

**Rhetoric or reality: An exploratory study of the culture of  
Queensland Lutheran Schools**

**Submitted by**

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## **STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP**

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics/Safety Committees (where required).

Ian Marks

March 1, 2000

## ABSTRACT

Lutheran schools have a long heritage in Australia of offering Christian education within the theology of the Lutheran church. Early Queensland Lutheran schools developed as schools for children of Lutherans, while schools opened in the last twenty five years have been developed to offer Lutheran education to the wider community. Lutheran church and school literature suggest that Lutheran schools are characterised by a distinctive culture which pervades the school. This thesis presents research which explored the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools, comparing the research results with the rhetoric of the Lutheran church and schools.

The literature review explains the rationale for this study adopting an ideational conception of culture, and hence, a conceptual framework of different kinds of cultural knowledge: axiomatic knowledge, dictionary knowledge, directory knowledge, and recipe knowledge (Sackmann, 1991, 1992). Further, literature and research related to the independent variables within the study were reviewed, providing the basis for discussion of results from the research.

The post-positivist orientation adopted for the research recognised basic assumptions about knowledge and reality within the study. Research principles derived from the theory of symbolic interactionism complemented the post-positivist orientation in the identification of important dimensions reflecting different kinds of cultural knowledge.

These cultural dimensions were derived from data collected from key informants in Queensland Lutheran schools. Six culture dimensions and associated characteristics identified in the research: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Quality Christian Education, Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership and Management formed the basis for the development and validation of a context-specific instrument to assess these dimensions of culture. The use of this instrument with teachers, senior staff, school council members, and parents and friends executive members in Queensland Lutheran schools revealed

general consensus with the dimensions of culture identified in the first stage of the research.

Generally, perceptions of culture within primary schools were more positive than those in secondary schools. The study also revealed that as a school increases in size, perceptions of culture tend to become less positive. An increase in the proportion of Lutheran teachers and students within a school resulted in more positive perceptions of culture. Perceptions of culture were most positive amongst senior staff and school council members, and least positive in parents. Finally, the study revealed that the current theological professional development in Queensland Lutheran schools has no noticeable effect on perceptions of school culture.

Differences of perceptions of culture were mainly apparent in three culture dimensions: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, and Worship as Life in Vocation. It is argued that the different structure and operation of primary and secondary school account for much of the variation reported.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	x
LIST OF TABLES	xi

<b>CHAPTER ONE</b>	<b>THE RESEARCH DEFINED</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Introduction to the research	1
1.2	The research context	2
1.3	Identification of the research problem	3
1.4	Purpose of the research	5
1.5	The research questions	7
1.6	Design of the research	11
1.7	The significance of the research	12
1.8	Limitations of the research	14
1.9	Outline of the thesis	15
<b>CHAPTER TWO</b>	<b>QUEENSLAND LUTHERAN SCHOOLS</b>	<b>17</b>
2.1	Introduction	17
2.2	Principles of Lutheran theology	17
2.3	A brief review of Australian Lutheran schools	27
2.4	Contemporary Queensland Lutheran schools	33
2.5	Chapter summary	51

<b>CHAPTER THREE</b>	<b>REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</b>	<b>53</b>
3.1	Introduction	53
3.2	The culture concept and its application within organisational and educational literature	55
3.3	The ideational perspective in depth	63
3.4	Conceptual framework for the study	76
3.5	Educational research in the cultural perspective	79
3.6	Chapter summary	103
 <b>CHAPTER FOUR</b>	 <b>DESIGN OF RESEARCH</b>	 <b>105</b>
4.1	Introduction	105
4.2	Research orientation	106
4.3	Theoretical perspective for the methodology	108
4.4	The research design	112
4.5	Ethical considerations	130
4.6	Issues of reliability and validity	131
4.7	Chapter summary	137
 <b>CHAPTER FIVE</b>	 <b>THE CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF QUEENSLAND LUTHERAN SCHOOLS: ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEW DATA</b>	 <b>139</b>
5.1	Introduction	139
5.2	Axiomatic knowledge	141
5.3	Dictionary knowledge	143
5.4	Recipe knowledge	160
5.5	Directory knowledge	177
5.6	The cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools	177
5.7	Chapter summary	178
 <b>CHAPTER SIX</b>	 <b>DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF INSTRUMENT</b>	 <b>180</b>
6.1	Introduction	180
6.2	Instrument development criteria and instrument development and validation procedure	182
6.3	Development and validation of the instrument	185
6.4	Chapter summary	200

<b>CHAPTER SEVEN</b>	<b>ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE DATA</b>	<b>202</b>
7.1	Introduction	202
7.2	Research instrument	205
7.3	Scale mean consensus and Lutheran school culture	206
7.4	School Type	208
7.5	Size of school	213
7.6	Denominational background	216
7.7	Proportion of Lutheran students	220
7.8	Position	223
7.9	Theological professional development	228
7.10	Chapter summary	234
<b>CHAPTER EIGHT</b>	<b>DISCUSSION OF RESULTS</b>	<b>237</b>
8.1	Introduction	237
8.2	What are the important dimensions of culture in Lutheran schools in Queensland?	240
8.3	Is it possible to develop a context-specific, valid, reliable and economic research instrument that assesses the important dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?	251
8.4	How closely do the results of this study agree with the rhetoric of a distinctive ethos in Queensland Lutheran schools?	252
8.5	How do perceptions of culture vary between different groups in Queensland Lutheran schools?	254
8.6	Chapter summary	289
<b>CHAPTER NINE</b>	<b>REVIEW AND SYNTHESIS</b>	<b>291</b>
9.1	Purpose of the research	291
9.2	Design of the research	293
9.3	Research questions answered	294
9.4	Conclusions from the research	299
9.5	Recommendations from the research	302
9.6	Concluding remarks	309



<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>311</b>
1. Lutheran Church of Australia Policy on Lutheran Education	311
2. Statement of Facts Concerning the Policies and Practices of Lutheran Schools	315
3. The Lutheran Church of Australia and its Schools	320
4. The Teacher in the Lutheran School	324
5. Interview Guide	325
6. Scale items for the six cultural dimensions of the Lutheran School Culture Inventory	326
7. Questionnaire Sample	
8. The Questionnaire Form	332
9. Scale items for the six cultural dimensions of the Lutheran School Culture Inventory – Final version	338
10. The Questionnaire Form – Final version	341
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>345</b>

## LIST OF FIGURES

	page
Figure 3.1	Organisation of the literature review 56
Figure 3.2	The culture of Catholic schools 82
Figure 6.1	The three stage instrument and development procedure 184
Figure 7.1	Mean scores and standard deviations for the six scales of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory 207
Figure 7.2	Highest, mean, and lowest school mean scores for the six scales of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory 208
Figure 7.3	Mean scores for analysis of school type 209
Figure 7.4	Mean scores for analysis of primary and secondary teachers in P-12 schools 211
Figure 7.5	Canonical discriminant function evaluated at group means (centroid) for primary and secondary teachers 212
Figure 7.6	Mean scores for variable school size using equations from curvefit 215
Figure 7.7	Mean scores for variable school size using equations from curvefit - primary schools only 216
Figure 7.8	Means scores comparing Lutheran with non-Lutheran teachers 218
Figure 7.9	Mean scores for variable percentage of Lutheran teachers using equations from curvefit 219
Figure 7.10	Mean scores for variable percentage of Lutheran teachers using equations from curvefit - primary schools only 220
Figure 7.11	Mean scores for variable percentage of Lutheran students using equations from curvefit 221
Figure 7.12	Percentage of Lutheran students - primary schools only 222
Figure 7.13	Mean scores for teachers, senior staff, board members, and P&F executive members in Queensland Lutheran schools 227
Figure 7.14	Mean scores for teachers for variable Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education 229
Figure 7.15	Mean scores for teachers for variable Theological Orientation Program for Staff 232
Figure 7.16	Scale means for variable teaches Christian Studies 234

## LIST OF TABLES

	page
Table 3.1	A conceptual framework for the consideration of school culture 60
Table 3.2	Schein's three levels of organisational culture and their interactions 64
Table 3.3	The cultural knowledge map: Definitions and characteristics of the different kinds of cultural knowledge 72
Table 3.4	The cultural characteristics of the Catholic school 80
Table 3.5	Personal teaching goals of teachers in low income US Catholic schools 97
Table 4.1	The research program 113
Table 4.2	Demographic characteristics of interview participants 115
Table 4.3	Geographical locations of Queensland Lutheran schools 122
Table 4.4	Questionnaire sample for different stakeholder groups 122
Table 4.5	Independent variables and their associated analysis technique 129
Table 4.6	Research period and activity for each stage of the research program 130
Table 5.1	Cultural knowledge reflecting dictionary knowledge with associated characteristics 160
Table 5.2	Cultural knowledge reflecting recipe knowledge with associated characteristics 176
Table 5.3	The cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools 178
Table 6.1	The six dimensions of culture on which scale development was based 186
Table 6.2	Descriptive information for the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory 188
Table 6.3	Exploratory factor analysis results for six-factor varimax rotation for the original version of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory 190
Table 6.4	Internal consistency (alpha reliability) and discriminant validity (mean correlation with other scales) for the trial of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory 191
Table 6.5	Exploratory factor analysis results for 16-factor varimax rotation for the original version of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory 192
Table 6.6	Number of factors and percentage of variance in the six a priori scales 193
Table 6.7	Descriptive information for the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory (Final version) 195
Table 6.8	Factor analysis results for six-factor varimax rotation for the final form of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory 196

Table 6.9	Internal consistency (alpha reliability) and discriminant validity (mean correlation with other scales) for the final form of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory for two units on analysis	197
Table 6.10	Mean alpha reliability and standard deviation for the six scales of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory	199
Table 6.11	ANOVA results for schools membership differences in individual perceptions of school culture	200
Table 7.1	Individual scale ANOVA results for variable school type	210
Table 7.2	Statistics for the significant canonical discriminant function	212
Table 7.3	Scale mean scores and standard deviations for six culture scales for primary and secondary teachers	213
Table 7.4	Curvefit statistics for independent variable school size	214
Table 7.5	School size of Queensland Lutheran schools	215
Table 7.6	ANOVA results for variable denomination	217
Table 7.7	Mean scale scores for variable denomination	217
Table 7.8	Curvefit statistics for variable percentage of Lutheran teachers	218
Table 7.9	Percentages of Lutheran teachers in Queensland Lutheran schools	219
Table 7.10	Curvefit statistics for variable percentage of Lutheran students	221
Table 7.11	Percentage of Lutheran students in Queensland Lutheran schools	222
Table 7.12	ANOVA results for variable position	224
Table 7.13	Mean scores for teachers, senior staff, board members, and parents and friends executive members	225
Table 7.14	ANOVA results for variable position within-subject effects	226
Table 7.15	Correlations between different positions	227
Table 7.16	Mean scores for variable Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education	229
Table 7.17	ANOVA results for variable TOPS	230
Table 7.18	Mean scale scores for teachers for the variable TOPS	231
Table 7.19	ANOVA results for variable teaches Christian Studies	233
Table 7.20	Mean scale scores for variable teaches Christian Studies	233
Table 8.1	The cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools	241
Table A.1	Number of schools and participants in each school in the questionnaire sample (N = 21 schools and 384 participants)	
Table A.2	Number of participants in the questionnaire sample by position and school type (N = 384)	
Table A.3	Number of primary and secondary teachers in the P – 12 questionnaire sample (N=66)	
Table A.4	Number of teachers in the questionnaire sample by denominational background (N=194)	
Table A.5	Number of teachers in the questionnaire sample by the variable TOPS (N = 194)	
Table A.6	Number of teachers in the questionnaire sample by the variable Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education (N = 194)	

Table A.7      Number of teachers in the questionnaire sample by the  
variable teaches Christian Studies (N = 194)

## **LIST OF DEFINITIONS**

Board for Lutheran Schools

Chaplain

Congregational School

District Director

District School

District Synod

Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District

Luther Seminary

School Council

Schools Assembly

Schools Council

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **THE RESEARCH DEFINED**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH**

This thesis reports exploratory research into the school culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. School culture in this study refers to groups of commonly held cognitions within an organisation which are held with emotion and integrated into a logical system. These cognitions are habitually used and influence perception, thinking, feeling and acting within organisations (Sackmann, 1991). Thus the focus of inquiry was perceptions held by stakeholders within school communities of commonly held cognitions which were important to the meaning and conduct of Queensland Lutheran schools. In this context, school culture refers to questions of why, what and how things occur within the schools which contribute towards the distinctive culture of Queensland Lutheran schools.

Research into the culture of schools in Australia has been led by Flynn (1975, 1985, 1993) who has conducted longitudinal studies into the culture of Catholic schools. Other research within Australia has investigated the culture of a Christian school (Collins, 1989), the culture of the middle school in Western Australia (Daniel, 1990) and the perceptions and preferences of teachers to elements of school culture (Cavanagh & Dellar, 1997). Research into the culture of Catholic schools has been conducted by Ramsey and Clark (1990) in Tasmania and Lesko (1986) in the United States. This study extends the research of school culture into Lutheran schools in Queensland.

The following sections of this introductory chapter provide an introduction to the thesis by considering several important areas. Firstly, the research setting is outlined, providing the context for the study. The research problem is then introduced, along with the purpose of the research. This leads into presentation of the research questions, the research design, and the significance of this research. Following an explanation of the limitations of the research, this introductory chapter concludes with an outline of the structure of the thesis.

## 1.2 THE RESEARCH SETTING

This research was conducted within Queensland Lutheran schools. These schools have been established under the auspices of the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District to offer quality, Christian education to the general community. The Queensland Lutheran school system is a small system of schools comprising primary, secondary, and preschool to year 12 schools in urban, provincial city, and rural settings. A small secretariat consisting of a Director for Lutheran Schools, education officers, a business manager, and other administrative staff serve the schools of the system. The schools of the Queensland Lutheran School System are ultimately responsible to the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District Church Council and the District Synod. This system of schools operates within the purvey of the Lutheran Church of Australia and the Board for Lutheran Schools, a national body elected by the General Synod of the Lutheran Church of Australia. Data were obtained from senior staff, teachers, school council members, parents and friends executive members, and pastors and chaplains, from within these schools, as well staff from the Queensland Lutheran school system.

The rationale for the Lutheran Church of Australia conducting schools is clearly explained in the statement *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a):

The Lutheran Church of Australia through its congregations and districts, owns and operates kindergartens, primary schools, and secondary schools in order to make available to its members and to others in the community a formal education in which the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities in the school. Thus through its schools the church deliberately and intentionally bears Christian witness to students, parents, teachers, friends, and all who make up the world of the school. (p. 1)

Chapter 2 of this thesis provides detailed background information on the schools of the Queensland Lutheran school system involved in this study. Following a summary of the theological principles which form the basis of Lutheranism, a brief history is presented of



Lutheran schools in Australia. Chapter 2 also provides an analysis of contemporary Lutheran schools, outlining important themes pertaining to the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. These themes, as well as representing the rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools, foreshadow important cultural dimensions which are identified in Chapter 5 of the thesis. These dimensions form the basis for the development of the questionnaire reported in Chapter 6. Data from the questionnaire are analysed in Chapter 7 and discussed in Chapter 8.

### **1.3 IDENTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Lutheran schools have existed in Australia since the settlement of German immigrants in Adelaide in 1838 (Zweck, 1988). From these early beginnings, the development of Lutheran schools can be classified into two identifiable phases: 1838 to 1966, and 1966 to the present (Bartsch, 1998). Four primary purposes have been identified for the first phase of development: nurture of the faith of the children of Lutheran congregations, preservation of the German language and culture, the need for basic schooling, and preparation of pastors and teachers for the church (Bartsch, 1998).

