school has a unique identity (Convey, 2012). This identity is characterised by a religious dimension, based on the life and example of Jesus Christ, that permeates all aspects of school life (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1988). This religious dimension is formed, in part, by the role of the Catholic school in supporting the evangelising mission of the Catholic Church (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997). This evangelising mission involves the principal, teachers and support staff meeting the spiritual needs of practicing Catholics from their school communities and encouraging baptised, but unchurched or non-practicing members to experience the teachings, rituals and celebrations of the Church. An equally important aspect of the evangelising mission is encouragement of non-Catholics to experience the ‘good news’ known in Jesus Christ and join the Church through the sacrament of Baptism (Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, 2014).

One way that the Catholic school supports the evangelising mission of the Catholic Church is by basing school vision on the development of students as ‘whole persons.’ Formation of the whole person involves “preparation for professional life, formation of ethical and social awareness, and developing awareness of the transcendental and religious education” (The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977, p. 31). This type of formation, also termed ‘holistic development’, is achieved when teachers nurture the intellectual, spiritual, social, physical and emotional dimensions of their students (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2009). Catholic students developed in this way have a system of values based on the life, work and teachings of Jesus Christ (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997; Dobzanski, 2001; Flynn & Mok, 2002; Krebs, 2000) and are capable of thinking and acting counter-culturally when confronted with situations that oppose these ideals (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009; Grace, 2002; Groome, 2002). To achieve school vision based on the holistic development of students, the principal must ensure that all activity that occurs within the Catholic school ultimately contributes to the delivery of high quality teaching and learning infused, where possible, with Gospel values. (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). The following role components and

capabilities, effectively led and managed by the principal, ensure achievement of this vision and enable the school to support the evangelising mission of the Catholic Church.

### **3.2.2 Role component one: Catholic identity.**

The first role component of Catholic principalship is Catholic identity. Catholic identity refers a school's "ethos, its faith community, which is manifested in what is taught and how, how people relate to one another, what the environment looks like, what celebrations occur and, finally, by its name" (Convey, 2012, p. 211). Catholic identity infuses all aspects of Catholic principalship and is therefore considered an overarching role component (McNamara, 2002).

Four equally important expectations are placed upon the principal when leading and managing through this role component. Firstly, the principal is expected to enhance and promote school Catholic identity. Secondly, and connected with the role component of teaching and learning, the principal is required to oversee the provision of Gospel-based curricula. Thirdly, and connected with the role component of community engagement and development, the principal is obliged to develop the school as a faith community by providing opportunities to reflect, pray and participate in sacramental and liturgical celebration. Finally, the principal is expected to sustain a commitment to social justice and action (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Convey, 2012).

With regard to the first responsibility, enhancing and promoting school Catholic identity, the principal is required to understand, embrace and clearly articulate a Catholic perspective when leading and managing (Sergiovanni, 2004). Specifically, the principal is expected to voice the teachings of the Catholic Church with courage, conviction, hope and deep compassion when interacting with staff, students, their parents and carers and members of the broader school community (Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, 2009; Australian Catholic University, 2004; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009; Catholic Education Office Hobart, 2005). The principal is also expected to align words with actions (Buchanan, 2013a), in part, by ensuring that policy statements and procedures governing school operations reflect the principles of Catholic social

thought and are applied accordingly (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). These principles include the dignity of the human person, respect for human life, protection of the poor and vulnerable, subsidiarity and the common good (Byron, 1999). Finally, the principal is obliged to develop and implement strategies to promote school Catholic identity (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). One strategy cited in the literature are Christian service learning programs that provide students with opportunities to apply Gospel-based learning in practical ways within and beyond their immediate school communities (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Dobzanski, 2001; Krebs, 2000; Torres-Harding & Meyers, 2013).

The second responsibility associated with the role component, Catholic identity is the provision of Gospel-based curricula that attend to “the immediate needs of youngsters’ moral guidance by preparing them to survive in an amoral youth culture” (Krebs, 2000, p. 307). Education in this form is primarily delivered through the school Religious Education program, the content of which must “be presented with the same rigor and academic expectations accorded to other subjects in the curriculum” (Convey, 2012, p. 191). This program should be imbued with Catholic Church teachings and traditions and assist students to form a set of values based on the life, work and teachings of Jesus Christ (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2009; Dobzanski, 2001; Flynn & Mok, 2002; Krebs, 2000; The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977). As explained previously, students equipped with these values are capable of thinking and acting counter-culturally when confronted with situations that oppose these ideals (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009; Grace, 2002; Groome, 2002). Buchanan (2013a) described the disposition required of principals when leading this aspect of the role:

Effective leadership in religious schools requires those exercising leadership to constantly be open to exploring issues and challenges in contemporary society. Leaders need the skills and vision to critique and examine such issues within the context of the religious tradition to which the schools belong and to equip students with values and principles that form them for useful service. (p. 2)

Convey (2012) asserted: “While the religion course must be the central component of the curriculum of a Catholic school, equally important is the integration of Catholic teachings in all aspects of the curriculum” (p. 192). Therefore, the formation of student Gospel values is not only achieved through the formal Religious Education program, but, where possible, through all education programs provided by the school (Convey, 2012; Hunt, Oldenski, & Wallace, 2000; Krebbs, 2000; The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977). Ultimately, Gospel-based teaching and learning is imperative for the achievement of school vision based on the holistic development of students.

To achieve holistic student development, the principal must also strive to recruit and develop the best possible teachers (Convey, 2012). With regard to staff development, the principal must ensure that teachers are appropriately resourced and “carefully prepared so that both in secular and religious knowledge they are equipped with suitable qualifications and also with a pedagogical skill that is in keeping with the findings of the contemporary world” (The Sacred Ecumenical Council, 1965, p. 8). Such preparation involves the provision of professional learning that augments teacher faith formation, religious knowledge and practice (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Cook & Simonds, 2011; Earl, 2005; Shimabukuro & Fox, 2010). One important form of professional learning are programs that enrich teacher understanding of the interplay between faith, life and culture and the influence of resultant tensions on students (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Cook & Simonds, 2011; Nuzzi, 2002; Shimabukuro & Fox, 2010). The development of teachers in this way highlights a connection between the principalship role components of Catholic identity and stewardship of resources.

In addition to religious content, it is essential that the principal oversee educative processes within teaching and learning programs such as assessment and reporting (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2009). Likewise, the principal has an overarching responsibility to ensure the regular review of the curriculum delivered through all learning areas to confirm that programs, where possible, reflect Gospel values (Australian Catholic University, 2004; Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). Finally, the principal is expected to develop and nurture rich school-home-parish

partnerships and support diocesan catechesis programs (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009).

The third responsibility associated with the role component, Catholic identity is the development of the school as a faith community (Convey, 2012; The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982). The principal nurtures the faith dimension of a school community through the provision of opportunities to reflect, pray and participate in sacramental and liturgical celebration (Convey, 2012; DeFiore, Convey, & Schuttloffel, 2009; Klenke, 2007). Specifically, the principal is required to implement diocesan catechesis policy statements, procedures and programs to ensure that celebrations of life and faith are established as regular components of school life (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). These celebrations are vital because they engender amongst school community members a shared understanding of Gospel values and Catholic traditions (Klenke, 2007). These opportunities also nurture the development of a personal relationship with God (Cook & Simonds, 2011; Hunt, Joseph, & Nuzzi, 2004; Nuzzi, 2002). The principal must also be open to personal growth, especially with regard to the spiritual dimension (Buchanan, 2013b) and overtly work to build capacity for prayer, reflection and spiritual development in all members of the school community (DeFiore et al., 2009; Howe, 1998; Hunt et al., 2004). Finally, the principal must ensure that the symbols of the Catholic Church and, where appropriate, those reflecting the charism of the school are visible and incorporated into daily practices including the delivery of curricula (Convey, 2012).

The fourth responsibility requires the principal to sustain a commitment to social justice and action. The Catholic Church, in accord with the life, work and teachings of Jesus Christ, expresses a strong concern for social justice and action and strives to protect the most vulnerable members of the community (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2009). The Church, by expressing concern for social justice and action, promotes the development of a compassionate and just society (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Grace, 2002; T. H. McLaughlin, 1996). The principal assists the Church to achieve this aim by working with and through school staff to build

awareness of social justice issues in the immediate and wider community before encouraging action.

When working to build student awareness of social justice and action, the principal is required to ensure the provision of theory through the formal and informal curricula (Starratt, 1996) and opportunities to apply learning through a range of activities such as Christian service learning (Dobzanski, 2001; Miller & Engel, 2011; Torres-Harding & Meyers, 2013). With regard to Christian service learning, the capacity of the principal to build a collaborative relationship between the school and parish is vital for the successful conversion of social justice intentions to action. Miller and Engel (2011) stated:

So, not only are churches appealing grounds for school engagement because many people belong to them, they are also appealing because the people who are there tend to have especially tight and influential bonds within these settings. Churches can be engaged, then, not as large, disjointed assortments of individuals, but as unified bands of socially-conscious actors who can be mobilized for action. (p. 32)

Such partnerships and activities have the potential to “foster the personal and spiritual development of students; engage students in responsible participation in the communal life, mission and work of their school community; and empower students to critically analyse and transform their culture and society” (Dobzanski, 2001, p. 323).

Three expectations are placed upon the principal with regard to engaging the school community in the Church’s call for social justice and action. Firstly, the principal is required to use media, such as the school website and newsletter, to communicate and promote a scriptural understanding of social justice and action. The principal, where relevant, should highlight issues of concern from the local, national and global communities as exemplars. Upon identification of issues, the principal is obliged to model appropriate action and encourage others to do the same (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). Secondly, the principal is expected to work with the school community to establish a common understanding and appreciation of Australia’s multi-cultural identity, the process of Aboriginal reconciliation (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership,

2011) and the role of the Church in ecumenical activities (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2009). Part of this educative process sees the principal encouraging the community to acknowledge the plight of marginalised societal groups and work empathetically with them to meet their needs (Carrington, 1999; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Dyson, Howes, & Roberts, 2002). Thirdly, the principal is expected to oversee the regular review, evaluation and refinement of school policy statements and procedures, programs and structures to ensure that they consider and appropriately address the principles of social justice and action (Carrington, 1999; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Dyson et al., 2002).

### **3.2.3 Role component two: Teaching and learning.**

The second role component of Catholic principalship is teaching and learning, also referred to as educational or instructional leadership (Dinham, Anderson, Caldwell, & Weldon, 2011; Dinham, Collarbone, Evans, & Mackay, 2013). Well led and managed by the principal, this role component produces three outcomes. Firstly, effective teaching and learning is placed at the centre of all school endeavours (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Dinham et al., 2011; Dinham et al., 2013; Elmore, 2000; The Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008). Secondly, teaching and learning is infused, where possible, with Gospel values (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997; Convey, 2012; Hunt et al., 2000; Krebs, 2000). Thirdly, all involved in the teaching and learning process: the principal, teachers, students, their parents and carers and members of the broader school community, are encouraged to become independent, enthusiastic and life-long learners (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009; J. Harris, Spina, Ehrich, & Smeed, 2013).

To achieve these three outcomes, the principal must engage with the school community to form a collective vision for teaching and learning (J. Harris et al., 2013; The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). This vision-creation process produces a set of clear, attainable goals that are subsequently articulated by the principal and supported by the community (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008; Robinson, 2011). When

articulating these goals, the principal is required to set high expectations for teachers and students including appropriate standards of behaviour, attendance, engagement and voice (Blase & Blase, 2000; Marzano et al., 2005; The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership, 2013; Toshalis & Nakkula, 2012; Victory, 2013). Imperative amongst these expectations is the development of positive teacher-student relationships based on mutual trust and safety (Robinson, 2011; Van Maele & Van Houtte, 2011). Robinson (2011) stated: “If students and staff do not feel physically and psychologically safe, if discipline codes are perceived as unfair and inconsistently enforced, then little progress is likely in the improvement of teaching and learning” (p. 125).

Equally important is the expectation that the principal work collegially with teachers to create an effective, whole-of-school professional learning culture (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Blase & Blase, 2000; DuFour, 2002; Marzano et al., 2005; The Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008) focused on the holistic development of students (The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977). This culture is characterised by the careful and collaborative planning of a diverse and flexible curriculum that meets national (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Marzano et al., 2005; Robinson, 2011; Victory, 2013) and, where appropriate, Church requirements (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2009). Likewise, teachers observe one another and engage in collaborative feedback for the purpose of reviewing and improving the effectiveness of their teaching practices and classroom environments (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Childs-Bowen, Moller, & Scrivner, 2000; DuFour, 2002; Jenkins, 2009; Robinson, 2011).

The principal, when working to create this culture, must consult with teachers to ensure that they are appropriately resourced, encouraged and developed through internal and external professional learning (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Blase & Blase, 2000; Jenkins, 2009; Marzano et al., 2005; The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). However, simply overseeing or coordinating professional learning is inadequate. Rather, Robinson (2011) recommended: “The most powerful way that school leaders can make a difference to

the learning of their students is by promoting and participating in the professional learning and development of their teachers” (p. 104).

As leader of teaching and learning, the principal is also expected to work with teachers to improve understanding and use of assessment frameworks, based on data, benchmarking and observation, to monitor student progress (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Department for Education and Skills, 2004; Department of Education Northern Ireland, 2005; Lashway, 2002). Equally important is the modelling of praise by the principal when assisting teacher understanding of methods to celebrate and promote positive student achievement (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Blase & Blase, 2000; Marzano et al., 2005; The Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008). Finally, it is imperative that the principal assists teachers to identify and appropriately challenge student underperformance before applying effective intervention techniques (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Welsh Assembly Government, 2006).

#### **3.2.4 Role component three: Stewardship of resources.**

The term ‘stewardship’ has a specific meaning for Catholic principals. The term has a long ecclesiastical history and refers to gratitude shown by people to God for gifts provided (Byron, 1998, 1999; Catholic Earthcare Australia, 2012; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Gottlieb, 2004; Smith, 2001). These gifts may be environmental resources, personal talents or those present amongst the members of a community (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b). An essential part of the gratitude process is preserving, nurturing and enhancing these gifts (Catholic Earthcare Australia, 2012; Gottlieb, 2004; Smith, 2001).

The spiritual metaphor of stewardship appeared first in the Old Testament in the book of Leviticus followed by the New Testament (Wenham, 1979). The apostle Paul identified himself as a steward in Corinthians as did Peter. The ‘Parable of the Talents’ (Matthew 25:14-30 and Luke 19:11-27) is referred to as a lesson in stewardship where individuals were asked to nurture their God-given gifts (Gottlieb, 2004; Smith, 2001). In the parable, a master provided talents (gold coins) to three servants for safekeeping. The two servants who used their allocated talents to

procure more for their master were rewarded whilst the servant who hid his talent for fear of loss was punished (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Gottlieb, 2004; Smith, 2001).

With regard to stewardship of resources as a role component of Catholic principalship, Spry and Cunliffe (2008) stated:

The domain of stewardship recognises that policy and organisational structures serve individual and communal development as well as care for the Earth. Stewardship involves policy development, the efficient provision, use and maintenance of the human, environmental, financial and physical resources of the system and appropriate processes to monitor, review, report and provide accountability to Church and government authorities and the wider community. (p. 8)

Considering this definition, the role component of stewardship of resources is comprised of four dimensions: stewardship of human; environmental; financial; and capital resources (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). When leading and managing through these dimensions, the principal is required to consider and apply Gospel values (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). Leading and managing resources in this way creates a culture of trust and enhances potential for achievement of school vision and provision of support for the Church's evangelising mission (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b).

#### ***3.2.4.1 Stewardship of human resources.***

The principal dedicated to the stewardship of human resources produces three outcomes. Firstly, the principal who cares for and nurtures staff is likely to engender a culture of trust and goodwill (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011). Within this culture, teachers are encouraged to form professional learning communities focused on the continuous improvement of teaching and learning infused, where possible, with Gospel values (Australian Catholic University, 2004; Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). Secondly, the principal who regularly engages staff in informal and formal

performance management establishes high standards and develops leadership capacity (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Department for Education and Skills, 2004; Department of Education Northern Ireland, 2005). Thirdly, the principal who participates in professional learning and caters for personal health and wellbeing in a sustained way, models appropriate behaviour to staff and enhances their capacity to cope with the role and its demands (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010).

To achieve these three outcomes, the principal is required to lead and manage the recruitment, induction, development and appraisal of staff (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). The principal, when recruiting staff, must use procedurally fair and transparent procedures and provide candidates with accurate duty statements that clarify responsibilities and tasks (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). When inducting new staff, the principal should use both mentoring and coaching approaches to assist acclimatisation to school culture and practices (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Blase & Blase, 2000; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Scottish Executive Education Department, 2005; The Hay Group, 2014). Likewise, the principal should use coaching and mentoring approaches when developing staff through informal performance management (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Blase & Blase, 2000; The Hay Group, 2014). Performance management, in this sense, involves the principal engaging with staff in collaborative, professional conversations. Blase and Blase (2000) stated: “Effective principals ‘hold up a mirror’, serve as ‘another set of eyes’, and are ‘critical friends’ who engage in thoughtful discourse with teachers” (p. 133). The principal can use ‘thoughtful discourse’ when affirming staff strengths, providing timely, accurate feedback regarding areas for practice improvement and recommending professional learning to address these needs (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Scottish Executive Education Department, 2005; The Hay Group, 2014; Welsh Assembly Government, 2006).

When formally appraising staff, the principal must ensure that processes for formative (staff development) and summative (termination) appraisal are equitable, transparent and satisfy legislative requirements (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). Prior to initiating either form of appraisal, the principal is expected to clearly explain the reason for and purpose of the process to the staff member, make relevant policy statements and appraisal criteria available for perusal and be available to answer questions (Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). When conducting the appraisal, the principal must communicate with the staff member and attempt to develop an appreciation of issues that may be adversely impacting performance. When making decisions regarding appraisal outcomes and actions, the principal is required to consider these issues in the light of Gospel values such as the dignity of the human person and social justice and action (Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010).

A potential positive outcome of any appraisal process is the opportunity for the principal to recognise and celebrate staff achievements (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Blase & Blase, 2000; Childs-Bowen et al., 2000). Childs-Bowen, Moller and Scrivner (2000) suggested: “A simple, but powerful strategy is genuine praise, which is more important to most people than money” and “effective principals use rituals, ceremonies and stories to create this culture” (p. 33). Additionally, the appraisal process has the potential to yield for the principal an understanding of staff aspirations and talents. Equipped with such knowledge, the principal is able to distribute leadership for school-based initiatives, thereby providing staff with opportunities to develop their potential and showcase their talents (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; A. Harris, 2008; Scottish Executive Education Department, 2005; Welsh Assembly Government, 2006). When the principal distributes leadership, he or she “acknowledges the work of all individuals who contribute to leadership practice whether or not they are formally designated or defined as leaders” (A. Harris, 2008, p. 13).

It is also essential that the principal use the outcomes of personal performance conversations and formative appraisal processes to develop and implement a professional learning plan (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Department for Education and Skills, 2004; Department of Education Northern

Ireland, 2005). Such plans should include measures to address adverse health and wellbeing issues generated by the role (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; National College for School Leadership, 2005). The willingness of the principal to share the outcomes of personal performance conversations, appraisal processes and professional learning with staff is a powerful way to engender trust (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; National College for School Leadership, 2005). This strategy also has the potential to encourage staff engagement with professional learning for the purpose of performance improvement (Australian Council for Educational Leaders, 2009; Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Welsh Assembly Government, 2006).

#### ***3.2.4.2 Stewardship of environmental, financial and capital resources.***

If a school is to achieve its vision and support the evangelising mission of the Church, it must concentrate all endeavours on the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning infused, where possible, with Gospel values (Convey, 2012; Hunt et al., 2000; Krebbs, 2000; The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977). To achieve this aim, the principal must provide staff with the resources they need to teach effectively and a safe environment within which to practice their craft (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Robinson, 2011). With this premise in mind, the second dimension of stewardship emphasises the role of the principal as the leader and manager of school environmental (Catholic Earthcare Australia, 2012; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Spry & Cunliffe, 2008), financial and capital resources (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Welsh Assembly Government, 2006).

As steward of environmental resources, the principal is expected to collaborate with staff, students, their parents and carers and members of the broader school community to participate in conservation and enhancement initiatives (Catholic Earthcare Australia, 2012; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Spry & Cunliffe, 2008). These initiatives may comprise local, national or international environmental priorities. Examples of initiatives include participation in local and national clean up days and implementing school-based electricity, water and soil conservation and recycling programs (Catholic Education Commission of

Western Australia, 2008b). The principal is also required to ensure that the school's physical and human environments (e.g. grounds, buildings and equipment) are safe for staff, students and visitors. The principal, therefore, is expected to enact relevant policy statements and procedures pertaining to occupational health and safety to ensure that hazards are identified and subjected to appropriate rectification measures (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008a; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership, 2013).

As steward of financial resources, the principal is required to operate within the fiscal framework established by the employing authority and the school board (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). Specifically, the principal must ensure that the school's annual budget is carefully and thoroughly designed, taking into account a number of factors. These factors include staff salaries and on-costs such as leave provisions and superannuation. Other factors include the fixed and variable costs associated with day-to-day school operation of the school, provision for the mid-term and long-term maintenance of school buildings and facilities and savings required to fund strategic planning priorities (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Welsh Assembly Government, 2006). Post-implementation of the school budget, the principal is expected to regularly monitor expenditure against projections and, when necessary, modify the budget to correct anomalies and restore balance. Equally important is the reporting of expenditure against budget projections by the principal to the school board, employing authority and government authorities as required (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Welsh Assembly Government, 2006).

As steward of capital resources, the principal has three specific responsibilities. Firstly, the principal is responsible for planning and directing the construction of new school buildings and facilities (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2010; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). Secondly, the principal is expected to plan and manage the maintenance or refurbishment of existing amenities (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2010; Catholic

Education Office Sydney, 2010). Thirdly, the principal is required to lead and manage staff responsible for the procurement and servicing of capital items housed within new and existing school buildings and facilities (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2010; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010).

To assist with the stewardship of capital resources, the principal is required to formulate and maintain a school capital master plan and a capital development plan (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2010; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). The master plan illustrates the location and dimensions of existing school buildings, facilities and other infrastructure. A capital development plan is the result of new building and refurbishment priorities identified in the school strategic plan and is comprised of architectural drawings, cost projections and a savings plan linked to the school budget (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2010; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010).

The strategic plan is a short-term to mid-term (two to five year) blueprint for the school, developed by the principal in consultation with representatives from all strata of the school community (Davies, 2003; Davies & Ellison, 2003; Davies & West-Burnham, 2003; The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). The strategic plan contains a series of priorities that are ultimately designed to enhance the provision of high quality teaching and learning infused, where possible, with Gospel values (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). The strategic plan identifies activities that will be implemented to achieve priorities and contains details regarding responsible personnel, timelines, milestones and key performance indicators that will be used by the principal to assess progress and measure performance (Davies, 2003; Davies & Ellison, 2003; Davies & West-Burnham, 2003; The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership, 2013).

### **3.2.5 Role component four: Community engagement and development.**

The fourth role component of Catholic principalship is community engagement and development. There are four potential benefits associated with fruitful school-community partnerships. The first benefit, linked to the role component of Catholic

identity, is the development of a faith community that enables the school to achieve the holistic development of students and, in doing so, support the evangelising mission of the Church (Convey, 2012; Klenke, 2007; The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1982). The second benefit is improved student attendance, participation and achievement, essential for developing students holistically. The third benefit is enhanced community support for school improvement initiatives. The fourth benefit is the generation of innovative ideas to address challenges faced by the school (Datnow, Lasky, Stringfield, & Teddlie, 2005; Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins, & Weiss, 2006; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Sheldon, 2007). In addition to the principalship responsibilities associated with the development of a faith community described previously, these benefits are the result of four principal-led actions.