The second phase of Lutheran schools in Australia started in 1966. In this year, the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) was formed from the two pre-existing synods bringing to an end many years of separation and schism between Lutherans in Australia (Leske, 1996). These two synods had separate relations with overseas Lutheran churches which affected their attitudes to schools. The United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (UELCA) maintained close relations with the German Lutheran Church which did not extend a high priority to the establishment of denominational schools, while the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (ELCA) aligned itself with the Missouri Synod of the American Lutheran Church which perceived schooling to be a central responsibility of the church (Hauser, 1990). The formation of the LCA led to a more consolidated approach to all aspects of the work of the LCA including the area of Lutheran schooling (Bartsch, 1998). The 1970's also witnessed the beginning of a period of rapid growth in Lutheran schools in a time of change in both the LCA and society (Hauser, 1990). A number of reasons have been advanced for this rapid growth including the injection of government money into private schooling, the migration of southern Lutherans to

Queensland with their emphasis on establishing Lutheran schools, and an emphasis on establishing schools as a vehicle for evangelisation in the community (Hauser, 1990).

During this time new understandings were developed of the place of Lutheran schools in the ministry and mission of the LCA. Bartsch (1998) has identified seven such issues. The first of these issues is an ongoing debate as to whether Lutheran schools exist primarily to nurture the Christian faith and life of the students, or outreach to non-churched families through the school (Albinger, 1990). One outcome from this debate is the second issue: discussion as to the purpose of religious education in Lutheran schools. This discussion has been exacerbated by the lack of a common religious education curriculum within Lutheran schools. Third, particularly at upper primary and secondary levels is the existence of a tension with respect to the presence of both Christian and non-Christian students in the school and the support needed for students with a committed faith. The fourth issue identified relates to worship within Lutheran schools. Currently this worship is compulsory for all students. For believing students, worship complements the formal teaching of religion and extends to students the awe, exuberance and joy of faith (Crawford & Rossiter, 1989). For non-Christian students, the level of participation possible in worship and the appropriateness of different worship forms are areas of concern. The fifth issue is the increasing demand for quality education and that this demand may be compromising the Christian nature of the school (Koch, 1990). Sixth, is the perceived “institutional gap” and the “communication gap” between the Lutheran church and the Lutheran schools. Stolz (1995) maintains that Lutheran schools and Lutheran congregations no longer interact in an “informed and informing way” (p. 3). Instead, according to Koch (1990), schools may be developing lives of their own as institutions. This phenomena mitigates against the school in its role as an agency of the Lutheran church. Finally, changes have occurred in the way in which teachers in Lutheran schools perceive their vocation. Bartsch (1998) asserts that this change may be attributed to changes of conditions of teachers from being “Church Workers” to instead being governed by state teaching awards. A further area of change which has occurred is the adoption of a new staffing policy (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b). Of concern is the perceived lowering of the sense of “ministry” in teachers in Lutheran schools. These

identified issues are crucial and fundamental for Lutheran schools as they attempt to serve the church in times of change within the church and society (Bartsch, 1998).

The 1970's marked the commencement of rapid growth within Lutheran schools in Queensland as the system developed from two colleges and one primary school in 1966 to over 24 schools in 1999. This growth occurred without any "clear philosophical vision" (Hauser, 1990). Prior to the commencement of this "school boom", a traditional model of Lutheran schooling existed where Lutheran schools were established for the children of the Lutheran congregation. Throughout the boom this traditional model changed with little reflection on how, or why, this came about (Hauser, 1990).

The schools which developed through the boom years, and since, are schools which have grown from the basis of being schools of the church (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a), and which have responded to local pressures and concerns (Bartsch, 1998; Hauser, 1990). This research assumed that in this process a distinctive culture which identifies these schools as being "Lutheran schools" developed. However, no research has been conducted in Queensland Lutheran schools to ascertain firstly whether the schools share distinctive characteristics, or even to identify what these characteristics may be. This research sought to redress this situation.

#### **1.4 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH**

The overall purpose of this research, to investigate the organisational culture of Queensland Lutheran schools, was achieved through five smaller inter-related purposes. Firstly Lutheran school literature was reviewed, not only to contextualise the study, but also to identify major themes from official documents and policies of Queensland Lutheran schools in relation to the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. These themes provided a basis for comparison of the results of the empirical research conducted in this study.

The second purpose was to identify and describe the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools. It was hypothesised that a number of identifiable characteristics exist which adequately describe the diversity of Lutheran schools. These cultural dimensions

may be shared with other Christian schools, but it was hypothesised that the particular configuration and understanding of the cultural dimensions identified in this research will lead to a greater understanding of the distinctive culture of Lutheran schools in Queensland and beyond.

The third purpose was to operationalise these dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools through a research instrument to determine how widely these dimensions were shared in Queensland Lutheran schools. This component of the study required the development of a context-specific survey questionnaire based on the dimensions of culture identified in the first stage of the research.

The fourth purpose was to determine how closely these dimensions were shared across Lutheran schools in Queensland. This was achieved through the administration of the context-specific research instrument to stakeholders in Queensland Lutheran schools. The ensuing analysis determined whether the rhetoric of Lutheran schools of a distinctive culture was shared by stakeholders in Queensland Lutheran schools.

Finally, this research investigated factors which may impact on the culture within different settings. Thus this research sought to identify differences in perceptions of culture in primary, secondary, and P-12 schools, as well as the effect of school size on the culture of the school. A major focus of the research involved investigating factors which may influence cultural perceptions of teachers. These factors included the denominational background of teachers, the effect of theological professional development of teachers, and whether teaching Christian Studies within Lutheran schools affects perceptions of culture. Associated with this was an investigation of the effect different proportions of Lutheran teachers and students within a Lutheran school may have on overall perceptions of culture within the schools. Finally, this research investigated whether different stakeholders within Queensland Lutheran schools held differing understandings of the culture of the schools.

## **1.5 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Consequently, research questions evolved consonant with the purpose of the research to focus the study. The research questions are presented below together with the rationale for their inclusion in this research

**Research Question 1.** *What are the important dimensions of culture in Lutheran schools in Queensland?*

This research sought to investigate the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. In order to achieve this it was necessary to identify and describe the dimensions of culture which characterise Lutheran schools in Queensland. These cultural dimensions were identified through interviews of key informants within the Lutheran school system.

**Research Question 2.** *Is it possible to develop a context-specific, valid, reliable, and economic research instrument that assesses the important dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

An important aspect of this research was to determine whether the understanding of the distinctiveness of Queensland Lutheran schools was shared amongst the schools and the various stakeholders within the school. For this to be achieved it was necessary to survey these stakeholders. A comprehensive survey such as this required the use of a survey questionnaire. It was therefore necessary to develop a questionnaire which reflected the cultural understandings of Queensland Lutheran schools. Questions were developed based on data collected through the interviews of key informants and scored using a Likert scale.

**Research Question 3.** *How closely do the results of this study agree with the rhetoric of a distinctive culture in Queensland Lutheran Schools?*

Following the validation of the research instrument and administration of the questionnaire to the research sample, analysis of the results of the survey using descriptive statistical methods were used. It was considered important to determine how closely the cultural dimensions identified in response to Research Question 1 were shared with the

research sample and the published documents of the Lutheran Church of Australia and the Queensland Lutheran school system.

**Research Question 4.** *How do the perceptions of culture vary between different groups in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

While it is important to determine whether understandings of the important dimensions of culture are shared across the Queensland Lutheran school system further analysis was needed to understand how perceptions may vary and what factors contribute to these variations. It was also necessary to develop a number of sub-questions to investigate particular issues which may affect cultural understandings.

**Research Question 4a.** *To what extent do the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools vary between different types of schools (i.e. primary, secondary, P-12)?*

The first of these issues related to investigating the similarity of perceptions of stakeholders between the different types of schools. The three types of schools in the Queensland Lutheran school system are primary schools, secondary schools and pre-school to year 12 (P-12) schools. It was considered important to determine differences which may exist between primary and secondary schools to gain greater understanding of the impact of the different levels of education on cultural perceptions. The last twenty years has also seen the advent of the P-12 schools in Queensland. This development has not been subjected to critical review and this research allowed investigation into differing cultural perceptions of these schools. Research Question 4a addressed these issues.

**Research Question 4b.** *To what extent does the size of a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

The second major factor to be investigated was school size. The growth within Queensland Lutheran schools has not simply been in the number of schools but also the size of the schools. The Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District Schools Policy

(Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District, 1989) states that the suggested size for a secondary school is 400 to 500 students, and 200 students for a primary school. When the data were gathered through the questionnaire, the largest P-12 school had 1620 enrolments, the largest secondary schools had 830 enrolments and the largest primary school had 480 enrolments. This research compared the perceptions of culture of stakeholders in schools of the different sizes present in the Queensland Lutheran school system to investigate how these larger sizes impact on cultural perceptions.

**Research Question 4c.** *To what extent does denominational background of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools? To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

The staffing policy for Queensland Lutheran schools states that preference be given to practicing Lutheran educators (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b). However staffing Lutheran schools with suitably qualified Lutheran educators has become more difficult, especially at secondary level. This research investigated whether the denominational background of teachers affected perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools. Further, the research investigated whether the proportion of Lutheran teachers within a school affected the perceptions of culture within the school.

**Research Question 4d.** *To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran students within a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

The issue of the number of Lutheran students within a Lutheran school has been an issue for Lutheran schools since the formation of the Lutheran Church of Australia (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1972). Since the boom growth of Lutheran schools, the proportion of Lutheran students in Lutheran schools has decreased to, in some instances, very low proportions. It was considered important to determine what effect, if any, the proportion of Lutheran students within a school has on cultural perceptions. Further, one issue for

debate for Queensland Lutheran schools is whether the schools operate for nurture or for outreach. Important insights may be gained by investigating whether a critical proportion of Lutheran students in a school affects cultural perceptions.

**Research Question 4e.** *To what extent do the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools vary amongst major stakeholders (i.e. senior staff, teachers, school councillors, pastors and chaplains, and parents and friends members)?*

An important research direction for this study was to understand whether perceptions of culture vary amongst the various stakeholder groups within a school. For instance, do parents and friends executive members appreciate cultural imperatives which may affect decision making by senior staff or school council members? Similarly it was important to know whether the cultural understanding of senior staff are shared by teachers. This question investigated this issue.

**Research Question 4f.** *To what extent does theological professional development of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

The staffing policy of Lutheran schools in Queensland (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b) delineates the theological professional development required by teachers in Queensland Lutheran schools. It was important to determine the effectiveness of these professional development requirements. The provision of theological professional development places financial and human resource burdens on to the schools. If this theological professional development is not having a positive effect on cultural perceptions of teachers, then the situation of theological professional development requires review.



## 1.6 DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

The research design, which had three stages, was developed to answer the research questions enunciated in the preceding section (Howe & Eisenhart, 1990). The research was contextualised by a review of the principles of Lutheran theology, together with an analysis of the development of, and important themes within, contemporary Queensland Lutheran schools (Chapter 2). In effect, this analysis outlined the rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools. The review of literature and research on school culture, from which the conceptual framework for the study was identified, provided a basis for the discussion of results from the research (Chapter 3).

This study adopted an overall post-positivist orientation to the research. Complementing this orientation was the adoption of the principles of symbolic interactionism to inform the research data collection and analysis methods (Candy, 1989; Crotty, 1998; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These principles complemented the “humbler” (Crotty, 1998, p. 40) approach of post-positivism by incorporating a naturalistic approach by providing an “insider’s” perspective through an understanding of the meaning participants give to the reality under research (Chapter 4).

The purpose of the first stage of the research design was to identify the dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. “Key informants” were interviewed using an unstructured interview schedule. Data were analyzed using analytical induction to identify predominant categories and properties for each categories. These categories were in fact the dimensions of culture necessary to answer Research Question 1 (Chapter 5).

The dimensions of culture identified in Stage 1 of the research provided the basis for the development of a context-specific instrument which was developed as Stage 2 of the research design. The intuitive-rational approach to instrument development, which relies on the researcher's intuitive understandings of the dimensions being assessed (Fraser, 1986), was adopted for the development of the instrument scales for assessing the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. This questionnaire was further developed and refined to ensure that the questionnaire exhibited good psychometric properties. This stage of the research design answered Research Question 2 (Chapter 6).

Stage 3 of the research design involved the administration of the research instrument developed in Stage 2 to 384 teachers, senior staff, school council members, Parents and Friends executive members, and pastors and chaplains in 21 Queensland Lutheran schools. Schools surveyed included primary, secondary, and pre-school to year 12 schools. Statistical analyses (descriptive statistical analysis and multivariate analysis of variance) were performed on the data collected (Chapter 7). Results from analysis were discussed in light of the rhetoric of Lutheran schools, school culture theory, and previous culture research (Chapter 8). These data collected, and the results obtained from the analyses, provided the basis to answer Research Questions 3 and 4 (Chapter 9). Chapter 4 of this thesis presents a comprehensive account of the research design.

## **1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

This study makes an important contribution to Lutheran education and school culture research for several reasons. First, this research is unique in that it was the first systematic study of school culture in Queensland Lutheran schools. Little research has been conducted in Lutheran schools in Queensland since the rapid growth of Lutheran schools in the 1970's. The literature base for Lutheran schools in Queensland is also small. This study contributes to a growing literature base and presents a foundation for future research in Queensland Lutheran schools. The paucity of the literature of Lutheran schools in Australia is in contrast to the extensive literature of Catholic schools in Australia (e.g. Canavan, 1995; Crawford & Rossiter, 1989; Dorman, 1994; Duignan & D'Arbon, 1998; Flynn, 1975, 1985, 1993; Griffiths, 1998; Harney, 1997; Queensland Catholic Education Commission, 1978; Treston, 1983, 1992, 1997).

Second, Lutheran schools claim to have a distinctive culture. However little empirical research focussing on these distinctive elements has occurred. This study was an initial attempt to identify and investigate those dimensions of culture which are purportedly at the centre of Queensland Lutheran schools. It parallels studies which have been conducted in Queensland Catholic schools (Queensland Catholic Education Commission, 1978). Dimensions of culture are also prevalent in the literature of Catholic schools in the United

States, Wales, and the United Kingdom (e.g. Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993; Catholic Education Service, 1996; Groome, 1996; McDermott, 1986; McLaughlin, 1996).

The identification of distinctive dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools is an important issue for the future of Lutheran schooling in Queensland. While the values of Lutheran schooling have been expressed by theologians (Bartsch, 1998; Janetzki, 1985), Lutheran schools have developed in Queensland without a “clear philosophical vision” (Hauser, 1990, p. 103). The present challenge is to build on the past, “to identify what is crucial for Lutheran schools” (Bartsch, 1998, p. 5), and to retain this, even if in modified form for the future (Beare & Slaughter, 1993). An examination of distinctive cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools enables more focussed analysis of those issues, such as the demand for quality education, the place of worship in the school (Bartsch, 1998) (Section 1.3), and other issues currently facing Lutheran schools.

Changes to schooling through government and political pressures (Kemp, 1998; Wiltshire, 1994) is another reason which highlights the importance of identifying the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools. Where schools exist in a more competitive environment, subject to market forces, and where each school is encouraged to fulfil its mission (Beare, 1998), it is imperative that schools and school systems know and understand the cultural dimensions which shape their schools.

Third, the development of an instrument to assess the dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools is important for future research in both Queensland, and other Australian, Lutheran schools. A number of recommendations made in this thesis focus on further school culture research in Lutheran schools and the existence of the instrument developed in this study should facilitate this research. This study also supports the view that context-specific instruments should be used in school culture research. This instrument may be used to compare Lutheran systems in Australia (e.g. Queensland and South Australia), or international studies comparing Lutheran schools in Australia with those in the United States. The development of this instrument also opens the possibility for longitudinal research to be conducted in Queensland Lutheran schools, analogous to that undertaken by Flynn (1975, 1985, 1993) in Catholic schools in New South Wales.