Firstly, the principal oversees the development and maintenance of structures and processes to permit effective communication between the school and its community (Australian Council for Educational Leaders, 2009; Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Epstein, 2007). These structures not only ensure the effective promotion of endeavours and achievements from the school to the community, they provide the school with a mechanism through which to receive timely feedback (Australian Council for Educational Leaders, 2009; Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Epstein, 2007). Used well, feedback has the potential to improve all facets of the school, especially the quality of teaching and learning (The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977). Effective communication structures and processes can also be used to nurture school-home-community partnerships that deliver benefits to all parties, especially students (Australian Council for Educational Leaders, 2009; Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Department for Education and Skills, 2004). As stated previously, Christian service learning is one example of a positive school-community partnership that provides students with opportunities to apply Gospel-based knowledge learned in the classroom to reality (Dobzanski, 2001; Kemp, 2010; Miller & Engel, 2011).

Secondly, the principal is required to value the principles of inclusion (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). These principles are applied when the principal encourages the development of trusting, collaborative relationships

between teachers and parents to enhance student educational outcomes (Harrison & Greenfield, 2011; Henderson & Mapp, 2002; The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). One specific example of effective school-parent collaboration is the use of linguistic and cultural resources present in the school community within the teaching and learning process (Epstein, 2007). With regard to cultural recognition, the principal is required to promote an understanding and appreciation of indigenous reconciliation amongst school community members. In Australia, this action also involves principal-led strategies to develop authentic, collaborative partnerships between the school and the members of local aboriginal communities (Australian Council for Educational Research, 2004; Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; J. M. McLaughlin, Whatman, Ross, & Katona, 2012).

A priority for the Catholic principal is student safety and continuity of high quality teaching and learning infused, where possible, with Gospel values (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Office Hobart, 2005; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). Thus, action three relates to the duty of the principal to cooperate and work with relevant agencies to protect and support student attendance and physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011). Specifically, when the principal is made aware of complex challenges arising in the home environment that threaten student wellbeing, legislative responsibilities such as child protection procedures must be enacted (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2014b). Additionally, the principal, in the spirit of Jesus, is required to think, speak and act through the lens of social justice and action by caring for the marginalised, be they students, their parents and carers or family members (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). Equally important is the willingness and capability of the principal to support staff experiencing personal and/or professional crises (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010).

Finally, the principal is expected to contribute to the enhancement of the education system within which the school is located (Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). When enacting this dimension at a practical level, the principal

encourages and oversees the sharing of teaching and learning facilities, resources and effective practices with neighbouring schools, regardless of system or sector. Harris (2008) stated:

In the past, schools tended to work in relative isolation with relatively few links to other schools or organisations. While this way of working might have been appropriate a decade or so ago, there is now increased pressure on schools to establish partnerships with other schools, agencies or professionals. (p. 101)

The aim of such collaboration is the development of an integrated approach to education to enhance student learning outcomes across the community (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; A. Harris, 2008).

### **3.2.6 Role component five: School improvement.**

The final role component of Catholic principalship is school improvement. School improvement “involves school staff examining information and assessing the performance of their school; developing plans to address areas where the evidence tells them improvement is most needed; and putting their plans into effect and checking they have had the intended impact” (Department of Education and Training, 2014, p. 2). The principal enacts this role component in three ways.

Firstly, the principal is an agent for change, especially with regard to leadership of teaching and learning infused, where possible, with Gospel values (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2006). Therefore, the principal is expected to continuously encourage teacher use of creative, innovative practices when striving to enhance student learning. These practices include the use of existing, new and emerging technologies in the classroom (Ainscow et al., 2013; Australian Council for Educational Leaders, 2009; Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Davies & Ellison, 2013). Secondly, the principal is expected to reflect upon their personal leadership and management through the role components of Catholic identity, teaching and learning, stewardship of resources and community engagement and development before implementing measures to improve proficiency (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney,

2006). Thirdly, the principal is expected to remain abreast of contemporary literature regarding school improvement and use this knowledge in concert with the system-approved tool to continually review and improve aspects of the school deemed deficient (Ainscow et al., 2013; Davies & Ellison, 2013; Department of Education and Training, 2014). The result of these three actions is enhancement of the quality of services provided to students, their parents and carers and members of the broader school community and achievement of school vision (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2006).

When leading school improvement, the principal is expected to distribute leadership (A. Harris, 2008). Distributed leadership occurs when the principal identifies staff with interest in school improvement, not necessarily those employed in designated leadership roles, and encourages them to lead the review and improvement process (A. Harris, 2008). This practice not only enables individual members of staff to develop their leadership capabilities, it simultaneously deepens the leadership capacity of the school and system or sector to which it belongs (Ainscow et al., 2013; Davies & Ellison, 2013; A. Harris, 2008).

The principal, after leading or overseeing the use of the system approved school improvement tool to identify school strengths and weaknesses, is required to work with and through staff to develop improvement action plans (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2006, 2011; Department of Education and Training, 2014; A. Harris, 2012). Prior to making final decisions with regard to these plans, the principal is required to consult with members of the school community to ascertain their perspectives (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2006; A. Harris, 2012; Leithwood, Harris, & Hopkins, 2008). Once agreement is reached, the principal is obliged to integrate school improvement action plans with the school strategic plan (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2006).

When implementing the strategic plan, the principal is expected to clearly articulate to the school community its purpose and importance (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Office Sydney,

2006). As the strategic plan is a living document, it is incumbent upon the principal to provide the community with regular updates. Updates may include progress reports regarding the achievement of priorities, delays encountered, reasons for delays and planned rectification measures. New priorities, identified through the school improvement process, associated actions and proposed timelines for completion must also be communicated as appropriate (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2006; Davies & Ellison, 2013).

### **3.2.7 The capabilities required for effective performance.**

The term ‘capability’ refers to the extent of an individual’s ability in a given domain or endeavour (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011). The literature suggests that effective Catholic principals use three broad capabilities when leading and managing through the role components of Catholic identity, teaching and learning, stewardship of resources, community engagement and development and school improvement. These capabilities are vision and values; knowledge and understanding; and leadership competence (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Scottish Executive Education Department, 2005; Welsh Assembly Government, 2006).

#### ***3.2.7.1 Vision and values.***

The Catholic principal must have the intellectual aptitude to understand the evangelising mission of the Catholic Church (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009). Based on this understanding, the principal is required to demonstrate competence when working with staff, students, their parents and carers and members of the broader school community to form, articulate and drive achievement of school vision (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009). School vision must focus on the holistic development of students (The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977) including the formation of systems of values based on those modelled by Jesus (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997; Dobzanski, 2001; Flynn & Mok, 2002; Krebbs, 2000). This vision is achieved when the principal focuses all role components and school activities on the delivery of high quality teaching and learning infused, where

possible, with Gospel values (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010).

It is also imperative that the words and actions of the Catholic principal are based on Gospel values (Congregation for Catholic Education, 1997; Convey, 2012; Cook & Simonds, 2011; Dobzanski, 2001; Grace, 1996) and are aligned when leading and managing (Buchanan, 2013a). Prime amongst these values is a penchant for social justice and action (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). The principal also needs to value, model and promote the pursuit of life-long learning and set high standards for themselves and those they lead (Australian Council for Educational Leaders, 2009; Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Scottish Executive Education Department, 2005; Welsh Assembly Government, 2006).

### ***3.2.7.2 Knowledge and understanding.***

To effectively lead the formulation and achievement of school vision and, in doing so, support the evangelising mission of the Church, the Catholic principal must thoroughly understand the responsibilities associated with the five suggested components that comprise the role (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b). The following examples are stated for illustration purposes. When leading and managing Catholic identity, the principal must sustain an up-to-date understanding of Catholic social teaching (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). When leading and managing teaching and learning, the principal is required to ensure the provision of Gospel values through the religious education program and, where possible, subjects associated with other learning areas (Convey, 2012; Hunt et al., 2000; Krebbs, 2000; The Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1977). The principal is also expected to be cognisant of the latest research and legislative developments influencing curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, reporting and student wellbeing (Australian Council for Educational Leaders, 2009; Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Dinham et al., 2011; Dinham et al., 2013).

When leading and managing the stewardship of resources to ensure the delivery of high-quality teaching and learning, the principal is required to be aware of new, and changes to existing, legislation governing school operations promulgated by local, state and federal authorities (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Department for Education and Skills, 2004; Department of Education Northern Ireland, 2005; Scottish Executive Education Department, 2005; Welsh Assembly Government, 2006). These requirements may relate to the domains of occupational safety and health, environmental conservation, human resource management, financial management and capital development planning (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b). Despite the system or sector to which the school belongs assuming responsibility for legislative compliance through the creation and refinement of policy statements and procedures, the principal is expected to understand, correctly interpret and integrate statements and procedures into school operations (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2006).

When leading and managing community engagement and development, especially its faith dimension, the principal must understand the importance of reflection, prayer and sacramental and liturgical celebration and ensure that opportunities are integrated into the daily life of the school including teaching and learning programs (Convey, 2012; Hunt et al., 2004; Hunt et al., 2000; Nuzzi, 2002). The principal must also appropriately lead and manage the school board and other bodies (e.g. the Parents and Friends Council) when attempting to build collaborative school-community partnerships to enhance student educational outcomes (Australian Council for Educational Leaders, 2009; Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2008). To effectively lead and manage this role component, the principal must have a genuine desire for communication and consultation with the school community (Epstein, 2007). Especially important in the communication and consultation process is currency of principal knowledge with regard to marketing techniques including the use of technological advances to improve proficiency (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011).

Finally, it is essential that the principal have school improvement and strategic planning proficiency (Davies & Ellison, 2013; A. Harris, 2012). Such proficiency

enables the principal to lead the identification of areas of school strength and deficiency and determine and implement improvement action plans to enhance the quality of services offered to the school community, especially students (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2006; Davies & Ellison, 2013; A. Harris, 2012). Additionally, the principal must remain abreast of contemporary developments in the field of school improvement when leading and managing improvement through each role component (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; A. Harris, 2012). Equally important is principal knowledge and understanding regarding the use of any system-approved school improvement tool to generate improvement action plans (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2006). Finally, the principal is expected to demonstrate proficiency with regard to the integration of improvement action plans with the school strategic plan (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2006).

### ***3.2.7.3 Leadership competence.***

Leadership competence “refers to a leader’s track record and ability to get things done” (Kouzes & Posner, 2006, p. 8). When discussing the ability to ‘get things done’ in the context of principalship, AITSL (2011) emphasised the requirement of the principal to “regularly review practice and implement change in leadership and management approaches to suit the situation” (p. 7). That is, for the principal to cope with the diverse range of situations presented through the daily discharge of the role, he or she must have the ability to understand and precipitously apply contemporary leadership theory apposite for the circumstance (Australian Council for Educational Leaders, 2009).

In the context of Catholic principalship, three appropriate and interrelated theories are transactional, transformational and transcendental leadership (Lavery, 2011). Liu (2007) stated: “Transactional, transformational, and transcendental leadership are located in nested hierarchy, with the transcendental leadership incorporating and extending the former two” (p. 4). Other researchers assert that transactional, transformational and transcendental leadership are ranked along a

continuum from managerial control at one end through to spiritual holism at the other (Avolio, 2010; Fairholm, 2004; Gardiner, 2006).

Lavery (2011) referred to the need for the principal to have the capability to establish school vision and that “such a role suggests a transformational understanding of leadership” (p. 1). Lavery (2011), when discussing the capabilities required of principals to drive achievement of school vision, referred to the ability of the principal to ensure “that appropriate processes are in place for the organisation to function” and that “this managerial approach embraces a transactional notion of leadership that focuses on structure and organisation” (p. 1). Transcendental leadership moves beyond the application of transactional-transformational capabilities and involves the leader inspiring amongst followers a consideration of “the impact their collective actions have upon the rest of humanity” (Zacko-Smith, 2010, p. 4). In Catholic school environments, a similar concept is servant leadership “where the focus is less about oneself and more concerned with the requirements of others” (Lavery, 2011, p. 1).

Transactional leadership applies primarily to managerial situations and is relational in that it involves an exchange process between the leader and staff (Burns, 1978). In the context of this relationship, the leader invites staff to complete duties and tasks in exchange immediate, tangible rewards (Avolio, 2010; Burns, 1978; Lowe et al., 2013; Walumbwa & Wernsing, 2013). In Catholic schools, the first stage of transactional leadership occurs at appointment when a staff member signs an employment contract in exchange for salary and other benefits. In return, the staff member becomes accountable to the principal for the professional execution of the role they are employed to perform (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2012a, 2012b).

When recruiting staff, the principal is required to adhere to policy statements and procedures generated by the governing system (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b). When inducting new staff, the principal is expected to assist recruits to understand their roles, performance expectations, rewards for exceptional performance and penalties for poor performance (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2012a, 2012b). When supervising staff, the principal may adopt three possible forms of transactional leadership: management-by-

exception-passive; management-by-exception-active; and constructive transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1994). The preferred form for the Catholic principal is constructive transactional leadership (Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, 2013; Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2008b; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010). The principal, as a constructive transactional leader, clarifies expectations of staff, works collaboratively to set appropriate goals, consults with staff as they perform their roles, suggests strategies for improvement, provides feedback, praise and recognition when warranted and exchanges rewards for accomplishments (Avolio, 2010; Lowe et al., 2013; Marzano et al., 2005). Managing in this way, the principal is likely to inspire staff achievement of goals, the result of their direct involvement in the management process (Avolio, 2010; Bass, 1990; Lowe et al., 2013).

The application of transactional capabilities by the principal has the potential to deliver benefits to the Catholic school. Lavery (2011) stated:

The strength of the transactional model of leadership is that clear managerial structures are detailed whereby people know exactly their roles and what is expected of them. Schools benefit significantly from good organisation and clear lines of communication. (p. 4)

However, transactional capabilities also have limitations in that school structures, policies and procedures “may develop into the endpoint of leadership rather than as the process of leadership” (Lavery, 2011, p. 4). The risk for the school in this situation is that leadership “becomes rigid, whereby change and development are extremely difficult to enact” (Lavery, 2011, p. 4).

The Catholic principal uses transformational leadership capabilities when attempting to transform or inspire staff to move from a mindset of egocentricity to one that considers the needs of colleagues and achievement of shared vision (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass, 1990; Burns, 1978; Lowe et al., 2013; Walumbwa & Wernsing, 2013). Although all transformational leaders are different, they generally achieve this shift using a combination of four strategies. These strategies are individual consideration; intellectual stimulation; inspirational motivation; and idealised influence (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass, 1990; Lowe et al., 2013).

Individual consideration refers to the willingness and capacity of a leader to mentor marginalised staff members (Bass, 1990). Affected staff appreciate the care and guidance offered by their leader and are more likely to follow them as they drive achievement of shared vision (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass, 1990; Lowe et al., 2013). Intellectual stimulation occurs when a leader encourages staff to apply new solutions to existing problems without criticising the history of the issue or the mistakes of individuals (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass, 1990; Lowe et al., 2013). This strategy has the potential to intellectually stimulate staff and inspire the discovery and application of hidden knowledge and skill that may then be applied to achieve shared vision (Marzano et al., 2005). Inspirational motivation is a strategy most often employed by a leader who is naturally charismatic. Inspirational motivation occurs when a leader communicates high performance expectations through dynamic presence, confidence and projection of power (Marzano et al., 2005). Communication in this manner has the potential to generate optimism amongst staff, commitment to the organisation and enthusiasm for vision achievement (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass, 1990; Lowe et al., 2013). Finally, idealised influence is exercised by a leader who models behaviour sought from staff including exemplary personal achievement, ethical words and actions, appropriate risk taking and consideration of the needs of others before self (Marzano et al., 2005).

Despite the potential for achievement of positive outcomes through the application of transformational leadership capabilities, there exist four potential disadvantages. Firstly, even the most adept transformational leader may receive unfavourable reactions from staff despite positive reception by the majority, the effect of which can be loss of traction toward achievement of vision (Avolio, 2010; Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Lowe et al., 2013; Walumbwa & Wernsing, 2013). Secondly, although a transformational leader may be capable of inspirational motivation, he or she may be a poor manager of people and incapable of articulating the steps required to achieve the vision they paint for their school. The result of these shortcomings is a highly motivated, but unstructured and directionless workplace (McCrimmon, 2008). Thirdly, the large reserve of enthusiasm possessed by a transformational leader, relentlessly applied, may exhaust staff and create dissatisfaction (Rodriguez, 2010). The final disadvantage relates to the ethical

disposition of the transformational leader. With regard to the unethical transformation leader, passion and confidence may be used to mask the unhealthy reality of a workplace. Such leaders may also drive staff to achieve their personal vision and not that of the organisation or enact change for the sake of change when, in reality, the organisation requires little modification (Rodriguez, 2010).

At other times, the Catholic principal is required to utilise transcendental leadership capabilities, especially when leading the role component, school improvement (Catholic Education Office of Western Australia, 2009). Transcendental leadership is a relationship-focused disposition adopted by the leader who seeks to nurture contribution-based exchanges between themselves and the staff they lead (Beckwith, 2011; Kishore & Nair, 2013; Lavery, 2012). In the context of these exchanges, the transcendental leader not only uses transformational leadership capabilities to form relationships with staff, he or she attempts to develop non-hierarchical unity and a reflective, values-centred culture through the use of genuine, collaborative dialogue (Beckwith, 2011; Cardona, 2000; Gardiner, 2006; Kishore & Nair, 2013; Lavery, 2012; Liu, 2007). The transcendental leader also engages in regular reflective practice, is deeply aware of leadership strengths and weaknesses, is quiet but fully present, open in mind, body and heart, listens unconditionally and models leadership that places service of others before self (Beckwith, 2011; Gardiner, 2006; Kishore & Nair, 2013; Lavery, 2012; Liu, 2007). As a result of these behaviours, the transcendental leader may assist staff to lead on their own, make decisions and accomplish goals. Perhaps most importantly, staff may develop a transcendent motivation to serve others (Beckwith, 2011; Gardiner, 2006; Kishore & Nair, 2013; Lavery, 2012; Liu, 2007; Rebore & Walmsley, 2009). As stated previously, this leadership disposition is particularly relevant for Catholic principals because it emulates the form of leadership modelled by Jesus Christ (Lavery, 2011).

### **3.2.8 Section one summary.**

This section of the literature review examined five, interrelated role components through which the Catholic principal could lead and manage and three capabilities that may be applied when doing so. The role components were Catholic identity; teaching and learning; stewardship of resources; community engagement and development; and school improvement. The capabilities were vision and values;

knowledge and understanding; and leadership competence. The review of literature in this section influenced the formulation of specific research question one: *What were aspirant perceptions regarding Catholic principalship role components and the capabilities required for effective performance before, during and upon completion of the Aspiring Principals Program? What influences provoked discernible perception changes?*

### **3.3 Section Two: Factors Enhancing Interest in Principalship**

A review of the literature identified seven factors with the potential to enhance aspirant interest in principalship. These factors are internal rewards; external rewards; high self-efficacy; exposure to positive role models; personal qualities and professional competencies; engagement with professional learning; and age. These seven factors frame this section of the literature review.

#### **3.3.1 Internal rewards.**

In their study of New South Wales Catholic school aspirants, d'Arbon, Duignan and Duncan (2002) identified two categories of rewards with the potential to enhance interest in principalship. These categories were internal or intrinsic rewards and external or extrinsic rewards. The researchers concluded that of the two reward categories "it was apparent that external rewards were not as influential in encouraging a person to apply for a principalship" (p. 479).

There are six internal rewards associated with principalship. The first internal reward is the opportunity to lead instruction and enhance student learning (d'Arbon, Duignan, & Duncan, 2002). This form of leadership involves shaping educational vision and inspiring teachers to improve their practice and the quality of learning environments and is driven by a love for children and a desire to positively impact their lives (Bickmore, Bickmore, & Raines, 2013; Coggshall, Stewart, & Bhatt, 2008; Lacey, 2003; McNeese, Roberson, & Haines, 2008; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011). The second internal reward is the opportunity, as principal, to influence school improvement (d'Arbon et al., 2002; Fraser & Brock, 2013; McKenzie, Rowley, Weldon, & Murphy, 2011; McNeese et al., 2008). The third internal reward is the authority provided by the principalship to build a competent and committed leadership team capable of the prudent management of resources and inspiring staff,

student and parent achievement of school vision (Neidhart & Carlin, 2003b; Pritchard, 2003; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011). The fourth internal reward is the opportunity provided by the principalship to improve the lives of staff and life chances of students (Bickmore et al., 2013; d'Arbon et al., 2002; Neidhart & Carlin, 2003b; Pritchard, 2003; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011). The fifth internal reward relates to the ability, as principal, to influence educational reform (Bickmore et al., 2013; Cranston, 2007; Pounder & Merrill, 2001). The sixth internal reward relates specifically to Catholic school aspirants; the opportunity offered by the principalship to contribute to Catholic education and the mission of the Church (d'Arbon et al., 2002; Fraser & Brock, 2013; Neidhart & Carlin, 2003b; Pritchard, 2003).

### **3.3.2 External rewards.**

d'Arbon, Duignan & Duncan (2002) identified five external or extrinsic rewards with the potential to enhance aspirant interest in principalship. These rewards were the possibility of success as principal leading to further career opportunities; role autonomy, power and prestige; enhanced job satisfaction compared with that derived from current role; principalship as a natural career step; and enhanced remuneration. McNeese, Robertson and Haines (2008) also found that “pay was important, but not the primary reason” (p. 29) driving aspirant interest in principalship. Other researchers identify the developmental promise of the principalship as an important external reward (Bezzina, 2012; Bickmore et al., 2013; Fraser & Brock, 2013; Lacey, 2003; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011; A. Walker & Kwan, 2009). That is, aspirants “are more likely to apply if they see the work as challenging and interesting and are keen to learn new skills” (Bezzina, 2012, p. 22). A final external reward is the urge to seek challenge beyond classroom teaching, a conclusion highlighted in the *Staff in Australia's Schools 2010* report (McKenzie et al., 2011). This report highlighted the results of national research into the level of satisfaction and career intentions of 4,599 Australian primary teachers, 10,876 secondary teachers, 741 primary leaders and 838 secondary leaders. 80% of Australian primary and secondary leaders surveyed for the research cited “I wanted challenges other than classroom teaching” as an important or very important consideration influencing their decision to seek promotion (McKenzie et al., 2011, p. 94).

### **3.3.3 High self-efficacy.**

Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as “the belief in one’s capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations” (p. 2). In simpler terms, self-efficacy refers to belief in ability to accomplish a stated goal (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Versland, 2009). In the school context, principals with high self-efficacy are considered by their peers to be highly successful, usually as a result of dogged persistence and adaptability when setting and pursuing goals (Osterman & Sullivan, 1996; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). With regard to aspirants, high self-efficacy is considered a factor with the potential to enhance interest in principalship (Bezzina, 2012; McKenzie et al., 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005; Versland, 2009). In their research, McKenzie, Rowley, Weldon and Murphy (2011) asserted that 93% of primary and 96% of secondary staff aspiring to assistant/deputy principal roles or principalship considered confidence in their ability to perform the role a significant factor influencing their decision to apply for vacancies (p. 94).