## 1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Notwithstanding the comments on validity and reliability provided in Chapter 4, the following limitations to the study are acknowledged. First, the quantitative results are generalisable only to the population of Queensland Lutheran schools from which the questionnaire sample was drawn. The sample of participants used in the quantitative component of this study, selected using theoretically based probabilistic sampling procedures (Denzin, 1989), was considered to be a fair and representative sample drawn from Queensland Lutheran schools.

Second, the quantitative results are limited by the assumptions about populations in multivariate statistics. Stevens (1992) states three assumptions of Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA): 1) the observations on the  $p$  dependent variable (here the six culture scales) follow a multivariate normal distribution in each group, 2) the population covariance matrices for the  $p$  dependent variable in each group are equal, and 3) the observations are independent. As far as possible, these conditions were met in the current study. For example, Stevens' (1992) third condition concerning independence of observations was met by using the school mean as the unit of analysis. That is, stakeholders within schools are not independent and use of the school mean was appropriate.

Third, the results from the analysis of the interview data, that is the dimensions of culture, are non-generalisable in the way that inferential statistics applied to quantitative data draw conclusions about a population based on representative samples. As discussed in Chapter 4, the external reliability and validity of qualitative methods is the ability to heighten understandings. Therefore, the qualitative results which hold true for the particular setting of this study, the six dimensions of culture, are possible explanations. While these results have been subjected to further empirical investigation in this research giving them greater certainty, they are non-generalisable to other settings and contexts. However they do prompt discussion and reflection that can be relevant to another context.

A methodological limitation of this study, and all studies that employ perceptual measures is that perceptions do not necessarily equate to reality. Chapter 3 highlights different

conceptual approaches to the culture construct and identified the cognitive approach adopted in this study. The conceptual framework used in the study differentiates between directory knowledge (causal-analytical attributions) and recipe knowledge (causal-normative attributions) (Section 3.2). A limitation of this study is that cultural dimensions derived from directory knowledge were not identified within this study. As directory knowledge reflects the *how* of things, events, and their processes, it is not appropriate to identify cultural dimensions reflecting this kind of cultural knowledge from interview or questionnaire data. However, it is recommended that further research be conducted to gain greater understanding of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools by using different research approaches than those in this study (Section 9.5).

## 1.9 OUTLINE OF THESIS

Apart from this introductory chapter, this thesis has eight chapters. Chapter 2 provides a contextual basis for the study with the chapter consisting of three sections. The first section outlines seven principles which form the basis for Lutheran theology. This section is followed by a brief review of the history of Lutheran schools in Australia with the final section presenting the contemporary context of Lutheran schools in Queensland.

Chapter 3 reviews literature pertinent to this study of Queensland Lutheran schools. Firstly three perspectives of culture are reviewed in relation to their suitability to this study. The rationale for the adoption of an ideational perspective of culture is presented together with a conceptual framework for the study. Previous research into school culture are reviewed in association with discussion of literature pertaining to issues relevant to the research questions.

Chapter 4 describes the methodology adopted for this study. This methodology adopts a post-positivist orientation with the research design utilising the principles of symbolic interactionism. Ten research principles developed from the theory of symbolic interactionism guided the design of the research. Based on these research principles, the chapter documents procedural issues of the study (e.g. data collection and analysis methods, samples, variables, units of analysis). The final section of the chapter details validity and reliability issues relating to the research design.

Chapter 5 presents the results from the first stage of the research design - interview data collected from key informants. These data were analyzed using the methods of analytic induction and are presented within the framework of different kinds of cultural knowledge identified in Chapter 3.

Chapter 6 provides a detailed discussion of the development of the instrument used in the study. Firstly, the instrument development criteria, and the development and validation procedures are presented. Secondly, these procedures are applied to the development of the instrument.

Chapter 7 reports analyses of the data collected using the instrument whose development and validation are reported in Chapter 6. Firstly, the overall results were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Multivariate analysis of variance was then used to test for differences between the means of groups classified according to a range of independent variables (school type, school size, denominational background of teachers and proportion of Lutheran teachers, proportion of Lutheran students, position held within the school, and theological professional development of teachers) with the set of six culture scales constituting the dependent variables. Graphs of results illustrate the findings of these analyses.

Chapter 8 discusses the results of the present study in relation to previous research on the culture of schools. Links between the results of the study and Lutheran education and other culture and school literature are discussed. Chapter 9 concludes the thesis by answering the research questions, summarising the study and suggesting implications of the study for Queensland Lutheran schools, methodology in school culture research and directions for future research in school culture research.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **QUEENSLAND LUTHERAN SCHOOLS**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 1 of this thesis introduced the view that Queensland Lutheran schools have cultural dimensions which are specific to the context of these schools. This chapter describes the context in which the study was conducted and has three main purposes. The first purpose is to introduce the reader to the Australian Lutheran Church and seven principles of Lutheran theology. This introduction serves to provide theological background information on Lutheranism to provide a contextual basis to the study and to present a sound basis for the discussion of the research findings. The second purpose of the chapter is to review the relevant history of Queensland Lutheran schools identifying important themes in their development. This development is contrasted with the associated development in South Australia, providing the necessary historical background for this study. Thirdly, the reader is introduced to contemporary Lutheran schools by examining the literature of Lutheran education and schools and in particular, official policies of the Lutheran Church of Australia pertinent to its schools. This analysis serves to identify fundamental themes of Queensland Lutheran schools which relate to the culture of the schools. In effect, these themes are the rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools. The analysis thus provides important information against which the results of this research may be compared and discussed.

#### **2.2 PRINCIPLES OF LUTHERAN THEOLOGY**

The Lutheran Church of Australia traces its origins to the arrival in Adelaide of Lutheran settlers from Prussia in 1838. As further Lutheran immigrants arrived in Adelaide and in Victoria and Queensland, alliances were formed between various congregations resulting in the formation of a number of synods which eventually came together in two distinct organisations: the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (ELCA), and the United

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (UELCA). In 1966 the ELCA and UELCA amalgamated to form the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA) (Leske, 1996).

The different synods resulted from varying understandings of Lutheran theology and highlighted the importance which Lutherans have attached to doctrinal matters. Braaten (1983) has listed seven principles of Lutheran theology which are “the most useful handles to understand a very rich heritage of church life and doctrine” (Braaten, 1983, p. xiii). These principles provide the structure for this section.

### **2.2.1 The Canonical Principle**

The canonical principle asserts the basic Lutheran belief of the primacy of Scripture as the ultimate authority of Lutheran theology. This basic pre-supposition is articulated clearly in the Lutheran Confessions.

We pledge ourselves to the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments as the pure and clear fountain of Israel, which is the only true norm according to which all teachers and teachings are to be judged and evaluated. ... The Word of God is and should remain the sole rule and norm of all doctrine, and (that) no human being's writings dare be put on a par with it, but (that) everything must be subjected to it. (Tappert, 1959, pp. 503-505)

This authority of the Scriptures for Luther resided in its Gospel content. The Scriptures according to Luther were to be judged by the formula *was Christum treibt* (what preaches Christ) (Altmann, 1992; Simpfendorfer, 1993). The Scriptures are Christ-centred and are divine and inspired because of Christ's authority (Altmann, 1992; Braaten, 1983). Central to this principle is the understanding that Scripture interprets itself (Althaus, 1966). No standard of interpretation can come from outside Scripture or be imposed upon Scripture because, as already stated, Scripture is the ultimate authority.



### 2.2.2 The Confessional Principle

The Lutheran Church of Australia has been described as a confessional movement (Leske, 1996), and part of a worldwide confessional movement known as Lutheranism (Braaten, 1983). The constitution of the Lutheran Church of Australia has at its centre the following confession:

We accept without reservation the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as a whole and in all their parts, as the divinely inspired, written and inerrant Word of God, and as the only infallible source and norm for all matters of faith, doctrine and life. We acknowledge and accept as true expositions of the Word of God and as our own confession all the symbolical books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church contained in the Book of Concord of 1580, namely the three Ecumenical Creeds: the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed; the Unaltered Augsburg Confession; the Apology [defence] of the Augsburg Confession; the Smalcald Articles; the Small Catechism of Luther; the Large Catechism of Luther; and the Formula of Concord. (Tappert, 1959, pp. 503-505)

As stated in the above extract, the *Book of Concord* is the collection of Lutheran Confessional writings. These writings, which are governed by the authority of Scripture, articulate the Lutheran understanding of Scripture.

At the heart of the Lutheran Confessions is the doctrine *justification through faith alone apart from works*. To fully understand this central Lutheran doctrine it is necessary to be cognisant with the Lutheran understanding relating to people and their fallen nature. Although people were initially created by God in His image, the fall into sin has shattered the initial perfect relationship with God, subsequently resulting in all people being born into a state of sinfulness. This is known as *original sin*. The Augsburg Confession devotes Article II, to this understanding.

It is also taught among us that since the fall of Adam all men (sic) who are born according to the course of nature are conceived and born in sin. That is, all men are full of evil lust and inclinations from their mothers' wombs and are unable by nature to have true fear of God and true faith in God. Moreover, this inborn sickness and hereditary sin is truly sin and condemns to the eternal wrath of God all those who are not born again through Baptism and the Holy Spirit.

Rejected in this connection are the Pelagians and others who deny that original sin is sin, for they hold that natural man is made righteous by his own powers, thus disparaging the sufferings and merits of Christ. (Tappert, 1959, p. 29)

Having this understanding, the doctrine of *justification through faith alone apart from works* can be fully appreciated. The Augsburg Confession, Article IV, clearly describes this doctrine:

It is also taught among us that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God by our own merits, works, or satisfactions, but that we receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, when we believe that Christ suffered for us and that for our sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life are given to us. For God will regard and reckon this faith as righteousness, as Paul says in Romans 3:21-26 and 4:5. (Tappert, 1959, p. 30)

This confessional statement is the central doctrine proclaimed by the Lutheran Church of Australia which informs the meaning of all other doctrines and their parts. This doctrine is often summarised as *sola gratia, sola fide, solus Christus*: grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone.

### **2.2.3 The Ecumenical Principle**

Lutherans claim membership of the church catholic, the universal Christian church. Lutheranism has been described as a "confessional movement that exists for the sake of reforming the whole church of Christ by the canon of the Gospel" (Braaten, 1983, p.46). The Lutheran Confessions in the Augsburg Confession clearly describe the church.

It is also taught among us that one holy Christian church will be and remain forever. This is the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel. For it is sufficient for the true unity of the Christian church that the Gospel be preached in conformity with a pure understanding of it and that the sacraments be administered in accordance to the divine Word. (Tappert, 1959, p. 32)

Lutherans assert that the church and its attributes of being one holy, catholic, and apostolic church “are derived radically from the gospel of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, as the foundation of the church and its reason for being” (Braaten, 1983, p.43). The church is present where the power of the Holy Spirit is at work through God’s Word and the sacraments. God incorporate sinners into the church through baptism or some other form of the Word where they are made God’s people. As fellow citizens of the church, the body of Christ, they are saints and members of God’s family which is built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ and his priesthood (Kolb, 1993).

The church has two types of relationships. First there is the vertical relationship with God, with Christ acting as high priest, bearing people’s burdens and interceding for them with his righteousness (Althaus, 1966). Because God joins people to his family as well, the second relationship is a horizontal relationship between the family of Christ, fellow believers, which is known as *the priesthood of all believers*. The priesthood means that we “stand before God, pray for others, intercede with and sacrifice ourselves to God and proclaim the word to one another” (Althaus, 1966, p.314). The priesthood of all believers highlights the community to which all Christians belong.

#### **2.2.4 The Christocentric Principle**

A central formula to Lutherans is *sola fide, sola gratia, solus Christus* (faith alone, grace alone, Christ alone). This section discusses the last of the “three solas”: the centrality of the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Braaten (1983) attests to this centrality of this activity of the church.

The chief aim of the church is to proclaim the gospel of God's salvation in Jesus Christ. Salvation is the most inclusive term for what the Bible declares God to have accomplished for the world through the person of Jesus. Every member of the church is called through baptism to witness to Jesus the Saviour of humanity; every minister of the gospel is appointed through ordination to announce the good news of salvation within and outside church. (Braaten, 1983, p. 63)

The Christocentric Principle is central to the Lutheran Church of Australia as evident within its constitution. Article III, the Objects of the Lutheran Church of Australia states:

The Objects of the Church are:

(a) to fulfil the mission of the Christian Church in the world by proclaiming the Word of God and administering the Sacraments in accordance with the Confession of the Church laid down in Article II. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1987, p. A2)

Further Article VI, Authority and Powers states:

1. The Church acknowledges that Jesus Christ is its one Lord and Head, and that all power and authority exercised by the Church must be governed by His will as revealed in His Word. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1987, p. A3)

To fully understand the implications of these extracts requires examination of Luther's *theology of the cross* which highlights the cross as the central feature of Christ (Simpfendorfer, 1993). Luther distinguished between the "hidden God" and the "revealed God". God is hidden in the sense that he lies beyond human knowledge. However, God has revealed himself in the person of Jesus Christ, God's Son, "the suffering servant, who died, rose and even now, as king of heaven, bears the wounds of the sacrificial Son" (Simpfendorfer, 1993, p. 16). Today, this Gospel of Christ, the suffering servant, is revealed in His Word and the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion (Kolb, 1993). The theology of the cross teaches that God controls his access to people through His Word, and that God takes the initiative and reveals Himself with a promise of salvation in Christ. This promise is received by faith in the grace of God. Thus, Christ is only known by faith (Kolb, 1993). The theology of the cross focuses on Christ on the cross. On the cross, Christ suffered because of people's sin and evil. Christ died not only

for people's sin, but also because of people's sin. On the cross, Christ overcame sin, death, and the power of the devil. Thus the cross is a symbol of victory and glory (Simpfendorfer, 1993).

In him [Christ], wrong is made right, and death is left behind for life, through God's peculiar way of doing things. The theology of the cross presupposes that the cross, death, is the path to life. The final result of this joyous exchange is that we who were buried with and raised with Christ in Baptism (Rom. 6:3-11; Col. 2:11-15) are joint heirs with him, even as we suffer with him, and will share glory with him (Rom. 8:17). (Kolb, 1993, pp. 26-27)

The final point in regard to the theology of the cross is that of "discipleship under the cross" (Kolb, 1993, p. 27). In response to what Christ has done, believers take up their own crosses to serve Christ by trusting in him and witnessing him to others. Life is lived out attempting to do God's will in the world (Kolb, 1993). The theology of the cross helps to explain the special character of Lutherans, their focus on Christ and an emphasis on service to God by serving others.

### **2.2.5 The Sacramental Principle**

Lutherans believe that God reveals himself through the *means of grace*: the Scriptures and the Sacraments. Within Lutheran theology a sacrament is defined as "... an action appointed by Christ, in which the general promise of the Gospel concerning the forgiveness of sins for Christ's sake is applied and sealed to an individual in the use of an external element" (Forrell, 1968, p. 42). Important for Lutherans is what God achieves through the sacraments: Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.

It is taught among us that the sacraments were instituted not only to be signs by which people might be identified outwardly as Christians, but that they are signs and testimonies of God's will toward us for the purpose of awakening and strengthening our faith. For this reason they require faith, and they are rightly used when they are received in faith and for the purpose of strengthening faith. (Tappert, 1959, p. 35)

To comprehend the sacraments within Lutheran theology requires an understanding of the gospel message of justification. God brings his saving message to his people in His Word and in *visible* manner as well; in Baptism and Holy Communion. The sacraments are often termed the *visible word* (Gritsch & Jensen, 1976). Within baptism, Christ comes to speak his word of forgiveness and to give salvation to all who believe. As St Paul wrote in Romans Chapter 6, verse 4: “We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life” (New International Version). Within Holy Communion Christ comes to people in his body and blood under the bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins. This belief in the real presence of Christ in the sacrament emphasises that Christ is received in the sacrament not only spiritually, but also physically. Christ has given himself totally for all people.