Bandura (1986) asserted that individuals with high self-efficacy are more likely to invest effort when striving to achieve specific outcomes whilst attributing failure to factors within their control rather than blaming others. Individuals with high self-efficacy are also capable of quick recovery after setback and, as a result, are more likely to achieve stated goals. Likewise, other researchers assert that leaders with high self-efficacy display characteristics including enhanced aspiration, goal setting prowess, effort, adaptability and persistence when pursuing goals (Gist & Mitchell, 1992; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005; Versland, 2009). Moreover, the benefits of high self-efficacy are not limited to the leader and have the potential to positively influence the attitudes and role performance of followers (Bezzina, 2012; Chemers, Watson, & May, 2000; Luthans & Peterson, 2002). Importantly, workplaces staffed by personnel with high self-efficacy perceptions are more likely to achieve shared organisation vision (Chemers et al., 2000).

### **3.3.4 Exposure to positive role models.**

One factor with the potential to influence aspirant self-efficacy perceptions and enhance interest in principalship is exposure to positive experiences during what Gronn (1999) referred to as the ‘accession phase’ of leadership. The accession phase

forms part of Gronn's life history framework that encapsulates four broad phases through which school leaders commonly pass. These phases are formation or the period from birth to young adulthood; accession or grooming and rehearsal for leadership roles; incumbency or attainment of the principalship and subsequent experiences; and divestiture or preparation for role departure and retirement (Gronn, 1999).

During the accession phase, aspirants are more likely to seek principalship if they are exposed to positive, encouraging role models. These role models are usually principals who believe in the leadership capacity of aspirants, develop their talents through shared leadership practices and professional learning and encourage application for principalship vacancies (Bickmore et al., 2013; A. Walker & Kwan, 2009). In their research, McKenzie, Rowley, Weldon and Murphy (2011) drew similar conclusions when they reported that 89% of Australian primary and 90% of secondary teachers aspiring to assistant/deputy principalship or principalship asserted that successful experience in other leadership roles provided by their principals significantly influenced their decision to seek promotion (p. 94). Likewise, the researchers concluded that 79% of primary and 72% of secondary aspirants cited encouragement and support from their principals as significant factors influencing career decision-making (p. 94). Aspirants are also more likely to form positive perceptions of the principalship, and experience enhanced interest in the role as a result, if their principals lead in a manner congruent with aspirant leadership values (Bezzina, 2012; Draper & McMichael, 2003). An equally important research conclusion asserts that aspirants who observe their principals expressing high satisfaction whilst performing their roles on a daily basis are more likely to desire promotion (Bickmore et al., 2013; Lacey, 2003).

### **3.3.5 Personal qualities and professional competencies.**

In 2001, Day and Leithwood initiated the International Successful School Principal Project. One of the research goals was the identification of personal qualities and professional competencies common to effective school principals. The project concluded in 2007 with the writing and analysis of over 60 case studies of Australian, Canadian, Chinese, Danish, English, Norwegian, Swedish and American principals. The three qualities and competencies identified by the research were not

only developed and refined by individual principals over time, they fed role desire during the accession phase (Gronn, 1999) of their careers. Likewise, some researchers contend that aspirants with these qualities and competencies are likely to be attracted to principalship (Day & Leithwood, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2008).

The first quality and competency was the ability of the principal to bracket the relational demands associated with the role (Bezzina, 2012; Daresh & Male, 2000; Day & Leithwood, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2008; A. Walker & Kwan, 2009). Stated simply, principalship is complex, in part because of the constant need to address decision-making dilemmas (Wildy & Clarke, 2008). Effective principals, when attempting to resolve dilemmas, have the willingness and capability to make difficult decisions that may inadvertently marginalise people. Aspirants who feel uncomfortable with this reality, especially where prevailing cultural norms emphasise group-orientation, belonging and collectivism, are unlikely to seek promotion (A. Walker & Kwan, 2009). In contrast, aspirants who have the ability to effectively and efficiently balance interpersonal relationships and school effectiveness are more likely to apply for principalship (Bezzina, 2012; A. Walker & Kwan, 2009).

The second quality and competency common to successful principals was passion and enthusiasm for the teaching, ensconced in an ethic of care and concern for the principles of social justice (Day & Leithwood, 2007). Linked with the positive influence of high self-efficacy described previously, these principals had the capacity to set achievable goals to ensure the achievement of student educational outcomes before pursuing and achieving them with optimism, vigour and persistence (Day & Leithwood, 2007). Further, these principals were deemed effective because they were visible and accessible to staff, students and their parents during times of need and were 'gifted' with the capacity for emotional sensitivity (Day & Leithwood, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2008).

The third quality and competency common to successful principals was an inherent passion for developing and caring for people, especially the staff they led (Day & Leithwood, 2007). These principals collaborated with staff to ascertain development needs before working to provide appropriate professional learning (Day & Leithwood, 2007). Additionally, some principals also used the gift of intellectual

stimulation to encourage staff to generate new ideas before providing support for initiatives to bring them to reality (Avolio, 2010; Avolio & Yammarino, 2013; Bass, 1990; Day & Leithwood, 2007; Lowe et al., 2013; Walumbwa & Wernsing, 2013). These principals were also described by staff as caring, reflective and genuine and were known for aligning their words with actions that, in turn, mirrored the values of the school and its context (Day & Leithwood, 2007).

### **3.3.6 Engagement with professional learning.**

Walker and Kwan (2009), in their research involving 331 vice principals in Hong Kong, discovered strong correlation between aspirant involvement in professional learning and enhanced interest in principalship. Walker and Kwan (2009) stated: “Frequent involvement in continuous professional learning might in turn help vice principals feel confident enough to apply for principalships so they can put their learning into practice” (p. 607). The forms of professional learning identified by the researchers as most influential were not those related to the day-to-day operation of schools, but future-orientated programs that were often paid for by the aspirant in terms of both money and time (A. Walker & Kwan, 2009). Linking again with the positive influence of high aspirant self-efficacy on interest in principalship, it is surmised that involvement in professional learning may enhance confidence to apply for vacancies (Bezzina, 2012; A. Walker & Kwan, 2009).

### **3.3.7 Age.**

The chronological age of aspirants may be a factor that enhances aspirant interest in principalship. Walker and Kwan (2009) concluded that aspirants aged between 45 and 54 expressed greater desire for principalship than their younger and more senior colleagues (p. 610). The researchers surmised that the “lack of interest in the position expressed by younger vice principals may be attributable to their feeling that they are not yet ‘senior enough’ for the top post in a school” (p. 608). These feelings may also be influenced by prevailing cultural factors including the preference in Chinese society for seniority as opposed to merit-based promotion. An equally indifferent attitude expressed by vice principals older than 55 may be attributed to impending retirement at 60 (p. 610). The researchers suggested that subjects in this age bracket might be more focused on retirement planning than

promotion. The researchers also concluded that vice principals older than 55 may have made a conscious decision earlier in their careers to commit themselves to the role because of its suitability to their competencies and capabilities (p. 610).

### **3.3.8 Section two summary.**

This section of the literature review presented seven factors with the potential to enhance aspirant interest in principalship. Factors one and two focused on the potential of the role to meet the internal and external needs of aspirants respectively. The third factor was the influence of high self-efficacy on aspirant desire for principalship. The fourth factor was the positive effect of principal role models on aspiration. The fifth factor was aspirant desire to enact personal qualities and professional competencies through the principalship. The sixth factor was enthusiasm for principalship generated through engagement with professional learning. The seventh factor with the potential to enhance aspirant interest in principalship was the effect of chronological age. The review of literature in this section influenced the formulation of specific research question two: *What were aspirant perceptions regarding the factors enhancing interest in Catholic principalship before, during and upon completion of the Aspiring Principals Program? What influences provoked discernible perception changes?*

### **3.4 Section Three: Factors Diminishing Interest in Principalship**

A review of the literature identified 15 factors with the potential to diminish aspirant interest in principalship. These factors are referred to as ‘disincentives’ in the literature (Bezzina, 2012; Cranston, 2005a; d’Arbon, 2006). Within this section, disincentives are presented in three categories. The categories are personal disincentives; school and system disincentives; and community and society disincentives (Bezzina, 2012). Personal disincentives include low self-efficacy; clashes between the role of the principal and aspirant values; negative career experiences; the detrimental impact of role intensification; gender inequality; and race-based issues. School and system disincentives include inadequate remuneration compared with role demands; issues emanating from the typical pattern of novice principalship in the Western Australian Catholic education system; issues with the principalship recruitment processes; and inadequate provision of resources to

facilitate role effectiveness. Community and society disincentives include challenging and unsupportive parents; the negative public perception of schools; complexities created by diverse student populations; difficulties associated with parental engagement; and the need for principals to deal with complex social issues.

### **3.4.1 Personal disincentives.**

As the term suggests, the personal disincentives associated with principalship refer to aspects of the role that have a direct and immediate impact on the aspirant (Bezzina, 2012). There are six personal disincentives identified in the literature. The first disincentive is the result of low aspirant self-efficacy. Self-efficacy, defined in the previous section of this literature review, refers to belief in ability to accomplish a stated goal (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Versland, 2009). With regard to the influence of self-efficacy on desire for principalship, aspirants who doubt their experience, expertise and capability to commence principalship and cope with role demands are less likely to apply for vacancies (Bezzina, 2012; Rhodes & Brundrett, 2006). Several researchers conclude that low self-efficacy most often finds a home in female (Bezzina, 2012; Neidhart & Carlin, 2003b; Oplatka & Tamir, 2009) and indigenous aspirants (Bezzina, 2012; Chabaya, Rembe, & Wadesango, 2009).

The second personal disincentive is the clash between the role of the principal and aspirant values (Bezzina, 2012). Beginning principalship can be a lonely experience for novice principals (Fraser & Brock, 2013). Novice principalship may require adjustment from a comfortable, familiar role to one that is uncomfortable, uncertain and requires the ability and willingness to make difficult decisions that may not engender the admiration of others (Fraser & Brock, 2013; Wildy et al., 2007). For some aspirants, the need to make hard, unpopular decisions may be distasteful and diminish enthusiasm for promotion (Bezzina, 2012; Daresh & Male, 2000). The literature also emphasises the potential for promotion to principalship to adversely affect existing collegial relationships and the development of new ones, a reality that some aspirants find disconcerting (Bezzina, 2012; Cooley & Shen, 2000; Neidhart & Carlin, 2003a; Wildy et al., 2007).

Another disincentive created by a clash of values is the mismatch between the leadership ideals of the aspirant and the reality of principalship (Bezzina, 2012). For example, some aspirants desire to be instructional leaders, keen to drive the

continuous improvement of teaching and learning. Others aspirants aim to be transformational leaders, motivated by the thought of influencing those they lead to achieve school vision (Avolio, 2010; Avolio & Yammarino, 2013). Regardless of preference, there exists potential for both ideals to jar against the reality of a role that is dominated by technical, administrative and compliance tasks and responsibilities (Cranston, 2005a, 2005b; Fraser & Brock, 2013; Mulford, 2007; Pascoe, 2007; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011; Watson, 2009).

A third personal disincentive is grounded in the professional experiences of aspirants immediately preceding principalship (Bezzina, 2012; Draper & McMichael, 2003). Given that, in Western Australian schools, most novice principals arrive at the role post-assistant or deputy principalship, the quality of experiences in these roles and their perceived match with the reality of principalship is crucial (Bezzina, 2012). For aspirants who have not experienced quality, shared leadership with their principals during their time as assistant/deputy principals, it is likely that they will not seek promotion (Bezzina, 2012; Draper & McMichael, 2003; A. Harris, Muijs, et al., 2003).

Strangely, although generally considered a factor that can enhance aspirant desire for promotion, principals who wholeheartedly share leadership with their assistant or deputy principals and develop them professionally may inadvertently discourage aspiration. Bezzina (2012) explained:

The experience of the current role is a significant factor in informing aspirant choice. The increasing prevalence of shared leadership practices can be argued to have the effect of allowing senior school staff to engage in significant levels of influence and decision-making without having to take the final step to principalship. (p. 22)

Likewise, Lacey (2003) concluded that principals who delegate responsibility for instructional leadership to assistant or deputy principals in an effort to cope with the time-consuming, technical elements of the role actually enhance aspirant job satisfaction. James and Whiting (1998) determined that if aspirants are satisfied with their current role, there exists little motivation to seek promotion to principalship.