The Sacraments, together with the Scriptures, known collectively as the means of grace, are also means by which people receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit “works faith, when and where he pleases, in those who hear the Gospel” (Tappert, 1959, p. 31). The work of the Holy Spirit is described by Luther in the explanation of the third article of the Apostle’s Creed in Luther’s Small Catechism.

I believe that by my own reason and strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in true faith, just as he calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith. (Tappert, 1959, p. 345)

The life in faith in Christ has been called a “life of new obedience” (Kolb, 1993, p. 244). The Holy Spirit leads the believer to produce the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-24). The believer responds to God’s love by recognising God’s goodness and giving thanks and praise to him, by witnessing to others through word and action, by trusting in God to provide all they need, and by serving God by serving those around them (Kolb, 1993, pp. 245, 246).

### **2.2.6 The Law/Gospel Principle**

Lutherans teach that God speaks in two ways in Scripture: through law and through gospel. The Lutheran Confessions state, “We believe, teach, and confess that the distinction between law and Gospel is an especially glorious light that is to be maintained with great diligence in the church ...” (Tappert, 1959, p. 478). The law is that revelation of God which teaches “what is right and God-pleasing and which condemns everything that is sinful and contrary to God’s will” (Tappert, 1959, p. 478). The law convicts people of their sin. The gospel, on the other hand, proclaims God’s good news to the sinner that Christ has fulfilled the requirements of the law and has won for the sinner forgiveness of sins, righteousness before God, and eternal life (Tappert, 1959). The law fulfils three purposes: it provides order for everybody’s benefit, it highlights sin and points to the need for Christ, and it provides a spiritual guide for the saved (Simpfendorfer, 1993). “The gospel is God’s solution to human weakness, sin, guilt and vulnerability” (Simpfendorfer, 1993, p. 19). When Lutherans proclaim God’s word they proclaim his law and his gospel message of salvation in Christ.

Related to the doctrine of law and gospel is the understanding that people are simultaneously saints and sinners. God’s law convicts people in their sin and weakness and reveals them to be sinners. However, simultaneously, God reveals that Christ has saved people and so being justified by grace through faith they may be considered saints. This is one of the great dialectics of Lutheran theology. While Christians claim to be saved, they have not attained perfection, but rather live in a state of tension. This does not mean that being saved one may live a life of sin. Instead, there needs to be a continual striving to do God’s will through the power of the Holy Spirit. Sin and salvation will continue to exist simultaneously within a believer. This is an important understanding which affects relationships between people.

### **2.2.7 The Two Kingdoms Principle**

The two kingdoms doctrine, developed by Luther, is concerned with God’s rule in the world. God has established two governments or kingdoms: the spiritual and the secular.

Both kingdoms display God's love and care for his creation. The left hand kingdom, the secular kingdom, shows God's love and care for all people; the right hand kingdom, the spiritual kingdom, shows God's love and care for his people (Althaus, 1972; Altmann, 1992).

Luther's explanation to the first article of the Apostles Creed, in Luther's *Small Catechism*, attests to the belief that not only has God created all things, but that he continues to create and preserve all things.

I believe that God has created me and all that exists; that he has given me and still sustains my body and soul, all my limbs and senses, my reason and all the faculties of my mind, together with food and clothing, house and home, family and property; that he provides me daily and abundantly with all the necessities of life, protects me from all danger, and preserves me from all evil. All this he does out of his pure, fatherly, and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness on my part. For all this I am bound to thank, praise, serve, and obey him. This is most certainly true. (Tappert, 1959, pp. 344, 345)

Creation is sustained at both a personal level, spiritually and physically, as well as at a community level. Thus God continues to preserve and sustain his world. The two kingdoms principle sets out how this occurs within society and the church.

The left hand kingdom instituted by God shows God's care for all people. This includes provision of political authorities and governments for the good order and safety of all people. This kingdom operates under natural justice administered by temporal authorities for the good of all people (Althaus, 1972). Within this kingdom Luther includes four *institutions* or *estates* for the well-being of all people. The first of these is government which God institutes for the general well being of humanity. Second is marriage, which is God's gift for the care and nurturing of both adults and children. Thirdly, God calls people to work for the good of the economy and the fair treatment of all people. Finally, within religion, whether Christian or not, the rights and responsibilities of each believer are to be protected to reflect justice, goodness, and peace within the world.



The right hand kingdom, the spiritual kingdom, ruled by Christ, is the community of those who believe in Jesus. Within this kingdom Christ's gospel message is proclaimed and his grace is extended to sinners. His forgiveness is brought to them and they are set free from sin and the devil. In this community the faithful are sustained by the sacraments, the Word, and brotherly consolation. Within this kingdom God is worshipped and Christ's life, death and resurrection are celebrated (Simpfendorfer, 1993). This is the community of sacrifice and service. Believers are called into *vocation* in the four situations of human life: within society, their family situation, work, and their church, to do God's work in loving and caring for the rest of his creation. As a response to God's love and care, and in service to him, believers extend this same love and care to others within the vocations in which they have been called (Kolb, 1993; Schnabel, 1989).

This section presents seven principles which characterise Lutheran theology. It is these theological principles which undergird the public theology of the Lutheran church (Benne, 1995) and hence which form the basis from which to develop a Lutheran philosophy of education. These principles form an important foundational context in this exploratory study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. It is hypothesised that these principles provide the presuppositions and assumptions on which Lutheran education is based. The next section turns from this theological introduction of Lutheran schools to a brief historical review of Lutheran schools in Australia.

### **2.3 A BRIEF REVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS**

In order to understand contemporary Lutheran schools, it is important to appreciate the heritage of the Lutheran Church and its schools, and those historical forces which have shaped their development. This section reviews these forces, examining the heritage of the church and schools, and the patterns of development which occurred in Australia. It is argued that these forces resulted in different traditions within the Lutheran Church in Australia and two models of Lutheran schools. The Lutheran Church has only recently united into one organisation which has presented various challenges to the schools of the Church.

### **2.3.1 The Heritage of Lutheran Schools**

The history of Lutheran schools in Australia can be traced to the arrival of the early German settlers in Australia. They migrated to South Australia because of religious persecution which restricted the establishment of churches and schools in the Lutheran tradition (Zweck, 1988). One of the priorities of these German settlers who arrived in South Australia was the establishment of schools, with a Lutheran school established within six months of settlement (Hauser, 1990). This first Lutheran school was established next to the church with the settlement having its own pastor and teacher (Zweck, 1988).

A number of reasons can be advanced for the importance which these early German settlers placed on the establishment of schools (Hauser, 1990). First, Lutherans have a tradition of education dating back to the time of Luther and the reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. A key component of the reformation was that the Bible be accessible to all Germans in their native language. Not only did Luther translate the Bible into German and write two catechisms, he also implored both the authorities to build schools and the peasants to send their children to these schools (Luther, 1524). Second, as members of a confessional church, the early Lutheran settlers placed emphasis on the individual reading the Bible, as well as the other doctrinal writings contained within the *Book of Concord* (Tappert, 1959), together with the practice of learning by rote large sections of both volumes. Thirdly, the Australian Lutherans wished to preserve the use of the German language among their people. This was partially achieved through the schools where all teaching was conducted in German.

### **Patterns of Development in South Australia and Queensland**

Although German settlements occurred in both South Australia and Queensland, the patterns of settlement were different largely due to different reasons for emigration. The earliest group of German settlers arrived in Adelaide led by Pastor Kavel in 1838 and within six months had constructed a school. In 1841, another group of settlers led by Pastor Fritsche established a settlement at Lobethal, east of Adelaide, with a school again being established next to the church with the settlement having its pastor and teacher

(Zweck, 1988). This pattern of development continued with each new establishment having a church and school next to each other, and its own pastor and teacher (Hauser, 1990). These settlements have thrived until the present time.

The pattern of development in Queensland was different. In 1838, the same year as Pastor Kavel and his people arrived in Adelaide, a company of Gossner missionaries arrived in Queensland to establish a mission amongst the aborigines in Moreton Bay. A mission station, Zion's Hill, was established in what is the present day suburb of Nundah. However in 1844, government aid to the station was discontinued, with the mission being abandoned by 1848. In 1857, Pastor Schirmeister arrived at Zion's Hill, but after losing hope of establishing a distinctive Lutheran congregation there, organised a congregation from among the German settlers in Brisbane itself. Schirmeister, although stationed in Brisbane, established a number of Lutheran congregations throughout south east Queensland. By the end of the century well over a dozen were operating (throughout Queensland).

The reason for this marked difference between Lutheranism in Queensland and South Australia can be traced to the reason the settlers emigrated (Hauser, 1990). Whereas Lutherans in South Australia had emigrated to Australia because of persecution, which then led to piety and dedication by these settlers, the northern settlers had come to Australia due to economic and personal reasons. The northern settlers also had a greater tendency to be assimilated into the local community. Nevertheless, some of the northern settlers established Lutheran schools. As with the development of the congregations in Queensland, these were not built as quickly or in the same number as those in South Australia. They were also unlike the schools in the south, in that they did not have the same religious fervour within the schools, but were Lutheran more because the only people qualified to teach in the schools were Lutheran pastors.

Many of the schools operated on an intermittent basis which depended on the enthusiasm of the local people, the availability of teachers, and the provision of state schools. However by the end of the century, most of the Queensland schools were in decline. This decline eventuated from a number of causes: a shortage of suitable teachers, a lack of

cohesion in the German communities, a lack of religious intensity, and more integration into the local community (Hauser, 1990). This contrasts with schools in South Australia which continued strongly until 1917 when an Act of Parliament caused them to be closed due to World War I. In South Australia, many schools opened again in 1924. However in Queensland there was little interest in establishing Lutheran schools until the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Traditions of Lutheran Education**

The concept of Lutheran education is complex and this complexity has its basis in the early history of the Lutheran church. Since early settlement, the Lutheran Church in Australia has been characterised by schism (Hauser, 1990). In fact as early as 1846 religious disagreement occurred between Kavel and Fritsche leading to great animosity between the two groups. For much of its history the Lutheran Church of Australia has consisted of two synods, each constituted as a separate church with their own seminaries, schools, parishes, and pastors. In later times these synods were known as the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (UELCA) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (ELCA).

These two synods had separate relations with overseas Lutheran Churches which affected their attitudes to schools. The UELCA, which maintained close relations with the German Church, did not give high priority to the establishment of denominational schools. Schools could be established by the church as long as the establishing congregation was aware that it was working outside of the domain of the church; rather education was the responsibility of the government. Where Lutheran schools were established, they were regarded mainly as secular institutions with the addition of some religious teaching. The schools were maintained primarily to provide a suitable education for potential seminarians, especially in languages.

By contrast, the ELCA, under of the influence of the Missouri Synod, USA, which had a vast school system of its own, perceived secular and religious education to be inextricably linked and a central responsibility of the church. Thus, while the core curriculum might be

basically the same as in a state school, “the values, beliefs and attitudes communicated in schools, indeed the understanding of life itself imparted to students through the hidden curriculum, were integral to the concerns of the church” (Hauser, 1990, p. 17). This schism left the Lutheran church with two strands of thinking about Lutheran schools. In 1966, the synods joined together to form the Lutheran Church of Australia, with the two school systems merging into one. According to Hauser (1990), the effects of the two divergent views of education, and the manner in which they have been resolved, is a concern which is still apparent (Hauser, 1990).

These views present contrasting understandings of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. If still apparent within Queensland Lutheran schools, this will lead to a diversity of understandings of the culture of the schools, especially in regard to the practices of the church within the schools. The following section examines another factor which underlies an important contemporary issue.

### **Two Models of Lutheran Schools**

The two patterns of development of schools in South Australia and Queensland led to two different models of Lutheran Schools. Schools established by the South Australian Lutherans, who emigrated to Australia for primarily religious reasons, were established for the nurture of their children, the children of the church. However in Queensland schools have been established for mission purposes. This approach suggests that Lutheran schools are able to make contact with non-Christians and fringe church members who can in turn be evangelised into the church. The nurture philosophy is a church tradition and has tended to be apparent in the south, while the mission philosophy was more apparent to Queensland Lutherans. However, any clear division between these two views on a state basis has been clouded by the transfer of teachers between the states which has led to cross fertilisation of the ideas.

### **2.3.2 The Lutheran Church of Australia and its Schools**

In 1966, the two existing synods of the Lutheran Church amalgamated to form the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA), which has continued to the present day. This not only reunited the two synods, but brought together the schools under the control of this “new” church. At question at this time were the two approaches to schools as displayed by the previous synods. A number of important documents have been developed reflecting the approach of the LCA. Appendices 1 to 4 present documents which provided policy direction for Lutheran schools:

- *Lutheran Church of Australia Policy on Lutheran Education* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1972)
- *Statement of Facts Concerning the Policies and Practices of Lutheran Schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1978)
- *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a)
- *The teacher in the Lutheran school* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1992)

### **2.3.3 The Lutheran School Boom in Queensland**

The revival of Lutheran schools in Queensland commenced at the end of the second World War with the establishment of two Lutheran secondary colleges in Brisbane and Toowoomba. These schools did not start due to any local initiatives, but were instead synodical decisions. At that time the two separate synods had their major educational institutions in Adelaide, which operated with the main aim of providing pastors and teachers for their respective churches. Secondary colleges were also operating for each synod, to act as preparatory schools for tertiary education, including each synod’s seminary. Devout Queensland Lutheran families needed to send their children to Adelaide if they wished to provide them with a Lutheran education. To overcome this, the UELCA synod established St Peter’s Lutheran College, Indooroopilly in Brisbane, which opened in 1945. Not to be outdone, the ELCA opened Concordia College, Toowoomba, in 1946.

These two schools, together with Concordia Primary School which grew from Concordia College, provided the basis for the “Lutheran School Boom” (Hauser, 1990) between 1970 and today, when there are 14 primary schools, 5 secondary schools, and 5 pre-school to year 12 schools. These schools are located in suburban Brisbane, provincial cities, and rural areas. Of these schools, six schools were opened in areas where Lutheranism had been long established and reflected the nurture model of Lutheran schools. Other new schools adopted the newer Queensland model. These schools often opened in unlikely areas, and reflected the evangelistic role expected of these schools.

## **2.4 CONTEMPORARY QUEENSLAND LUTHERAN SCHOOLS**

This chapter explores theological and historical issues which impact on contemporary Lutheran schools. The forces of these theological and historical principles have shaped Queensland Lutheran schools and, in some instances, the tensions reported above are still apparent within the schools today. This current section reviews the operation and policy basis of Queensland Lutheran schools, which provides further contextual understanding for this exploratory study of the culture of these schools. The themes identified in this section also represent the rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools, which were used as a basis for comparison and discussion of the results of this study.

### **2.4.1 Organisation of Queensland Lutheran Schools**

Lutherans schools in Queensland are ultimately under the authority of the Lutheran Church of Australia. The Lutheran Church of Australia appoints the Board for Lutheran Schools (BLS) to

... promote Lutheran school at pre-primary, primary, and secondary levels as agencies of Christian education in the Church, and to give guidance in the development and co-ordination of the educational program of the Church in this field. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1987)

The BLS is responsible for national policies for Lutheran schools, including pre-service education for teachers in Lutheran schools, staffing, and Christian Studies curriculum

development and evaluation. The BLS also represents Lutheran schools at the national level in discussions with the Federal Government and other national independent education authorities. The BLS appoints a National Director for Lutheran Education as its executive officer.