Bezzina (2012) considered the detrimental impact of role intensification a fourth personal disincentive. That is, by observing their principals in action, some

aspirants reach the unpalatable conclusion that principalship is the victim of 'greedy work', a term coined by Gronn (1999). Greedy work, also called 'role intensification' (Fraser & Brock, 2013), refers to the constantly changing nature of principalship in terms of breadth and complexity. Role intensification involves leadership of teaching and learning in addition to the management of an array of technical and administrative tasks that must often be completed in time and resource-poor environments (Chapman, 2005; Draper & McMichael, 2003; Fraser & Brock, 2013; A. Harris, Muijs, et al., 2003; Pounder et al., 2003; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011). 15 years later, research conducted by Riley (2014) into the health and wellbeing of 2,621 Australian principals from government, Catholic and independent schools highlighted the continued prevalence of role intensification and its impact as a disincentive. He determined that the sheer quantity of work, closely followed by a lack of time to focus on teaching and learning were areas of significant concern for principals.

For Catholic school principals, role intensification may be more pronounced than that experienced by their secular equivalents (Fraser & Brock, 2013). That is, the system to which the school belongs and Church documents expect Catholic principals to lead curriculum, pedagogical, financial, capital development, human resource and community-relations functions in addition to the faith dimension of their schools (Belmonte & Cranston, 2007; d'Arbon, 2006; Fraser & Brock, 2013). This additional dimension may present another disincentive for aspirants, in part because it requires the promotion of the Catholic faith to students and parents who are increasingly secular in their beliefs (Belmonte & Cranston, 2007; Dorman & d'Arbon, 2003a, 2003b; Fraser & Brock, 2013). Likewise, Catholic aspirants are well-aware that promotion to the principalship may involve the management of complex school-parish relationships (Australian Catholic Primary Principals' Association, 2005; Pascoe, 2007).

Role intensification leads many aspirants to perceive principalship as highly stressful, especially when they observe their principals suffering poor physical and mental health, relationship breakdowns and conflict with staff and members of the school community (Bezzina, 2012; Chapman, 2005; Cooley & Shen, 2000; Draper & McMichael, 2003; Fraser & Brock, 2013; Neidhart & Carlin, 2003a). Aspirant

perceptions regarding the stressful nature of principalship are confirmed by Riley's (2014) research:

Principals score less than the general population on all positive measures: self-rated health; happiness; mental health; coping; relationships; self-worth; and personal wellbeing and higher on all negative measures: burnout; stress; sleeping troubles; depressive symptoms; somatic stress symptoms; and cognitive stress symptoms. (p. 14)

Given these conclusions, it comes as no surprise that aspirants would be concerned about the impact of the role. For aspirants considering starting a family or for those who already have young children, the complexity of the role, associated time-demands and subsequent stress do little to encourage aspiration (Bezzina, 2012).

Gender-based issues represent a fifth personal disincentive that particularly impinges upon the career choices of female aspirants. Bezzina (2012) and McLay (2008) suggested that some in society consider leadership to be the sole domain of men. Confirming this deep-rooted, cultural script are Australian and international statistics indicating that the majority of teachers are female, yet the majority of school-based, senior leaders are male (Bezzina, 2012; Cranston, 2005a, 2005b; d'Arbon et al., 2002; d'Arbon, Duignan, Dwyer, & Goodwin, 2001; Neidhart & Carlin, 2003b; Pritchard, 2003). This trend, in part, is the result of traditional expectations that women will take time away from their careers to be the primary care givers of children (Bezzina, 2012).

Female aspirants who make the choice to disrupt their careers to raise children are disadvantaged when resuming their roles. Bezzina (2012) asserted:

Another aspect of family with relevance to decisions to take on principalship is the responsibility of caring roles such as parenthood, which are taken up disproportionately by women. This causes career interruptions, which in turn disadvantages women who might be seeking principalship. (p. 23)

One disadvantage associated with this choice is the need for female aspirants to compete for principalship appointment against colleagues who have maintained continuous service (Bezzina, 2012; Chabaya et al., 2009; McLay, 2008; Neidhart & Carlin, 2003a). Moreover, because of the male-dominated nature of the senior leadership tier in the Australian education sector, some female aspirants perceive

gender bias when it comes to the appointment of principals as men are, more often than not, the panellists who make the final decision (Neidhart & Carlin, 2003b). Bezzina (2012) and Neidhart and Carlin (2003a) also concluded that a negative consequence of the limited numbers of female principals is an absence of female mentors for female aspirants that, in turn, adversely impacts self-efficacy to commence principalship.

Some researchers conclude that the professional experiences of some male and female aspirants immediately preceding principalship are different (Bezzina, 2012; A. Harris, Muijs, et al., 2003; McLay, 2008). Specifically, because some principals perceive females to be more nurturing than males, there exists a tendency to promote women from teaching and middle-leadership roles to pastoral assistant or deputy principal roles. Some aspirants in these roles feel ‘pigeonholed’, the consequence of which is restricted development (Bezzina, 2012). Further, because some panellists consider pastoral-based leadership roles ‘softer’ than their traditional assistant or deputy principal counterparts in fields such as teaching and learning, the chances of females in these roles being promoted to principalship are further diminished (Bezzina, 2012; A. Harris, Muijs, et al., 2003; McLay, 2008).

With regard to the sixth personal disincentive, race and its impact on achievement of principalship, literature is sparse (Bezzina, 2012). Several researchers point to difficulties experienced by members of minority groups, especially indigenous aspirants, when it comes to attaining assistant or deputy principalship and operating effectively post-appointment. Reasons for difficulties include the compliance barriers associated with qualification attainment, the financial burden this creates and the sense of being a pioneer for the cultural group and the unwanted ‘spotlight’ this attracts (Auva’a, 2008; Bezzina, 2012; A. Harris, Muijs, et al., 2003). Considering that the Western Australian Catholic education system requires principal aspirants to have a track record of success as an assistant/deputy principal (Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia, 2012), this requirement may present a disincentive for members of minority groups.

### **3.4.2 School and system disincentives.**

The literature identifies four disincentives posed by schools and their governing systems. The first disincentive is inadequate remuneration, cited in the

literature as a factor with the potential to diminish aspirant interest in principalship (Bezzina, 2012; Fraser & Brock, 2013; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011). As described previously, in recent years, the scope and intensification of the principalship has dramatically increased in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States (Fraser & Brock, 2013; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011; Whitaker, 2002). These changes are the result of multiple reforms, requisite accountability requirements and increased parent demands that, combined, have impeded the capacity of principals to lead other important role components such as teaching and learning. However, when compared to role changes, remuneration increases are poor (Fraser & Brock, 2013; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011; Whitaker, 2002). Salary, in particular, is singled out as inappropriate compared with role dimensions and demands (Chapman, 2005; Draper & McMichael, 2003; Fraser & Brock, 2013; Neidhart & Carlin, 2003b; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011).

The second school and system disincentive is the result of the typical pattern of novice principalship in the Western Australian Catholic education system. That is, most first-time principals commence their roles in regional or remote schools in the Bunbury, Geraldton or Kimberley dioceses (Clarke, Wildy, & Pepper, 2007). Whilst school size in these areas is small compared with their metropolitan counterparts, beginning principals in these contexts face six significant challenges with the potential to diminish aspirant interest.

Firstly, some aspirants consider a lack of employment opportunities for their spouses in regional or remote locations a disincentive (Clarke et al., 2007; Dorman & d'Arbon, 2003b; Pritchard, 2003). Secondly, isolation from family and established professional support networks, important for managing stress associated with the 'newness' of the role and its challenges, is unattractive for many aspirants (Clarke et al., 2007; d'Arbon et al., 2002; d'Arbon et al., 2001; Dorman & d'Arbon, 2003a, 2003b; Fraser & Brock, 2013). Thirdly, uprooting and resettling primary school-aged children and finding appropriate schooling options for those in secondary school (e.g. boarding school options) presents financial and logistical challenges (Pritchard, 2003). Fourthly, the process of packing and renting or selling the family home and locating to often inferior accommodation is a disincentive (Pritchard, 2003). Fifthly, some aspirants are challenged by recruitment and retention difficulties present in

regional and remote settings. That is, attraction and employment of suitable staff in these locations, particularly those with leadership experience, is problematic (Pietsch & Williamson, 2009). In these locations, beginning principals may also be confronted by staff with limited knowledge regarding the use of educational technologies, contemporary teaching practices and/or cultural and community awareness (Clarke et al., 2007; Pietsch & Williamson, 2009). Finally, some aspirants are uncomfortable with the dual role of principal-resident, a reality in small country towns and remote communities (Clarke & Stevens, 2009; Halsey, 2011; Wallace & Boylan, 2007). Residing in community requires the need to be contextually literate at all times, the result of living in the 'fish bowl' where the words and actions of the principal and staff may be subjected to the constant scrutiny of parochial and conservative community members (Halsey, 2011; Wallace & Boylan, 2007). The result of this reality are feelings of restriction and amplification of emotions that may, in turn, intensify community scrutiny (Halsey, 2011; Wallace & Boylan, 2007). Halsey (2011), with regard to working and living in regional or remote communities, also advised beginning principals to delineate boundaries between personal and professional commitments to prevent being inundated by community demands and expectations.

The third school and system disincentive present in the literature is an underlying suspicion of the principal recruitment process. Neidhart and Carlin (2003), in their study regarding leadership succession in Victorian, South Australian and Tasmanian Catholic primary and secondary schools, commented:

Recruitment problems include: concern about the transparency and fairness of the selection process; lack of constructive feedback to unsuccessful candidates; perception that males are advantaged; and concern regarding the knowledge and experience panel members have to make appropriate recommendations.  
(p. 12)

As expressed previously, there exists a sense, particularly amongst female aspirants, that appointment panels carry an inherent gender bias, the result of the 'old boys' network formed as a consequence of the over-representation of males in leadership roles (Bezzina, 2012; McLay, 2008). Adding to aspirant concerns regarding the recruitment process are disincentives associated with a lack of quality feedback for unsuccessful applicants. That is, poor quality feedback confuses aspirants and creates

a sense of uncertainty with regard to application for subsequent vacancies (Bezzina, 2012; d'Arbon et al., 2002; d'Arbon et al., 2001; Gronn & Lacey, 2004; Pritchard, 2003).

The fourth school and system disincentive relates to a perceived lack of resources and support for principals during both their novice years (Bezzina, 2012) and later in the principalship (Bezzina, 2012; Chabaya et al., 2009). Specifically, some aspirants fear that because principals are responsible for all aspects of school operations, they would not receive systemic support in areas where they are untrained or feel unprepared such as school financial management (Pritchard, 2003). Aspirant concerns are often the result of direct observation of their principals experiencing role stress whilst operating in a high accountability environment governed by the employing authority (Bezzina, 2012; Quinn, 2002; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011).

### **3.4.3 Community and society disincentives.**

The literature identifies five disincentives emanating from school communities and, more broadly, from the society in which the school is located. The first disincentive relates to working with challenging parents. Fraser and Brock (2013) identified increased demands from parents together with threats of litigation stemming from principal failure to provide a safe environment for their children, poor support for school programs and abuse of staff as disincentives. Cusick (2003) reported a similar phenomenon in the United States. His research suggested high levels of principal satisfaction when working with teachers and students, but disproportionately high levels of dissatisfaction when working with disgruntled, litigious parents:

What do parents want from the school? Everything. And they expect to get it. And why don't teachers want the principal's job? Because your neck is out there all the time. It's Thanksgiving, you're the turkey and there are 100 axes. There's no support. The district will sacrifice you rather than take a black eye from a parent. (p. 23)

Apart from the unpleasant nature of demanding parents, the time taken to resolve minor issues that, in all probability, would not have been raised by the parents of students from previous generations reduces the limited time available for the

principal to attend to other role aspects (Bezzina, 2012; Cusick, 2003; Fraser & Brock, 2013; Tekleselassie & Villarreal III, 2011). The second disincentive, closely linked with negative parental attitudes, is the perception amongst school staff that parents do not respect them as professionals. Moreover, from a broader societal perspective, the public perception of schools is largely negative (Bezzina, 2012; Fiore, 2002; McNeese et al., 2008; Neidhart & Carlin, 2003a; Usdan, McCloud, & Podmostko, 2000).