Queensland Lutheran schools also operate under the authority of the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District, (LCAQD) which has established a schools department. The schools department consists of a Schools Assembly and a Schools Council. The Schools Assembly, which consists of representatives of all schools, reviews policy affecting schools, budgets for the Schools Department and the distribution of Government funds granted to the department. The Schools Council, consisting of members elected at the regular convention of the LCAQD, drafts and reviews policy, ensures schools operate within District policy, monitors staffing needs, provides professional development to the schools, coordinates industrial relations activities, and coordinates schools relations with educational and Government bodies at a state level. The Schools Council also manages the establishment of new schools. A Director for Lutheran Schools is the executive officer of the Schools Department (Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District, 1989).

Lutheran Schools within the LCAQD are managed by a School Council or Board. School councils are elected in one of two ways. For all of the colleges and one of the primary schools, the school council members are elected at the Convention of the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District from nominations submitted by Schools Council (Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District, 1995). Members for college councils are usually drawn from wider than the local area. For the other primary schools, the schools councils are elected at the level of the local congregation or parish from congregational or parish members (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1987). Two major differences are evident between the operation of these two types of councils. First, all colleges (including the one district primary school) are accountable to the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District, directly through the schools department, whereas primary schools are accountable to the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District, initially through the local congregation or parish. Second, the power to employ and dismiss staff is under the control of the College Head, whereas in primary schools the



authority rests with the local congregation or parish who may delegate the school council to be responsible for this function.

The Principal or Head of a Queensland Lutheran school is directly accountable to the local school council. In essence, the school Principal or Head is the executive officer of the school council and is responsible for the implementation of policy developed by the school council. The Principal reports and makes recommendations to the school council for the consideration of the council, ensuring the school is managed in conformity to the policies of the Lutheran Church of Australia, the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District, and the local school council.

Few official policy statements have been developed either at national or state level. The major policy statements are: *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a), and *The teacher in the Lutheran school* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b) which are Appendices 3 and 4 respectively. These statements provide the structure for the following discussion of Queensland Lutheran schools.

#### **2.4.2 An Agency of the Church**

An important element in this discussion of Lutheran schools is that the schools are *agencies* of the church. As such, they exist to fulfil the mission of the church within the educational context in which they operate whether this be early childhood, primary or secondary. Section 2.2.4, the Christocentric Principle clearly elaborated that “the chief aim of the church is to proclaim the gospel of God’s salvation in Jesus Christ” (Braaten, 1983, p.63).

The document *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a) is grounded in this understanding. Thus, Section 1 asserts that:

- 1.2 One such agency is the Lutheran school. The Lutheran Church of Australia, through its congregations and districts, owns and operates kindergartens, primary schools, and secondary schools in order to make available to its members and to

others in the community a formal education in which the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities in the school. Thus through its schools the church deliberately and intentionally bears Christian witness to students, parents, teachers, friends, and all who make up the world of the school. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a)

These two points highlight an area which has caused much discussion within both the church and its schools. That is, whether the schools role is focussed upon children of the church, that is *in nurture*, or children of the community, that is *in mission*. This issue is addressed in the following two subsections.

As an agency of the Church, the schools are grounded in the theological understandings of the church. This is made explicit to parental enquiries about the schools through a pamphlet entitled *Lutheran Schools: Growing for the future*. This pamphlet states in part:

We accept the Bible as the supreme authority for everything we do in our schools. While we value human knowledge and discovery, we recognise their limitations. God's word is at the centre of the Lutheran school because, as St John wrote, we believe that 'eternal life means knowing . . . the only true God, and knowing Jesus Christ, whom (God) sent' (John 17:3). We believe the Bible's good news that our worth and acceptance by God does not depend on our own performance or achievements. God accepts and values us only because he is merciful, as he has shown through his Son Jesus Christ. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1994)

Various principles of Lutheran theology are evident in this assertion: the canonical principle, the confessional principle, the Christocentric principle, and aspects of the law/gospel principle. Other principles (the sacramental principle, the two kingdoms principle) are evident within other sections of this pamphlet as well as in the statement *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a). Thus, as an agency of the church the schools are grounded in the principles of Lutheran Theology. However in contemporary Queensland Lutheran schools, the school's role as an agency of the church exhibits the tension referred to in section 2.3.1: the tension between being either in nurture or in mission. This is a basic understanding which may impact on the culture on the schools in this study.

## **In nurture**

Historically it is evident that Lutheran schools were established for the nurture of children of the church (Section 2.3.1). Janetzki (1985) lists three aims for Lutheran schools: to help Christian parents to provide a Christian education for their children, to help the church in nurturing its children received in baptism, and to help in recruiting and providing the initial preparation of church workers. These aims pre-suppose that the children of the school have a Christian background as members of the Christian church. These were the sole aims for those schools established in Lutheran strongholds (Hauser, 1990). These aims, still valid today, are reflected in the following statement:

We believe that in baptism God gives forgiveness of sins and new life as his children. In Lutheran schools we aim to help children grow in their life as God's children. This includes:

- constantly reminding and assuring students of God's undeserved and unconditional love;
- giving students the encouragement and support of fellow Christians;
- giving students the opportunity to hear God's word as the means by which the Holy Spirit can create and strengthen Christian faith;
- providing students with opportunities to learn more and more how to:
  - understand themselves as creatures of God in God's creation;
  - serve God and other people with the abilities God has given them;
  - witness to others that Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour;
  - give glory to God in everything. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1994, p. 2)

## **In mission**

While the statement *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* mentions the schools as agencies of mission, this is as an adjunct to the schools operating as agencies for Christian nurture. From 1971, schools in Queensland were established primarily for mission purposes (Hauser, 1990). The issue of mission opportunity was raised by Albinger (1990), the Director for Queensland Lutheran schools, in a paper which was widely circulated within the church and schools. This paper, in reviewing the mission thrust of the church including the role of schools in mission, suggested that the Lutheran Church of Australia needed to continue to explore ways in which the mission of the church through its schools might improve.

Stolz (1995) proposed the notion of the school church in apposition to the traditional church school. This concept involved the establishment of schools in areas without any strong Lutheran presence. The school is used to familiarise the community with Lutheran school culture and the church, and to establish a worshipping community of students, parents and friends within the school. Thus the school would be used as an agency of the church in bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the community. This emphasis is an important thrust for the schools of the church:

We believe that through the teaching of God's word, the Holy Spirit is at work to lead children to know and trust in God as their loving Father and Jesus as their only Saviour. As students hear and learn God's word, it is possible for Christian faith to grow stronger. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1994, p. 2)

That is, Lutheran schools are simultaneously in nurture and in mission. It also indicates that, strictly speaking, the work of Lutheran education is God's activity - the activity of the Holy Spirit, which produces the fruit of the spirit characterising new life. As indicated in Section 2.2.5, the Holy Spirit works through the means of grace: the teaching and preaching of the Word of God and the administration of the sacraments. Thus God's Word as Law and Gospel is taught within the school in chapel services, in devotional activities within the school, and in Christian Studies lessons. The use of the sacraments within the schools is one which is currently being debated within Lutheran schools.

However this does not mean that people who work in the school are unimportant elements in this process. Teachers and other staff within Lutheran schools “strive to be the best human instruments they can possibly be ‘in the Lord’, and employ the best human insights possible” (Janetzki, 1985, p.13) in their areas of activity (teaching and learning, educational administration, management etc).

Queensland Lutheran schools as agencies of the church in both nurture and mission also exhibit an ecumenical characteristic. All students irrespective of race and creed may be accepted in Lutheran schools according to the enrolment policy model developed by the BLS (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b). In Queensland this has resulted in schools being composed of Lutherans, Christians of other denominations, and non-Christians. In accordance with the Lutheran Confessions this means that the schools of the church will teach God’s Word to allow the Holy Spirit to promote faith and community within the school.

This section presents a number of factors which may have implications for this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. First, as the schools are agencies of the church, the theological principles presented in Section 2.2 should be evident in the life of the school. Thus Christ should be central to the activities of the school community as it operates in nurture and mission. Second, while not explicitly stated, it is assumed that teachers will accept the school’s role as an agency of the church. Given that Queensland Lutheran schools include staff who do not have a Lutheran background, it is important to determine any differences in cultural understandings of these teachers. Third, as Queensland Lutheran schools are open to students from any religious background, an important outcome of this research may be increased understanding of different cultural perspectives resulting from different proportions of Lutheran students within the schools.

### **2.4.3 Service**

A special relationship between Lutheran schools and students, parents, the church, the community, and the government is characterised by service. According to the Lutheran Church of Australia,

- 1.3 Specifically through its schools the Lutheran Church of Australia offers a program of Christian education which
- serves students, parents, the church, the community, and the government, by providing a quality education for the whole person.

And

- 2.1 The Lutheran school is committed to serving its students by providing a quality program of education which meets the requirements of the state, responds to the needs of its students and develops their God-given abilities as fully as possible within the resource limits of the community. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a, p. 1)

Service within the Lutheran school is viewed as a natural outcome of the Christian life. As such service is not seen to be the exclusive domain of Lutheran staff, but also should be an element of the student's life.

We believe that as students grow in Christian faith, they will also grow in Christian living. Service is one of the most important aspects of Christian living. We aim to help young people grow in unselfishly serving God and other people. This service can never be perfect in this world, but it covers every dimension of life:

- all activities: study, work, leisure, recreation, entertainment, etc
- all relationships to God, to other people, to the church, to self
- all ambitions, values and attitudes. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1994, p. 2)

The sense of service of Lutheran teachers comes from their calling to be a teacher as a call from God (Janetzki, 1985). This call in vocation is a call to forgiveness and fellowship in the church, and as a call to service as expressed in 1 Peter 2:9.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (New International Version)

Christian service is indicated by three Greek words found in the New Testament: *doulos*, *leitourgos*, and *diakonas* (Green, M. cited in Janetzki, 1985). First, *doulos* speaks of devotion, of being a bondservant. Second, *leitourgos* speaks of worship, "the Christian

service of adoration of praise, of holding Christ as worth the uttermost, motivated by his divine liturgy or service to us” (Janetzki, 1985, p. 139). This worship is expressed by the Christian giving themselves as a sacrifice to God. Third, *diakonos* expresses “the giving of oneself into the service of others” (Janetzki, 1985, p. 139) with no thought of reward. The calling of God for the teacher into the Christian life is expressed through service to God, by serving the parents, students and the school as an act of dedication to God.

The service relationship is one which has implications for this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. This section indicates that teachers and senior staff within Queensland Lutheran schools should serve in a Lutheran school in response to a call from God, to serve him in their vocation as an educator. This should be expressed both through worship, and their thoughts and actions to others.

#### **2.4.4 Quality Program**

The quality of the educational program is an important element of the education of Queensland Lutheran schools as highlighted in the following statement:

- 1.3 Specifically through its schools the Lutheran Church of Australia offers a program of Christian education which
  - serves students, parents, the church, the community, and the government, by providing a quality education for the whole person;
  - strives for excellence in the development and creative use by all students of their God-given gifts.

And

- 2.1 The Lutheran school is committed to serving its students by providing a quality program of education which meets the requirements of the state, responds to the needs of its students and develops their God-given abilities as fully as possible within the resource limits of the community. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a, pp. 1, 2)

The church has addressed the notion of quality education in the statement *Policy on Christian Education* adopted in 1972. In part this policy states:

The objectives of such schools [Lutheran pre-schools, primary and secondary schools], in so far as they relate to the individual, must always include all dimensions of education necessary for the growth of the whole person, education for a rich and meaningful life in society through the proper development of natural endowments and the transmission of all that is best in our culture, and nurture through the Means of Grace. No dimension of education should be lacking lest the school forfeit the right to exist either as a school or as Lutheran. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1972)

This challenges schools to on the one hand draw on the best of scholarship and research in regards to the content and processes of education, while on the other, relying on, being guided by, and transmitting the truths contained in Holy Scripture (Janetzki, 1985). This is an ongoing task which is the responsibility of all Lutheran schools. This section indicates that the quality of the educational program is an important cultural characteristic within the rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools.

#### **2.4.5 Worship**

The statement *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a) includes a section entitled *The Lutheran School and worship*.

3.1 The Lutheran Church of Australia confesses that worship of God is central to the life of the people of God in mission to the world of the school. Within the school such worship may be:

- public worship of the faithful, involving the ministry of word and sacraments. All who enter the world of the school are invited to this worship, which is held at a time appropriate to each worshipping community;
- school or class devotional exercises which are part of the regular program of the whole school and which in different ways involve all students and staff.



- 3.2 The Lutheran Church of Australia urges and encourages schools and local congregations to work together in worship and mission in the world of the school.
- In the context of the school in mission the school pastor serves as worship leader. He oversees and encourages staff, students, and others as they serve as leaders in class and school devotions. He feeds and equips the people of God for service and leads them in mission.
  - Christian principals, teachers, and other staff are key persons in ministry and mission to the world of the school. They participate in and, as appropriate, lead the exercises, model the Christian lifestyle, and uphold Christian values.
  - The school worshipping community works in mission together with surrounding congregations. It has a formal link with the Lutheran Church of Australia, either as a distinct worshipping group or as an extension of a local congregation. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a, p. 2)

This statement clearly places worship at the centre of the Lutheran school, differentiating between two forms of worship: the public worship of the faithful, and devotional exercises which are part of the school (and each class) program. Responsibility for the worship program rests initially with the school pastor, with devotional exercises being led by Principals and teachers as appropriate.

For the Lutheran school, worship has to be - and is - central to all that we do. It is central in our individual lives. As children of God we are the temples of the Holy Spirit, the very dwelling place of the risen Lord. It is also central in our corporate life as the Body of Christ, the church, the community of believers gathered around the Word of God in this place. (Cooper, 1995, p. 65)

The centrality of worship in the life of the individual Christian and in the life of the Lutheran school community has been a fundamental aspect of Lutheran schools (Bartsch, 1993). Within worship, God's Holy Spirit works through the spoken Word and through the liturgy, to create and nourish faith in the individual, and to unite and build up the school community as members of God's family. During worship, whether as a Chapel service, devotional exercise, or a Sunday service of the Lutheran congregation, God is

present and His Spirit actively encourages celebration of God's actions for us, both private and public, and the recognition that people belong not only to one another, but to the community of saints in heaven and earth (Cooper, 1995). Worship is communal having an emphasis on the unity of community around God's Word (Simpfendorfer, 1993).

Worship is manifested within Lutheran schools in various ways. Corporate worship occurs in the form of whole school chapel services. In smaller primary schools these occur weekly while in larger schools, particularly secondary schools, whole school worship may be restricted to once or twice a term. Both student and staff attendance are usually mandatory at whole school worship. In larger schools, sections of the school would have a weekly chapel worship. This could be in the form of a section of a primary school (e.g. junior primary), or a year level in a large secondary school. Worship, in the form of devotions, also occurs in Queensland Lutheran schools on a regular basis. Devotions begin the day in Queensland Lutheran schools in year level classes in the primary setting, or home groups (pastoral care groups) in secondary settings, being conducted under the direction of the class teacher or home group teacher. Morning devotions for staff are a common practice within Queensland Lutheran primary schools. These devotions, which take between five and ten minutes, are usually compulsory for teaching staff and are led by the staff in turn. Within secondary schools, devotions are also held but these are usually voluntary. Primary schools also have a regular Bible study led by the pastor, a feature generally not practised in secondary schools. Meetings conducted within Queensland Lutheran schools, including school council meetings, and Parents and Friends Association meetings, generally begin with a devotion or prayer.

This rhetoric concerning worship has important implications for this study of culture within Queensland Lutheran schools. First, worship should be evident as an important activity within the school. Second, worship, as a means of hearing God's Word, should be an activity which has a defining effect on Queensland Lutheran schools. Third, it will be important to note whether the importance attached to worship is consistent across all levels of schooling, and whether staff from religious backgrounds apart from Lutheranism attach the same importance to worship.