The third school community and society disincentive is the result of increasingly diverse student populations, a sub-set of which are students with disabilities, included in mainstream classrooms as a result of moral and legislative compulsion (Bezzina, 2012). An historical example of research in this area is that of Scruggs & Mastropieri (1996) who conducted a meta-analysis of the literature. In their study, the researchers examined the attitudes of more than 10,500 teachers and principals regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. The research concluded that although participants agreed philosophically with the principles of inclusion, two thirds were only prepared to work with students who did not require the acquisition of significant additional skills or increased time demands. Although the researchers attributed opposition to a variety of factors, as stated previously, the erosion of time available to lead other role aspects was the primary disincentive (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Almost two decades later, a large body of research continues to highlight significant levels of resistance when it comes to the inclusion of students with severe intellectual disabilities, emotional and/or behavioural disorders (Foreman, 2001; Hwang & Evans, 2011; Khochen & Radford, 2012).

Bezzina (2012) identified a lack of parental engagement with schools as the fourth community and society disincentive. One potential consequence of parental disengagement is the need for teachers to assume the role of parents with regard to morals and values formation (Bezzina, 2012). However, other researchers offer contrary conclusions to those offered by Bezzina (Dor & Rucker-Naidu, 2012; Epstein, 2008; Ferrara & Ferrara, 2005; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). These researchers assert that the overwhelming majority parents are keen to support their child's learning and the school and highlight the positive correlation between parent involvement in their child's education and higher attendance rates, positive attitudes

and academic success. Some researchers, however, contend that the disincentive for both principals and aspirants is developing a school culture where involvement of parents is considered a valuable priority (Dor & Rucker-Naidu, 2012; Ingram, Wolfe, & Lieberman, 2007).

Creating a school culture characterised by quality school-parent relationships is difficult because of the existence of six parental barriers. These barriers are lack of know-how when it comes to assisting children with homework (Christenson & Reschly, 2010; Dor & Rucker-Naidu, 2012); negative attitudes regarding school as a result of their own experiences; lack of time and money; single parenthood; non-English literacy; and cultural gaps (Ingram et al., 2007; J. S. Lee & Bowen, 2006). For principals, aspirants and teachers, the barriers include inadequate or lack of training to enhance parent involvement; negative attitudes toward parents; and inaccurate assumptions about parental intentions (Dor & Rucker-Naidu, 2012; Epstein, 2007, 2008).

Bezzina (2012) identified the range and complexity of social issues impacting schools as the fifth community and society disincentive. Raised previously, a disincentive associated with social issues is the time taken to resolve resultant conflict that, in turn, detracts from the ability of the principal to lead other role aspects (Bezzina, 2012). One contemporary example of an adverse social issue impacting schools is cyber bullying. The widespread availability of mobile communication technology amongst students has dissipated the boundary between school and private life. The dissolution of this boundary has enabled face-to-face conflict to continue online by parties both directly involved and peripheral to the conflict (Von Marées & Petermann, 2012). As a consequence, some parents and members of the broader community expect schools to develop and implement prevention and intervention efforts (Englander, 2012; Olweus & Limber, 2010; Spears, Slee, Owens, & Johnson, 2009). Von Marées and Petermann (2012) concluded:

Based on empirical evidence, researchers suggest that programs for the prevention of cyber bullying should be incorporated in school curricula and include thorough instruction on internet safety and online conduct. (p. 472)

Teachers and principals feel frustrated by the perception that some parents appear to abdicate their responsibility to monitor their child's use of information and communication technology at home and expect the school to assume responsibility for the teaching of responsible digital citizenship (Stauffer, Heath, Coyne, & Ferrin, 2012).

#### **3.4.4 Section three summary.**

This section of the literature review presented 15 disincentives in three categories with the potential to diminish aspirant interest in Catholic principalship. The three categories were personal disincentives; school and system disincentives; and community and society disincentives. The review of literature in this section influenced the formulation of specific research question three: *What were aspirant perceptions regarding the factors diminishing interest in Catholic principalship before, during and upon completion of the Aspiring Principals Program? What influences provoked discernible perception changes?*

#### **3.5 Section Four: Self-efficacy to Commence Principalship**

Self-efficacy, defined previously, refers to belief in ability to accomplish a stated goal (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Versland, 2009). In the context of this research, self-efficacy refers to an aspirant's belief in his or her ability to commence Catholic principalship. Sections two and three of this literature review also identified aspirant self-efficacy perceptions as a factor with the potential to both enhance and diminish interest in principalship. That is, aspirants with high self-efficacy are more likely to be interested in principalship whereas those with low self-efficacy may doubt their capacity to perform the role and decline promotional opportunities (Bezzina, 2012).

As examined in section one of this literature review, the role of the Catholic principal is complex and demanding. If aspirants transitioning to principalship are to experience success, healthy self-efficacy is vitally important because it provides them with the confidence they require to set and pursue goals and respond in an appropriate and timely manner to diverse and demanding situations (Versland, 2009). Principals with high self-efficacy, when confronted with these situations, are more likely to effectively draw upon and use prior experiences, professional knowledge

and skills than their counterparts with low self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005).

This section of the literature review addresses three specific dimensions of self-efficacy. Firstly, literature pertinent to principal self-efficacy and role effectiveness is described. This literature provides insight into the potential future leadership behaviours and effects of aspirants with both high and low self-efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005; Versland, 2009). Secondly, the four sources of self-efficacy defined by Bandura (1986) are presented because they have the potential to nurture aspirant self-efficacy perceptions. Thirdly, five elements of exemplary principal preparation programs with the potential to enhance aspirant self-efficacy are identified. With regard to literature examining the topic of aspirant self-efficacy to commence principalship, several researchers acknowledge that the field remains largely unexplored (Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). Considering this assertion, the findings and conclusions of this study may contribute to an improved understanding of the topic.

### **3.5.1 Principal self-efficacy and role effectiveness.**

Principals equipped with a robust sense of self-efficacy view change as an evolutionary process and understand that time and persistence are essential for goal achievement (Osterman & Sullivan, 1996; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). Despite this conclusion, principals with high self-efficacy are not *laissez-faire*. Rather, Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2005) observed that principals “with a strong sense of self-efficacy have been found to be persistent in pursuing their goals and are also more flexible and more willing to adapt their strategies based on contextual conditions” (p. 5). That is, principals with high self-efficacy pursue goals with vigour and are gifted with the ability to adapt strategies for achievement to suit the needs and conditions present in their respective schools (McCormick, 2001; Paglis & Green, 2002; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005; Wood & Bandura, 1989). When strategies applied for goal achievement are unsuccessful, principals with high self-efficacy do not hesitate to abandon them before proactively exploring, adopting and implementing alternatives (Lyons & Murphy, 1994; Osterman & Sullivan, 1996). These principals, rather than viewing unsuccessful strategies as failures, consider them learning experiences (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005).

Typically, principals with high self-efficacy are known for their calm and confident presence with some employing humour to mitigate stress in volatile situations (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). These principals use a combination of 'expert power', 'informational power' and 'referent power' when problem solving and striving for or leading others toward goal achievement (Lyons & Murphy, 1994; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). Expert power refers to the use of professional experiences, skills or knowledge by leaders when working to achieve goals (French & Raven, 1959; Raven, 1992). Informational power refers to the capacity of leaders to locate, present and use sources of information appropriate for task (French & Raven, 1959; Raven, 1992). Referent power refers to the ability of leaders to unite and inspire staff to achieve goals, the result of trust and mutual respect generated over time (French & Raven, 1959; Raven, 1992).

In contrast, principals with low self-efficacy "perceive an inability to control their environments and fear change" (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005, p. 5). The consequence of these perceptions is reduced capacity to set appropriate goals and solve problems (Osterman & Sullivan, 1996; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). When striving to achieve goals, principals with low self-efficacy tend to select strategies inappropriate for the task and when faced with failure, rigidly persist with their original course of action rather than make appropriate adjustments (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). During times of challenge or failure, principals with low self-efficacy are more likely to blame others as opposed to maintaining a calm, composed persona characteristic of their counterparts with high self-efficacy (Osterman & Sullivan, 1996). Further, principals with low self-efficacy tend to be failure-focused and are characterised by anxiety, stress and overt displays of frustration (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). Rather than adopt work practices based on expert, informational and referent power, principals with low self-efficacy employ external, institutional power bases including 'coercive power', 'positional power' and 'reward power' (Lyons & Murphy, 1994; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). As the term suggests, coercive power involves the use of force by leaders to achieve goals, the result of which, more often than not, is compliance (French & Raven, 1959; Raven, 1992). Positional power refers to the tendency of leaders to use their rank over others to impose their will (French & Raven, 1959; Raven, 1992).

Reward power refers to the willingness of leaders to grant favours to staff in exchange for compliance (French & Raven, 1959; Raven, 1992).

Principal self-efficacy perceptions also influence the self-efficacy perceptions of the staff they lead (Chemers et al., 2000; Luthans & Peterson, 2002). With regard to teachers, principals with high self-efficacy are likely to inspire a sense of common purpose, model expected behaviours, provide timely, appropriate and effective feedback and reward exceptional performance (Hipp & Bredeson, 1995). A culture of positivity may be generated as a result of these leadership behaviours and when combined with a focus on quality teaching and learning, teacher self-efficacy flourishes (Hoy & Woolfolk, 1993; Moore & Esselman, 1992; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). Principals, within such cultures, provide teachers with the authority to make decisions regarding their classroom environments and practices (Australian Council for Educational Leaders, 2009; Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Moore & Esselman, 1992), minimise student behavioural issues and filter activities that would otherwise distract teachers from practicing their craft (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; V. E. Lee, Dedrick, & Smith, 1991).

### **3.5.2 Sources of self-efficacy.**

Bandura (1986) proposed four sources of self-efficacy: “mastery experiences; vicarious experiences; social persuasion; and the monitoring of somatic (physical) and emotional states” (p. 400). Of these four sources, mastery experiences are considered the most potent influence on self-efficacy perceptions (Bandura, 1986; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). Mastery experiences occur when “an individual repeats effort in an attempt to overcome challenging situations and experience success” (Versland, 2009, p. 20). Vicarious experiences occur when “an individual observes colleagues achieving goals through perseverance and, as a result, forms the belief that they too have the capacity to succeed in comparable situations” (Versland, 2009, p. 20). Social persuasion occurs when “an individual praises the ability and efforts of colleagues and, as a result, convinces them that they have the capability to successfully master given activities” (Versland, 2009, p. 21). Monitoring physical and emotional states occurs when “an individual is subjected to experiences that generate emotional reactions” (Versland, 2009, p. 21). Controlling resultant physical

and emotional reactions such as stress and tension can assist the individual to recognise and modify reactions and, over time, mitigate their impacts (Bandura, 1986; Versland, 2009).

Vicarious experiences and social persuasion have the greatest impact early in learning when fewer mastery experiences are available (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005; Versland, 2009). However, once mastery experiences accumulate and present opportunities to monitor resultant physical and emotional states, the other two sources are less likely to prompt self-efficacy reassessment (Bandura, 1997; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005; Versland, 2009). Principal preparation programs represent one medium through which aspirants may be provided with opportunities to enhance self-efficacy perceptions. Programs that deliberately expose aspirants to the four self-efficacy sources are considered most effective in enhancing self-efficacy perceptions (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005; Versland, 2009).