## 2.4.6 Relationships

### Parents

Janetzki (1985) draws on the work of Luther to develop two points relevant to the relationship between Lutheran schools and parents.

1. The initiative and responsibility to care for children is with the parents, who delegate certain tasks to others, including teachers.
2. The teacher's work is a vicarious service for parents, compelled by necessity.  
(Janetzki, 1985, p. 126)

This quotation indicates the point of departure in considering the relationship between the Lutheran school and parents. Firstly, the Lutheran school considers that the parent has the ultimate and prime responsibility for the upbringing and education of their children. Secondly, as parents are unable to fulfil the role of formal education this is delegated to the school which performs this role as a vicarious service for the parents.

The teacher within the Lutheran school is considered to hold an auxiliary office within the Lutheran Church of Australia: the office of teacher. Within this office there is "a never-ending chain of opportunities to show kindness, patience, concern, some evidence of love" (Janetzki, 1985, p. 141). These opportunities exist with pupils, staff members, the community and with parents.

The statement *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* devotes one section specifically to the relationship between the schools and parents.

The Lutheran Church of Australia acknowledges that parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. As a church through its schools, it therefore seeks to support parents in the fulfillment of this responsibility to their children. Furthermore, the church, through its schools, offers to all parents the option of a Christian education for their children. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a, p. 4)

This relationship is more explicitly stated in the pamphlet, *Lutheran Schools: Growing for the future*.

We believe that parents have the prime responsibility for the education of their children. The Lutheran Church provides schools as a means of assisting parents in their God-given responsibilities. In particular, our schools offer help to parents in the spiritual development of their children.

It is vital that school and home work together and go in the same direction, with the same aims and values. So parents who make the free choice to send their children to a Lutheran school need to understand, and commit themselves to support, the aims and purposes of the school. To this end parents are invited to participate in the work of the school in a variety of ways.

Staff and everyone else involved in operating Lutheran schools accept that they are accountable to parents for the educational progress and development of pupils. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1994, pp. 3,4)

## **Government**

Section 2.4.1 stated that Lutheran schools exist as agencies of the church to fulfil a churchly function. However, the schools are also unashamedly schools which provide a quality education to prepare students for life in Australian society. Thus the schools operate in both the spiritual and secular kingdoms (Janetzki, 1985) (Section 2.2.7). The church has carefully considered its relationship with the government.

- 7.1 The Lutheran Church of Australia acknowledges that the State has accepted the responsibility for providing schooling for all its citizens. This education is compulsory, free, and secular in its orientation.
- 7.2 The Lutheran Church of Australia further acknowledges that the government permits non-government authorities, such as the churches, to operate schools, provided that they meet certain government determined criteria, such as curriculum, and health and safety requirements.

- 7.3 The Lutheran Church of Australia will continue to own and operate its schools in accordance with government requirements, provided that meeting these requirements does not bring the church into conflict with the Word of God or the Confessions of the church.
- 7.4 The Lutheran Church of Australia will continue to accept financial assistance from the government under conditions determined by the government from time to time, provided that the confessional position of the church is in no way or at any time compromised. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a, p. 3)

The Lutheran school sets out to perform those secular functions necessary for it to function as a school within Australian society. Thus the Lutheran school, along with other schools, will seek to improve the world in terms of freedom, justice and equality and will prepare its students to live within Australian society. It will also, along with other schools in Australia, operate under the necessary guidelines, rules and accountability provisions so long as these do not restrict the school also operating within the spiritual kingdom and fulfilling its mission to the church (Section 2.2.7). The Lutheran school when dealing with secular authorities operates within the secular kingdom and realm and is not to confuse this with its mission within the spiritual realm (Janetzki, 1985).

These relationships are important to an understanding of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. First, the relationship with parents is premised on a shared responsibility and therefore an openness and willingness towards the parents on behalf of the school. Second, relationships to governments explicate the school's role in educating students in today's society on behalf of the government, but with a Christian focus. This integration of the spiritual function of the church with the secular function required by government suggests a distinctive culture as the school operates within both spheres.

#### **2.4.7 Teachers and Students in Lutheran schools**

The composition of Queensland Lutheran schools in regard to the proportion of both Lutheran teachers and students has been a matter of concern in recent times. The *Policy on Christian Education* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1972) stated that while provision may be allowed for enrolling non-Lutheran students and employing non-Lutheran

teachers, “the Lutheran and Christian character of a school cannot be preserved where the proportion of non-Lutherans in both categories or in either category may become too large. What the proper proportion is, cannot be fixed mathematically but the majority in any case should be Lutheran, and the governing authority (headmaster (sic), school) must naturally be Lutheran also” (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1972, p. 2).

The matter of non-Lutheran students and staff was also considered in the *Statement of facts concerning the policies and practices of Lutheran schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1978) which was prepared in connection with the High Court challenge to State Aid to independent schools. Under the heading of staffing this statements says:

Because the attitude to and understanding of the Christian faith is influenced not only by what happens in religious exercises and the formal religious class, but by all that happens in the life of the school, as far as possible teachers are appointed who are practising adherents of the Lutheran Church. However, as competency in the required area of teaching is always an essential criterion of selection, non-Lutheran teachers are also appointed.

Current statistics on the ratio of Lutheran to non-Lutheran teachers are the following: 39% of teachers in secondary schools and 5% in primary schools are non-Lutheran.

Lutheran schools are working towards the ideal of having more and more teachers complete a course in Christian education either through a one-year post-graduate course at Lutheran Teachers College or through in-service studies.

Currently 12% of secondary teachers and 41% of primary teachers have completed such a course. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1978, p. 4)

The same statement elaborated general enrolment principles and criteria which extended a first preference to children from a Lutheran home, and second preference to subsequent members of any family, whether Lutheran or not, from which a child is enrolled. Enrolment is accepted on the proviso that parents and students conform to the religious policies and practices of the school. At the time this statement was prepared (1978) the percentage of Lutheran to non-Lutheran students was as follows: primary schools -

Lutheran 63.66%, non-Lutheran 36.34%, and in secondary - Lutheran 51.89% and non-Lutheran 48.11%.

The key paragraphs in the statement *The teacher in the Lutheran school* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1992) state:

The Lutheran school is an agency of the Lutheran Church of Australia through which the Church seeks to carry out its ministry and mission to the people of Australia.

The specific ministry and mission of the Lutheran school is to provide quality formal education in which the Word of God informs all learning, teaching and activities and where forgiveness and grace govern the relationships of the members of the school community.

In order to fulfil this ministry and mission the teacher in the Lutheran school, as well as being a qualified and competent educator, will be one who is committed to the Christian faith as confessed by the Lutheran Church, is willing to identify with, uphold and promote the Lutheran ethos of the school and will exemplify and model the Christian life-style in and beyond the school. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1992, p. 1)

This statement clearly enunciates the position of the Lutheran Church of Australia in regard to the teachers in its schools. Teachers are employed by the Lutheran Church of Australia through its schools to fulfil the work of the church in providing quality, formal education which is informed by the beliefs of the church. In particular staff are to uphold and promote the Lutheran ethos of the school to exemplify the ministry of the schools. In this context ethos refers to the “pervading spirit” (Flynn, 1993, p. 6) of the school derived from the values and beliefs of the school (Ott, 1989). Staff are called by God to serve Him as teachers (Section 2.4.2). Thus teaching becomes their vocation (Section 2.2.7) through which they serve God in their world of work. They also serve the church through this work.

Staffing policy has been developed by the Board for Lutheran Schools (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b) in response to this belief of the church. This policy was developed to overcome differences in staffing between primary and secondary schools. Previously

teachers and senior staff in parish based Lutheran primary schools were called to their positions by the owner congregation, while teachers and principals in secondary schools were appointed by the school, usually the Head. This led to quite different practices between the two levels of education which became untenable with the introduction of P-12 schools. The staffing policies (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b) brings a number of policies together which reflected the previous call system.

The policy states in part:

The Board is now attempting to provide a coherent and consistent approach to staffing in the LCA at all levels of education. Thus it is hoped to promote and foster a sense of life-long calling to teaching in the schools of the LCA.

In approving and accrediting staff for service in its schools the Church hopes to affirm teachers in their calling, to promote Lutheran schools as centres of quality learning and to ensure that its staff understand the essential ethos of Lutheran schools. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b, p. 1)

Staffing is managed by the school at the local level with staff being appointed to schools. The schools seek staff who are active members of the church with preference being given to “competent educators who are active communicant Lutherans”. Beyond this, preference is given to “people who are active Christians from other denominations who are willing to uphold the Lutheran teaching of the school” (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b, p. 2).

Within the staffing policy is a statement concerning theological training for educators in Lutheran schools. All educators in Lutheran schools are required to complete a basic theological course, which is currently the *Theological Orientation Program for Staff*. Teachers who teach Christian Studies (the majority of primary teachers) are to complete the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education, while those who aspire to lead a school must complete the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education and are recommended to complete a Masters degree in Educational Administration from a Lutheran tertiary institution. This policy is designed to ensure that educators have “sufficient theological understanding to uphold and promote the Lutheran character of the school” (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b).



A number of implications for this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools arise from this discussion of teachers in Lutheran schools. First, the role of the teacher in ministry is one which could be problematic. While primary staff are largely Lutheran, secondary staff come from a number of backgrounds which may bring different understandings into the school. Further the difference in emphasis in the roles of secondary and primary teachers may contribute different understandings and practices to ministry within the schools. Second, the effectiveness of any theological professional development is an important research direction of this study.

## **2.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This first purpose of this chapter was to describe the theological understandings of the Lutheran Church of Australia and hence of the schools. These understandings were expressed through seven theological principles: the canonical principle, confessional principle, ecumenical principle, Christocentric principle, sacramental principle, Law/Gospel principle, and two kingdoms principle. Central to an understanding of Lutheran theology is the doctrine of justification through faith alone apart from works. As agencies of the church, Queensland Lutheran schools are to develop an educational philosophy based on these principle.

The second purpose of this chapter was to review the history of Queensland Lutheran schools. This history can be traced to earliest settlement of Germans in South Australia. However patterns of development were different in Queensland to those of South Australia. This difference led eventually to two models of Lutheran schools. The first model, the South Australian or nurture model, was premised on providing a Christian education for nurture of Lutherans. The second model developed in Queensland was the outreach model, where schools were established in non-Lutheran areas and the school was utilised as a method of making contact with non-Christians and fringe members, and evangelising them into the school. Prior to 1970 three Lutheran schools were operating in Queensland. Since that time the Lutheran church has experienced a boom in Queensland with 24 further schools being established.

The third purpose of this chapter was to analyse the rhetoric of the contemporary Queensland Lutheran school. These schools are to operate under a policy developed by the church: *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a). This policy clearly describes Lutheran schools as agencies of the church which exist to offer a Christ-centred education to all members of the community who desire such an education. These schools should operate both in nurture and in mission as they seek to serve the students and families of the schools. The program offered by the schools is to fulfil the requirements of the church and the government in the provision of a quality education. A central activity of the school is to be worship as it seeks to live out its Christian focus within the world. As this focus depends on the disposition of individual teachers, Queensland Lutheran schools should seek to staff their schools with “competent educators who are active communicant Lutherans” (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b, p. 2). Where this is not possible, preference is to be given to teachers willing to uphold the ethos of Lutheran schools from other Christian backgrounds. The policy of the church is that all teachers within Queensland Lutheran schools are to undertake theological professional development to ensure their suitability to teach in its schools. These themes, which are in effect the rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools, provide the basis for comparison and discussion of results in Chapter 8.

Whereas this chapter has contextualised the study in presenting theological, historical, and contemporary understandings of Queensland Lutheran schools, the next chapter reviews literature which pertains to the purpose of the study. Thus Chapter 3 presents literature to conceptualise a theoretical framework for the study. Culture research is also presented in order to further understand issues related to the research questions.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter reports the review of the literature which served three purposes in this exploratory study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. The first purpose of the literature review was to place this research within a conceptual framework by critiquing three dominant perspectives of culture: the holistic perspective, the adaptational perspective, and the ideational perspective (Section 3.2). Secondly, this literature review further critiqued the ideational perspective by considering two theoretical constructs within this perspective: Schein's (1981, 1985, 1992) typology of culture (Section 3.3.1) and Sackmann's (1991, 1992) theory of different kinds of cultural knowledge (Section 3.3.2). The differing concepts of subcultures and cultural groupings were also reviewed in Section 3.3.3. Section 3.4 summarises this aspect of the literature review by proposing Sackmann's (1985, 1991) theory of different kinds of knowledge as the conceptual framework for this study, together with a summation of the rationale for this decision. The third purpose of the literature review was to critique literature which related to Research Questions 1 and 4a to 4f (Section 3.5). Literature, particularly research on school culture pertaining to dimensions of culture and the independent variables referred to in the research questions, (viz. school type, school size, denominational background of teachers, proportion of Lutheran teachers and students in a school, different stakeholder positions, and theological professional development) was reviewed. The structure of this section was guided by the research questions. This section provided the basis for discussion of research results presented in Chapter 8. The chapter is summarised in Section 3.6. The organisation of the literature review is presented in Figure 3.1.

#### **3.2 THE CULTURE CONCEPT AND ITS APPLICATION WITHIN ORGANISATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL LITERATURE**

Conceptions of culture in the organisational and school literatures have been drawn selectively from various anthropological and sociological sources, richly adding to the culture concept in school settings. However, agreement on the nature of the culture concept does not exist within anthropology (Keesing, 1973; Ortner, 1984; Sackmann 1991; Smircich, 1983) resulting in different approaches being evident within the organisational and school literature. The various anthropological approaches which have influenced conceptions of culture can be categorised as belonging to three main schools of thought: the holistic perspective, the adaptational perspective, and the ideational perspective (Keesing, 1973; Sackmann, 1991; Smircich, 1983).

### **3.2 The culture concept and its application within organisational and educational literature**

- 3.2.1 The holistic perspective
- 3.2.2 The adaptational perspective
- 3.2.3 The ideational perspective

### **3.3 The ideational perspective in depth**

- 3.3.1 Schein's typology of organisational culture
- 3.3.2 Sackmann's theory of different kinds of cultural knowledge
- 3.3.3 Subcultures or cultural groupings

### **3.4 Conceptual framework for the study**

### **3.5 Educational research in the culture perspective**

- 3.5.1 Dimensions of culture
- 3.5.2 School culture and school type
- 3.5.3 School culture and school size
- 3.5.4 Denominational background of staff and students
- 3.5.5 Position
- 3.5.6 Theological professional development

### **3.6 Chapter summary**

*Figure 3.1 Organisation of the Literature Review*

#### **3.2.1 The Holistic Perspective**

The *holistic perspective* of culture can be traced to the nineteenth century anthropologist Tylor (1871) who defined culture as that "complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and other capabilities acquired by man (sic) as a member of society" (p. 1). This view has been developed further by anthropologists who integrate cognitive, emotive, behavioural, and artifactual aspects of culture into one unified whole (Benedict, 1934; Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1952). In this perspective, culture is defined as:

patterned ways of thinking, feeling, and reacting that are acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols. They constitute the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts. Culture has a core that consists of historically derived and selected ideas and their attached values. The resulting cultural system is, on the one hand, to be considered a product of action, and on the other, conditioning elements of future action. (Sackmann, 1991, p. 18)

This holistic perspective of culture is widely accepted in the organisational literature and it represents an implicit reference point in thinking, writing, or talking about the culture construct in organisations (Sackmann, 1991). A typical definition of corporate culture from this perspective is:

a general constellation of beliefs, mores, customs, value systems, behavioural norms, and ways of doing business that are unique to each corporation, that set a pattern for corporate activities and actions, and that describe the implicit and emergent patterns of behaviour and emotions characterising life in the organisation. (Tunstall, 1983, p. 5)

The holistic perspective captures well the multifaceted nature of culture. Research within this perspective requires an ethnography involving various sources of data and a multi-focus on manifestations of culture (Sackmann, 1991).

This perspective has been evident in the writing of educational scholarship for over half a century. For instance, Waller (1932) writes:

Teachers have always known that it was not necessary for the students of strange customs to cross the seas to find material. Folklore and myth, tradition, taboo, magic rites, ceremonials of all sorts, collective representations, participation mystique all abound in the front yard, and occasionally they creep upstairs and are incorporated into the more formal portions of school life. (Waller, 1932, p. 103)

The holistic understanding is also evident in the writing of Sarason (1971):

The problem [of change inheres] in the fact that history and tradition have given rise to roles and relationships, to interlocking ideas, practices, values, and expectations that are "givens" not requiring thought or deliberation. These "givens" (like other categories of thought) are far less the products of characteristics of individuals than they are of what we call the culture and its traditions. (Sarason, 1971, pp. 227-228)

Although the holistic perspective provides a comprehensive view of culture, it was not recommended for this study. A holistic perspective invites a research design using an ethnography which by definition involves detailed and extensive investigation within the

organisation. The resources required to adopt this approach are not appropriate for the scope of this study, since the study is being undertaken across a school system - over 22 schools. To undertake this research, within the constraints of the study, required an alternative approach.

To overcome the difficulty of studying such a multifaceted concept as culture, both anthropological and educational researchers and theorists have concentrated on various aspects of culture which are argued to be the essential nature of culture. These perspectives are contained within two alternate streams of literature: the adaptational perspective and the ideational perspective, which are discussed in turn in the next two sections to determine their suitability for this study.

### **3.2.2 The Adaptational Perspective**

In contrast to the holistic perspective which integrates cognitive, emotive, behavioural, and artifactual aspects of culture into one whole, the adaptational perspective focuses on expressions of culture which include verbal and physical behaviours or practices, artifacts, and their underlying meanings. This perspective emphasises cultural manifestations that are tangible - whether behavioural, artifactual, or symbolic (Bolman & Deal, 1984). Consequently *culture* is defined as manifestations of behavioural norms (Smircich, 1983a) or as "the way we do things around here" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p. 4). Within this perspective, culture is "something that an organisation has" (Smircich, 1983). Culture is treated as another organisational variable that may be controlled (Sackmann, 1991).

Anthropologists who promote a symbolic manifestation consider culture a system of shared symbols and meanings, which some managerial writers refer to as "organisational symbolism" (Eoyang, 1983; Morgan, Frost, & Pondy, 1983; Wilkins & Ouchi, 1983). Because the major focus of research is the study of artifacts as expressions of culture, this stream of literature is subsumed under the manifestation-oriented perspective (Pettigrew, 1979). Consequently culture is conceived as predominantly the product of symbolic operations in which the manipulation of symbols and their attributed and shared meanings

are prominent, rather than social interactions (Deal, 1993a, 1993b; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Deal & Peterson, 1993; Martin & Siehl, 1983).

Of major interest are collective activities such as rites, rituals, and ceremonies (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Ott, 1989), as well as collective verbal behaviours such as language in general (Martin & Powers, 1983) and, more specifically, speeches and jargon (Ott, 1989), stories (Martin & Siehl, 1983; Wilkins, 1983), legends (Ott, 1989), or myths (Broms & Gahmberg, 1983; Koprowski, 1983; Pondy, 1983; Lesko, 1988). Material artifacts are taken as the tangible products of culture. These artifacts generate inferences about underlying meanings in their context when compared with meanings attributed to the same artifacts in other comparable settings (Barley, 1983; Sackmann, 1991; Smircich, 1983a).

The process of deciphering cultural manifestations is, however, difficult and involves some guesswork (Schein, 1985). Because researchers approach a study site with their own categories for perception, thought, and interpretation, errors and systematic biases are likely to occur. To avoid these potential problems and errors and to honour cultural aspects in a given context, the process of interpreting these context-specific meanings is based on the insiders' logic, which they use to make sense out of their organisational reality. This implies unravelling a setting's own principles from an insider view rather than from an outsider perspective (Elliot, 1988).

A conceptual framework for studying school culture from the adaptational perspective has been developed by Millikan (1987). Drawing from the anthropological and sociological literature, Millikan defined culture as:

that system of shared meanings, cognitions, symbols and experiences which are expressed in the behaviours and practices of the members of an affiliated group, and which give them both social definition and a sense of association. Culture is that collectivity of images which serve both physiological and psychological needs through interpersonal interaction and social support. It is expressed through rituals, ceremonies, imagery and symbols, all of which serve to reinforce and maintain each other. Culture is



the unique and distinct way of life which gives meaning and order to the particular grouping or community. (Millikan, 1987, p. 42)

Millikan has applied the concept of culture to schools to develop a conceptual framework to investigate school culture (Table 3.1). This framework has two major elements: the intangible foundations, and the tangible expressions and symbolism. According to Millikan, these two elements should have a close association, although at times the intangible foundations perform a normative role. The expressive tangible foundations are "a collective of inter-related means of developing, maintaining and reinforcing the actual character of school-culture" (Millikan, 1987, p.45). Three groups of symbolic or expressive manifestations are proposed: conceptualised/ verbalised/ written expressions; visual/ material expressions and symbolism; and enacted/ behavioural expressions (Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989; Livermore, 1990; Millikan, 1987).

*Table 3.1*

A conceptual framework for the consideration of school culture

Intangible Foundations	Tangible Expressions and Symbolism		
	Conceptualised/ Verbalised/ Written Expressions	Visual/ Material Expressions and Symbolism	Enacted/ Behavioural Expressions
Values Philosophy Ideology	Aims & objectives Curriculum Language Metaphors Myths & Fables Sagas & Legends Organisational structures Traditions	Crests Mottos Icons Uniforms Resources Facilities & Equipment Artifacts & Memorabilia	Rituals Ceremonies Teaching & Learning Assessment & Evaluation Operational Procedures Rules & Regulations Rewards & Sanctions Psychological & Social Support Structures Parental & Community Interaction Patterns

Adapted from Millikan, 1987, p. 41.

This conceptual framework formed the basis of Flynn's (1993) research which investigated cultural elements of some Catholic schools in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. This study used a cultural paradigm to explore a small number of cultural elements related to the integration of faith within the culture and life of Catholic secondary school students. Flynn (1993) expresses culture as follows:

The culture of a Catholic School expresses the core beliefs, values, traditions, symbols, and patterns of behaviour which provide meaning to the school community and which help to shape the lives of students, teachers and parents. In short, culture is the way we do things around here. (Flynn, 1993, p. 39)

The study of the culture of Catholic schools was based on four dimensions which were derived *a priori* from Millikan's (1987) conception of culture. The four dimensions were:

- The Core Beliefs and values of Catholic Schools: their Creation Story or Soul
- Expressive Symbols of Catholic Schools: their Models
- Processes and Traditions of Catholic Schools: their Stories and Myths
- Outcomes and Patterns of Relationships of Catholic Schools: their Rituals and Way of Life. (Flynn, 1993, p. 40)

This study by Flynn, an extension of research conducted earlier (1975, 1985), formed part of a longitudinal study of Catholic schools in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. Data were collected in all studies using purposefully designed questionnaires. For these data to be pertinent to a longitudinal study required the use of considerable overlap of instruments across the three studies within the dimensions which were evident in previous studies. The richness of these data for a longitudinal study meant however, that the study, rather than examining the culture of Catholic schools as such, instead investigated the influence of the culture on students, teachers and parents. Furthermore, the first dimension of culture, the core beliefs and values of Catholic schools: their creation story or soul, was not investigated but instead formed a theoretical and theological basis for the other dimensions. However the research by Flynn considered two aspects relevant for this study: community and issues in relation to teachers.

While the adaptational perspective has been the basis for significant research, it is not considered appropriate for this study for the following reasons. Firstly, this study is concerned with identifying cultural dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools and then surveying participants' understandings of these dimensions. While these dimensions are expressed through symbols, for these understandings to be explicated requires extensive, time consuming research to be undertaken. Secondly, this current study is concerned with people's understandings, that is their perceptions. These

perceptions are the central focus of this study, rather than the manifestations of these perceptions. This is the focus of the ideational perspective examined in the next section.

### 3.2.3 The Ideational Perspective

The holistic perspective of culture integrates the cognitive, emotive, behavioural, and artifactual aspects of culture into one unified whole. As with the adaptational perspective, which focuses on a particular aspect of culture - the behavioural and artifactual - the ideational or cognitive perspective focuses a particular aspect of culture as the core: the cognitive and emotive aspects of culture. These cognitive aspects of culture are the ideas, concepts, blueprints, beliefs, values, or norms which are commonly shared within the organisation. In anthropology and sociology these cognitive aspects of culture have also been described as *organised knowledge*: the form of things that people have in their minds; their models for perceiving, integrating, and interpreting them; the ideas or theories that they use collectively to make sense of their social or physical reality. Keesing (1973) describes this perspective of culture as the conceptual designs, or the shared system of meaning that underlie the way people live. From this perspective, *culture* refers to what humans learn, what they have in their mind, and not what they do or make. This accumulated knowledge that is held collectively provides standards for deciding what is, for deciding what to do, and for deciding how to do things (Keesing, 1973). This is in contrast to the adaptational perspective which focuses on behaviours and artifacts as expressions of the shared culture. The holistic view integrates these two approaches into one unified approach.

In the managerial literature, the ideational perspective of culture is presented with various degrees of specificity. Some authors refer to a set of shared understandings or meanings, a system of publicly and collectively accepted meanings of a group, or a set of important understandings shared by a community. Others define culture as a set of shared values (Peters & Waterman, 1982), shared norms and expectations (Kilmann & Saxton, 1983), beliefs and expectations shared by most members of an organisation's culture (Sapienza, 1985), or assumptions commonly held by members of a group (Schein, 1985).

Despite these wide and varying range of concepts, there are some underlying commonalities within the ideational perspective. Culture in organisations is considered a social construction of rules that guide perceptions and thinking. It offers a conceptual map that provides criteria for deciding what is, what to do, and how to go about it. This conceptual map emerges in a process of social interaction that is primarily oriented towards problem solving. Over time, a body of cultural knowledge is generated that is transmitted to other generations. Schein (1981, 1985, 1992) captures this view of organisational culture as;

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to problems. (Schein, 1992, p. 12)

This perspective seemed appropriate to adopt in this study as it focuses on individual's perceptions of shared meanings and understandings which have developed through social interaction over time. Rather than study manifestations of behaviours and artifacts to determine underlying meanings, the ideationalist perspective focuses on shared meanings held within people's consciousness. Within this study, this allowed research to be conducted in such a manner as to seek to understand participants' perceptions of the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools and how these are shared by various stakeholders within these schools.

So far this chapter has examined three perspectives of culture and has proposed the ideational perspective as being most appropriate for this study. The next section examines the ideational perspective in greater depth to further understand the relative strengths and weaknesses of this approach. Section 3.4 then proposes a conceptual framework for the study based on the discussion from this next section.

### **3.3 THE IDEATIONAL PERSPECTIVE IN DEPTH**

The previous section of this chapter identified the ideational perspective as that most appropriate for this study. This section further critiques the ideational perspective by

considering two alternative theoretical constructs: Schein's (1981, 1985, 1992) typology of organisational culture, and Sackmann's (1985, 1991, 1992) theory of different kinds of cultural knowledge. The purpose of this component of the literature review is to consider implications of the ideational perspective in relation to this study, as well as to identify an appropriate conceptual framework for the study.

### 3.3.1 Schein's Typology of Organisational Culture

Schein (1981, 1985, 1992) proposes an ideationalist definition of culture in arguing that the essential element of culture is the basic assumptions held by organisational members. However, from an holistic viewpoint, he acknowledges the presence and importance of the observable elements of culture by conceptualising three levels of organisational culture (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2

Schein's three levels of organisational culture and their interaction

Level 1: Artifacts	Visible organisational structures and processes (hard to decipher)
Level 2: Espoused Values	Strategies, goals, philosophies (espoused justifications)
Level 3: Basic Underlying Assumptions	Unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs, Perceptions, thoughts, and feelings (ultimate source of values and action)

Source: Schein, 1992, p.17.

Level 1 of organisational culture, *artifacts*, is consistent with the adaptational view of culture. Artifacts are the behavioural patterns and the visible, tangible, and/or audible results of behaviour. Level 1 of organisational culture includes an organisation's visible products such as office layouts and arrangements, technology and products, artistic creations, organisational structure, dress codes, written and spoken language, myths, organisational stories and jargon, ceremonies and rituals, and behavioural norms (Schein

1992), the tangible expressions and symbolism of Millikan's (1987) conception of culture. Because artifacts are tangible, it is tempting to collect:

information about specific programs and to shy away from the harder task of interpreting the values and beliefs that lie behind them. ... A living culture exists in beliefs and values more than in artifacts and documents. This makes managing the culture a very intangible undertaking, and it renders the job of analysing culture equally frustrating at times.

(Davis, 1984, p. 12)

Level 1 of organisational culture is easy to observe, but it can prove difficult to interpret the meanings of these observations without an understanding of the other levels of culture (Sathe, 1985; Schein, 1992).

Level 2 of organisational culture, *espoused values*, consists of beliefs and values and overlaps the aspects of both the adaptationists and the ideationalists. Beliefs and values are the sense of "what 'ought' to be, as distinct from what is" (Schein, 1985, p. 15). Level 2 has been described as revealing

how people communicate, explain, rationalise, and justify what they say and do as a community - how they 'make sense' of the first level of culture. We will denote this level with the terms *cultural communications* and *justifications of behaviour*, or *justifications*.

(Sathe, 1985, p. 10)

The Level 2 construct of organisational culture includes those sets of values which have become embodied into an ethos, philosophy, ideology, ethical and moral code, and which serve a normative and moral function (Schein, 1992). Level 2 elements of organisational culture represent an ideal, workable blending of the ideationist and adaptationist concepts of culture (Ott 1989). Indeed, several organisational writers label Level 2 beliefs and values as the true organisational culture (Davis, 1984; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Sergiovanni & Corbally, 1984). However, Level 2 elements cannot be trusted to provide accurate information about a true organisational culture (Level 3) because of prevalent incongruences between "espoused values" and "values-in-use" in organisations (Argyris & Schon, 1978). Espoused values often serve important symbolic functions and may remain

in an organisation for extended periods of time even though they are incongruent with values-in-use. Investigations of Level 2 elements of organisational culture often yield espoused values - what people will say - rather than values-in-use, which can be used to predict what people will do (Ott, 1989). To gain a deeper level of understanding it is necessary to understand the category of "basic assumptions", the third level of organisational culture (Schein, 1992).

Level 3 of organisational culture, *basic underlying assumptions*, is defined as fundamental beliefs, values, and perceptions which:

have become so taken for granted that one finds little variation within a cultural unit. ... What I am calling basic assumptions are congruent with what Argyris has identified as "Theories-in-use", the implicit assumptions that actually guide behaviour, that tell group members how to perceive, think about, and feel about things [Argyris, 1976; Argyris & Schon, 1974]. Basic assumptions, like theories-in-use, tend to be nonconfrontable and nondebatable. (Schein, 1992, p. 21)

When culture is viewed as a set of basic underlying assumptions, the set of basic assumptions defines for organisational members "what to pay attention to, what things mean, how to react emotionally to what is going on, and what actions to take in various situations" (Schein, 1992, p. 22). These basic assumptions eventually form into an integrated set which might be called a "thought world or mental map" (Schein, 1992, p. 22). The essence of culture lies in the basic underlying assumptions (Corbett, Firestone & Rossman, 1987; Schein, 1992). Once these are understood, the other two surface levels of culture are more easily understood (Schein, 1992).