### **3.5.3 Principal preparation programs and aspirant self-efficacy.**

Orr and Orphanos (2011) determined that established principals who participated in high-quality preparation programs prior to commencing principalship exhibited higher self-efficacy than their colleagues who commenced principalship without formation. Likewise, other researchers assert that aspirant self-efficacy to commence principalship is strongly correlated with participation in principal preparation programs considered exemplary (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005; Versland, 2009). With regard to exemplary principal preparation programs, numerous researchers identify five features with the potential to enhance aspirant self-efficacy perceptions (Orr & Orphanos, 2011).

Firstly, exemplary programs are characterised by a rigorous, coherent and systematic curriculum, aligned to national professional standards and a well-defined process for school improvement (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005; Jackson & Kelley, 2002; McCarthy, 1999; Orr, 2006; Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Young, Crow, Murphy, & Ogawa, 2009). A significant component of any effective school improvement process is enhanced capacity for leadership of teaching and learning (Orr & Orphanos, 2011). With regard to educational leadership content within exemplary programs, aspirants are taught strategies that may be applied to

create a shared set of teaching and learning beliefs amongst staff (J. Harris et al., 2013; The Ontario Institute for Education Leadership, 2013). To bring these beliefs to life, aspirants are encouraged to develop, resource and support structures promoting collaborative discussion amongst teachers, the purpose of which is the sharing and improvement of pedagogical practices (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Childs-Bowen et al., 2000; DuFour, 2002; Jenkins, 2009; Robinson, 2011). An outcome of these discussions is the opening of classrooms for peer observation and provision of quality feedback and advice with regard to the monitoring and improvement of student achievement (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2011; Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010; Department for Education and Skills, 2004; Department of Education Northern Ireland, 2005; Lashway, 2002). The principal, as educational leader, is also responsible for the promotion of formal and informal teacher development including involvement as a participant in the learning (Robinson, 2011). The final aspect of educational leadership highlighted in the literature relates to the role of the principal in ensuring the provision of an orderly and supportive environment for teachers (Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008). In addition to an emphasis on educational leadership content within exemplary programs, several researchers highlight the importance of two additional content fields: organisational development; and change leadership (Davis et al., 2005; Jackson & Kelley, 2002; McCarthy, 1999; Orr, 2006; Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Young et al., 2009). A comprehensive understanding of both fields is considered essential for leadership of schools that are characterised by constant change (Orr, Silverberg, & LeTendre, 2006).

The presentation of content within exemplary programs in and of itself, however, is inadequate (Orr et al., 2006). Rather, the second feature of exemplary programs with the potential to enhance aspirant self-efficacy perceptions is “active learning experiences that integrate theory and practice and stimulate reflection” (Orr & Orphanos, 2011, p. 22). These experiences may take the form of activities at aspirant schools, designed to stimulate reflection on an aspect of program theory, or longer periods of leadership experience (Davis et al., 2005). With regard to extended leadership experiences, several researchers recommend the internship as a means through which to provide aspirants with an authentic experience of principalship

(Leithwood, Jantzi, Coffin, & Wilson, 1996). The internship is also a way for aspirants to experience Bandura's four self-efficacy sources, especially mastery experiences and the monitoring and control of resultant physical and emotional reactions (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005; Versland, 2009). The internship may involve a period of 'shadowing' or observation of a principal in action, a co-principalship experience alongside an established principal or time as an acting principal in an aspirant's current or different school (Davis et al., 2005; Leithwood et al., 1996).

Several researchers recommend the use of mentor principals in conjunction with internship experiences. These researchers highlight the potential of the mentor to assist aspirant adjustment to the reality of the role and act as a source of vicarious experiences and social persuasion (Davis et al., 2005; Jackson & Kelley, 2002; McCarthy, 1999; Orr, 2006; Versland, 2009; Young et al., 2009). Mentor relationships often involve a more experienced person providing a protégé with advice or immediate solutions to problems encountered (Ehrich, Hansford, & Tennent, 2004; The Hay Group, 2014). However, to facilitate learning and development of aspirant self-efficacy, several researchers highlight the importance of a coach-mentor approach (Bloom, Castagna, & Warren, 2003; Rowley, 1999). Coaching differs from mentoring in that the process involves extraction of aspirant-generated solutions for given situations as opposed to the provision of immediate instructions or answers (GROWTH Coaching International, 2009; The Hay Group, 2014). Specifically, when acting as coach, the principal uses questioning techniques to encourage aspirant formation of goals before guiding strategy identification and implementation to achieve them (GROWTH Coaching International, 2009).

The decision by the principal to adopt a mentoring or coaching approach depends upon the situation. Usually, mentoring is appropriate for high-risk, time-poor situations where an immediate decision or implementation of a course of action is required to avert a crisis (Ehrich et al., 2004). Coaching is best employed in situations where time is available and reflection and deep learning is the goal (Bloom et al., 2003; Ehrich et al., 2004; GROWTH Coaching International, 2009; Rowley, 1999; The Hay Group, 2014). Finally, with regard to the selection of principal coach-mentors for internship experiences within exemplary programs, the pairing of an expert with an aspirant is discouraged because of the experience void between the

two (Ehrich et al., 2004; The Hay Group, 2014). Rather, it is recommended that a competent professional be paired with an aspirant because of the closeness of their realities (Ehrich et al., 2004; Woodd, 1997).

The third feature of exemplary programs with the potential to enhance aspirant self-efficacy perceptions is the development of support networks (Orr & Orphanos, 2011). Support networks are important because they have the potential to expose aspirants to two valuable self-efficacy sources: vicarious experiences and social persuasion (Davis et al., 2005; Jackson & Kelley, 2002; McCarthy, 1999; Orr, 2006; Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Young et al., 2009). There are three types of support networks identified in the literature: 'collegial', 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' support networks. Collegial support networks are generated as aspirants form and deepen relationships with a range of people connected with their program such as the program convenor, facilitators, colleagues, their current principals and program-appointed coach-mentors (Davis et al., 2005; Jackson & Kelley, 2002; McCarthy, 1999; Orr, 2006; Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Young et al., 2009). Vicarious experiences occur as the members of collegial support networks discuss their leadership experiences with aspirants in the context of structured program activities (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). Aspirants, as a result of these discussions, may form the belief that they have the capacity to achieve goals in comparable situations (Bandura, 1986; Versland, 2009). The program convenor, facilitators, colleagues, current principals and program-appointed coach-mentors may also provide aspirants with social persuasion in the form of formal and informal verbal encouragement, convincing them of their capacity to commence principalship and cope with role demands (Jackson & Kelley, 2002; Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005; Versland, 2009).

Top-down support networks are generated when aspirants form relationships with expert program facilitators, especially central office support staff with line management authority or specialist knowledge pertinent to principalship that is foreign to the aspirant (Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005; Versland, 2009). Such knowledge, for example, includes the management of school finances, project management of school building construction and conflict and legal issue resolution (Orr et al., 2006). As aspirants engage with top-down support network members and listen to and reflect upon stories regarding career challenges

and successes, they are exposed to vicarious experiences that may enhance self-efficacy perceptions (Versland, 2009). Equally important in the context of these exchanges is the provision of social persuasion from facilitators as they affirm aspirant strengths (Versland, 2009). The development of this professional support network also presents aspirants with a third self-efficacy benefit, reassurance in the form of access to specialist advice and support upon commencement of the principalship (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). Knowing whom to contact for support and when to do so is particularly comforting for novice principals who often experience dislocation from previous assistant or deputy principal networks and lack of acceptance from the established principals' network (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005).

Bottom-up support networks are comprised of relationships between the aspirant and school community members, especially staff, students and their parents and carers (Versland, 2009). With regard to development of aspirant self-efficacy to commence principalship, these relationships represent an important source of social persuasion (Versland, 2009). Reflecting this finding are those of Tschannen-Moran and Gareis (2005) who studied 558 elementary, middle and high school principals in Virginia. The researchers concluded that principals who felt supported by teaching and support staff had a robust sense of self-efficacy compared to those who felt the opposite. Of interest in this study was the conclusion that principals with high self-efficacy are also more adept at garnering support of teachers and support staff.

Perceived support of students and their parents by principals is also considered an important self-efficacy enhancer because it is an indicator of leadership quality (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). Parent and student support are also closely linked, suggesting that when parents are engaged in schools as supportive, constructive partners, students are likely to be similarly engaged. Conversely, when principals fail to earn the support of students, they are unlikely to achieve parental support (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2005). With these conclusions in mind, exemplary programs provide aspirants with strategies to enhance engagement of bottom-up network members, both in the context of their current leadership roles and upon appointment as principals. Aspirants are also provided with opportunities to test these strategies 'in the field' through active learning experiences such as internships

(Davis et al., 2005; Jackson & Kelley, 2002; McCarthy, 1999; Orr, 2006; Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Young et al., 2009).

The fourth feature of exemplary programs with the potential to enhance aspirant self-efficacy perceptions involves the use of standards-based assessment tasks (Davis et al., 2005; Jackson & Kelley, 2002; McCarthy, 1999; Orr, 2006; Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Young et al., 2009). These tasks can be used to assess program objectives that are, in turn, designed to achieve program vision (Orr, 2006; Orr & Orphanos, 2011). Tasks are supplied to aspirants together with a clear set of criteria against which they will be judged. Post- submission of tasks, grades are awarded based on aspirant performance relative to the pre-defined standards, not the performance of others or a pre-determined grade distribution. Standards-based assessment tasks permit the program convenor to make comparisons between aspirants based on achievement of the standards. The use of these tasks also adds rigour to the program and provides aspirants with opportunities to showcase their learning (Orr, 2006; Orr & Orphanos, 2011). Moreover, standards-based assessment tasks have two self-efficacy benefits. Firstly, aspirants are provided with social persuasion in the form of constructive feedback from the convenor. Secondly, completion of standards-based tasks provides aspirants with opportunities to navigate and control associated physical and emotional reactions such as stress (Hess & Kelly, 2007).

The fifth feature of exemplary programs with the potential to enhance aspirant self-efficacy perceptions is a focus on the continuous review and improvement of program structure, content and activities (Davis et al., 2005; Jackson & Kelley, 2002; McCarthy, 1999; Orr, 2006; Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Young et al., 2009). Within exemplary programs, review data is routinely collected from aspirants, their principals, coach-mentors and program facilitators and acted upon (Orr, 2006; Orr & Orphanos, 2011). Several researchers recommend the use of third-party evaluators to ensure the confidential collection and unbiased analysis of data (Davis et al., 2005; Orr, 2006; Young et al., 2009). Aspirants who know that their program is the subject of continuous review and improvement are more likely to have faith in the program as a tool for their development and experience higher self-efficacy as a result (Orr & Orphanos, 2011).

#### **3.5.4 Section four summary.**

This section of the literature review focused on three aspects of self-efficacy. Firstly, the characteristics of principals with high and low self-efficacy were described to highlight a possible connection between aspirant self-efficacy perceptions and their effectiveness as future principals. The subsequent effect of the former group on the self-efficacy perceptions of teachers was also examined. Secondly, the four sources of self-efficacy were presented: mastery experiences; vicarious experiences; social persuasion; and the monitoring of somatic (physical) and emotional states. Finally, five features of exemplary principal preparation programs with the potential to enhance aspirant self-efficacy perceptions were explored. The review of the literature in this section influenced the formulation of specific research question four: *What were aspirant perceptions regarding self-efficacy to commence Catholic principalship before, during and upon completion of the Aspiring Principals Program? What influences provoked discernible perception changes?*

#### **3.6 Chapter Conclusion**

The four sections of this chapter presented literature relevant to aspirant perceptions explored by the research. These sections were: Catholic principalship role components and the capabilities required for effective performance; factors enhancing interest in principalship; factors diminishing interest in principalship; and self-efficacy to commence principalship. The review of the literature related to these sections culminated in the formulation of the four specific research questions that, collectively, were used to guide the study. The upcoming chapter, Research Plan, explains the methodological components that informed and directed the conduct of the research. Specifically, this chapter describes the theoretical framework for the research, research participants, the measures adopted to ensure the study's trustworthiness and data analysis procedures. The chapter concludes with a description of ethical measures enacted and a design summary for the research.