Schein's typology has formed the theoretical framework for a number of research investigations within education. Owens & Steinhoff (1989a, 1989b) used Schein's typology to conceptualise their study. Using a metaphorical analysis - an exploration of organisational metaphors to illuminate the assumptions underlying the culture of the school - Owens & Steinhoff developed the "Organisational Culture Assessment Inventory". This inventory assisted insiders to identify the root metaphor of their

organisation and hence to bring to consciousness the underlying assumptions of the organisation.

Using statistical analysis, Daniel (1990) explored the elements of the ideal middle school culture using Schein's dimensions of culture. A questionnaire was developed from the five dimensions of culture proposed by Schein as the conceptual basis. Items were developed from literature on the ideal culture of middle schools in each of these five dimensions. The resulting questionnaire, the Middle School Description Survey, was found to be a promising tool for assessing organisational culture in middle schools (Daniel, 1990).

Collins (1989) used Schein's typology and five dimensions of culture to conduct an ethnographic study within a Christian Community School to uncover the three levels of culture within that school. This study concluded that uncovering the two surface levels of culture was relatively straightforward. However uncovering the third level of culture, the basic underlying assumptions, proved difficult (Collins, 1989). Following Dyer (1985), Collins (1989) concluded that rather than the third level of culture being the essence of culture, culture resides in all three levels, necessitating that research occur at all levels.

This research by Collins has direct implications for this study. While theory may indicate that culture resides at Level 3, basic assumptions, the work by Collins, which occurred within one school, indicated great difficulty in uncovering these assumptions. Within this study, the purpose was to investigate dimensions of a culture across a school system occupying multiple sites. This suggested the need for an alternative approach within the ideational perspective to undertake this study. This alternative approach will be discussed in section 3.3.2.

The studies by Daniel and Collins used Schein's five dimensions of culture as the basis for their investigations. The next section examines dimensions of culture to examine whether generic cultural dimensions such as those proposed by Schein are appropriate or whether context-specific dimensions are applicable for different organisations.



## Dimensions Of Culture

One important aspect of this study was to identify context specific dimensions of culture for Queensland Lutheran schools. This presupposes that cultural dimensions exist for specific contexts rather than being generic across different organisations. Various authors have propounded different dimensions as being *the* dimensions of culture or the most important dimensions of culture. Schein (1985, 1992) argues that in order to understand the content and dynamics of culture it is necessary to develop a model of how basic assumptions arise, and why they persist. He contends firstly that it is necessary for the organisational members to understand the issues or problems of external adaptation of the organisation - how it maintains its relation to a changing environment - as well as understanding the processes which allow a group to internally integrate major internal issues (Schein, 1992). Underlying the various issues and problems involved in external adaptation and internal integration are the deeper dimensions of culture around which the shared basic assumptions, which are the essence of culture, form. As discussed in the previous section these dimensions have formed the basis for a number of research efforts.

Most of the dimensions underlying such issues are derived from the wider cultural context in which their group is located, so their existence as assumptions can be quite invisible and taken for granted in homogenous cultural contexts (Schein, 1992, p. 92). Schein has adopted *a priori* five dimensions of culture, based on the research of Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961): the nature of reality and truth, the nature of time, the nature of space, the nature of human nature, the nature of human activity, and the nature of human relationships. Other authors have also suggested various dimensions as being the dimensions of culture: Deal and Kennedy (1992) two independent dimensions, (the degree of risk orientation and the speed of feedback on action taken), Kilmann and Saxton (1983) two others, (a focus on people or technology ranging from technical and human, and a time dimension ranging from short term to long term).

Within the school culture literature a similar situation is apparent, with some studies adopting Schein's (1985) dimensions of culture (Collins, 1991), while other studies (e.g. Flynn, 1993) have proposed different dimensions of culture based on the work of Millikan

(1987). According to Sackmann (1991), the problem with these dimensions is their determination *a priori* on the basis of theoretical considerations. As such, they reveal as much about the author as the cultural dimensions themselves. Sackmann suggests that relevant cultural dimensions need to be determined empirically and specifically for each cultural setting. The dimensions of culture are one problematic area in the literature on culture. Other criticisms of the organisational culture concept are examined in the next section.

### **Criticisms of the Organisational Culture Concept**

This study has adopted an ideational perspective for the basis of this research. However this has not been in an uncritical sense. As such criticisms of the ideational perspective presented so far are considered. Descriptions of culture focus variously on concepts such as ideologies, a coherent set of beliefs, the basic philosophy, basic assumptions, a set of core values, or a set of norms. Studies conducted have not clarified the use of these terms, but instead reflect selective use by authors. The usage seems at times to be arbitrary (Rousseau, 1990; Sackmann, 1991). Although it seems appropriate to consider all of these concepts as aspects of culture, this does not clarify meanings associated with these terms. For instance, a value is defined by Rokeach (1973) as “an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or end-state of existence” (Rokeach, 1973, p. 5). This definition illustrates the confusion which is apparent within the literature. Here a value is defined as “an enduring belief”, but no distinction is evident between these terms. Schein (1985, 1992), in proposing the three levels of culture, clarifies the use of various terms, but this usage does not extend across the literature. It has been suggested that at this stage of theory development these terms should be abandoned and replaced by generic constructs that directly reflect the underlying nature of the ideational components of culture (Sackmann, 1991), rather than assuming that these terms are understood implicitly.

Other assumptions about certain characteristics of culture have either been adopted from anthropology with no regard to differences in context or are based on managerial preconceptions and research practices (Sackmann, 1991). Two of the most widely shared

assumptions in the managerial literature are that culture in organisations is homogeneous and shared among organisational members, and is leader generated and leader centred (Gregory, 1983; Schein, 1983).

The assumption about a homogeneous culture is reflected directly in the two terms organisational culture and corporate culture. The assumption has been imported selectively, and without reflection, from anthropology. Anthropological research has been predominantly with isolated, small, and homogeneous tribes with relatively simple forms of organisational arrangements (Gregory, 1983). However contemporary organisations and their relevant environments are more complex, more dynamic, and less isolated. Research tentatively challenges this assumption and proposes questions about the kinds of subcultures which may emerge and exist in organisations (Gregory, 1983; Martin, Sitkin & Boehm, 1983, cited in Sackmann, 1991). This issue is a major consideration within this study of Queensland Lutheran schools. One focus of this research is to determine whether cultural dimensions are shared by all stakeholder groups in Queensland Lutheran Schools. This issue will be discussed further in Section 3.3.3.

The assumption that culture is leader generated and leader centred was proposed in some early organisational literature (Selznick, 1957, cited in Sackmann (1991)). While the leader's views influence top management, the issue is whether this view impinges upon all levels of the organisation and is perceived in a like manner at all levels of the organisation. Again this is one of the areas of research within this study. The clear implication is that research should occur at all levels of the school system to determine the extent of the influence of the leader's views across the entire organisation. These assumptions have challenged aspects of the organisational culture concept, highlighting areas of concern. The next section examines an alternative approach to the ideational conception of culture which purports to overcome these criticisms: Sackmann's (1985, 1991) theory of different kinds of cultural knowledge.

### **3.3.2 Sackmann's Theory of Different Kinds of Cultural Knowledge**

This chapter reviews literature on organisational and school culture to identify a conceptual framework for this study. Thus far, the ideational perspective has been identified as that most appropriate for this study. An examination of Schein's (1985, 1992) approach has identified various problematic issues pertinent to this study of Queensland Lutheran schools. Sackmann (1985, 1991) has developed an alternative conception of culture in organisations from within the ideational perspective which is now examined to determine its suitability to this study.

The structural side of culture is defined as:

sets of commonly held cognitions that are *held with some emotional investment* and integrated into a logical system or cognitive map that contains cognitions about *descriptions, operations, prescriptions, and causes*. They are *habitually used* and influence perception, thinking, feeling and acting (*italics original*). (Sackmann, 1991, p. 34)

The structural components are present at any time. However, cultural content may vary depending on its development. It is therefore necessary to complement the structural perspective with a developmental perspective. This developmental perspective addresses the formation, change, and perpetuation of cultural cognitions over time in the form of cultural knowledge:

Cognitions become commonly held in processes of social interaction. They can be introduced into the organisation based on outside experiences, they can emerge from growing experiences, they can be invented, and/or negotiated. In repeated applications they *become attached with emotions and assigned with degrees of importance* - also commonly held. They are *relatively stable over time* and accumulated in the form of different kinds of cultural knowledge that are labelled dictionary, directory, recipe, and axiomatic knowledge. This cultural knowledge is *passed on* to new members. (Sackmann, 1991, p. 34)

## Kinds of Cultural Knowledge

Rather than use terms such as values, beliefs or ideologies, Sackmann (1991) suggests using the term cognitions. Cognitions are sets of categories that guide perception and thinking. They are used to perceive, classify, and interpret phenomena according to meanings assigned to them. Cognitions help people construct and understand reality. They are interrelated and integrated into a logical system or cognitive map. Four structural aspects of a cognitive map are relevant to culture in organisations (Table 3.3): descriptive categories (“what is”), their interrelations and integrations in the form of causal-analytical attributions (“how”), causal-normative attributions (“should”), as well as ultimate explanations about “why” certain things happen (Sackmann, 1991). These concepts invite further elaboration.

Table 3.3

The cultural knowledge map: definitions and characteristics of the different kinds of cultural knowledge

Kinds of Cultural Knowledge	Cognitive Components	Manifestations
<b>Dictionary Knowledge</b> "what is that exists"	descriptive categories	definitions and labels of things and events
<b>Directory Knowledge</b> "how things are done"	causal-analytical attributions	expectations about cause & effect relationships, descriptive theory of action
<b>Recipe Knowledge</b> "what should be done to improve things" "what should be done if things go wrong"	causal-normative attribution	cause & effect relationships of hypothetical events, prescriptive theory of action
<b>Axiomatic Knowledge</b> "why things are done the way they are"	causes, assumptions/wants	fundamental beliefs

Adapted from: Sackmann, 1991, pp. 39, 149

*Dictionary knowledge* is defined as "information that refers to knowledge of things or events at a descriptive level" (Sackmann, 1991, p. 55). It comprises commonly held descriptions that include labels and sets of words or definitions that are used in a particular organisation. It refers to the "what" of situations, their content, such as what is considered a problem in that organisation. While behaviours are located at Schein's (1985) level of artifacts, their attributed meaning is at a deeper level. Therefore observations of

similar issues or behaviours in different cultural settings may be described differently, or similar descriptions in different cultural contexts may denote different issues, behaviours or events (Sackmann, 1992).

*Directory knowledge* refers to "causal-analytical attributions [which] are *expectations about cause-and-effect relationships* in actual occurrences. These causal attributions refer to the operational aspects of events, practices, and processes" (Sackmann, 1991, p. 36). Directory knowledge is descriptive rather than evaluative or prescriptive delineating the "how" of things, events and their processes. It is similar to Argyris and Schon's (1978) theory of action (Sackmann, 1992).

*Recipe Knowledge* is knowledge concerning "causal-normative attributions [which] are cause-and-effect relationships of hypothetical events. They reflect recommendations for improvements and repairs. They constitute prescriptive theories of action" (Sackmann, 1991, p. 36). Recipe knowledge which is based on judgments, refers to normative recommendations for repair and improvement strategies. It expresses *shoulds*, prescribing particular actions. Recipe knowledge contains "prescriptive recipes for survival and success" (Sackmann, 1992, p. 142), and is closely related to Argyris and Schon's (1978) espoused theory. Recipe knowledge approximates "wisdom" representing "prescriptive recommendations based on collective experience and judgment" (Sackmann, 1991, p. 37).

*Axiomatic knowledge* refers to underlying reasons and explanations of the definitive causes for an event. It represents premises equivalent to mathematical axioms in that they are set *a priori* and cannot be further reduced. Axiomatic knowledge, being concerned with 'why' things and events happen, may be compared with religion. It is similar to Schein's (1985) basic assumptions, but unlike Schein's typology of culture, these four kinds of cultural knowledge together constitute culture's essence or its core (Sackmann, 1992).

Together, dictionary, directory, recipe, and axiomatic knowledge form a cognitive cultural map (Sackmann, 1991). Artifacts and behavioural manifestations, considered expressions of culture located at a surface level, are of interest in terms of their imputed meanings.

These may be accurate reflections of the underlying collective sense-making components. Alternatively, they may reflect outlived routines whose meanings are no longer relevant to the organisation. Nevertheless, interpreting and understanding a cultural setting requires inquiry into the underlying processes of sense making (Fetterman, 1989; Sackmann, 1992).

This conception of the ideational perspective of culture is most pertinent to this study. One purpose of the study was to identify the dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools. This conception of culture as kinds of cultural knowledge proffers the theoretical basis to identify cultural dimensions in that the theory proposes that these dimensions are held as cognitions by the school's stakeholders. These cognitions are inter-related into a cognitive map which is perceived by each individual and are expressed through actions and symbols. It was posited that these cultural dimensions comprise different kinds of cultural knowledge, recognising that these dimensions form the foundation of the cognitive map.

Axiomatic knowledge is of great interest to this particular study of Queensland Lutheran schools. These schools have as their basis the theology of the Lutheran Church of Australia (Section 2.2). It was hypothesised that these theological understandings would be identified as the content of axiomatic knowledge. The integration of this type of knowledge into the construct of culture is a vital aspect of this study.

An area of concern is the distinction between directory knowledge and recipe knowledge. Directory knowledge is “causal-analytical” and is concerned with “how things are done” whereas recipe knowledge is “causal-normative” and is concerned with what people “should” do. The boundary between these types of knowledge are subtle and the definitions are ambiguous in themselves, given that how things are done must assume a normative aspect (Feldman, 1994).

This has implications for this study of the culture in Queensland Lutheran schools. The research design outlined in Chapter 4 indicates that cultural dimensions were identified through interviews of key informants, and then a pen and paper survey instrument was

developed to survey the views of different stakeholders in the schools. An interview is suited to collect data which relate to espoused views rather than actual procedures or actions. When combined with a focus on identifying the “ideal” cultural dimensions it is apparent that the cultural knowledge identified from the interview data was recipe knowledge.

In order to identify directory knowledge in Queensland Lutheran schools it would be necessary to adopt different research methods. Methods such as observation and participant observation are ideal to collect “spontaneous, less censored” data (Feldman, 1994) which are necessary to identify this type of cultural knowledge. Thus, it needs to be acknowledged, that the cultural dimensions identified in this research will present only a partial picture of the cultural dimensions in Queensland Lutheran schools.

### **3.3.3 Subcultures or Cultural Groupings?**

It is generally recognised that organisations and organisational cultures are not monolithic (Gregory, 1983). All organisations have subcultures, groups within the organisation in which the organisational culture varies to some degree from the dominant culture. Subcultures may develop in any organisational group, department, level of hierarchy, program or project, or due to work function, profession or ethnicity (Ott 1989). Generally subcultures are associated with clear cut boundaries which are set *a priori* and these subcultures are treated as homogeneous and rather closed entities (Sackmann, 1991).

Subcultures may interlock, overlap, partially coincide, and sometimes conflict. These subcultures may be strong, pervasive, and controlling; or they may be weak and hardly affect behaviour. Three different types of subcultures have been identified: enhancing, orthogonal, and countercultural (Sathe, 1985; Siehl & Martin, 1984, cited in Ott 1989). *Enhancing subcultures* have assumptions, beliefs and values which are compatible with and often are stronger and held with more fervour than those in the dominant culture. *Orthogonal subcultures* contain members who accept the basic assumptions of the dominant culture but also hold some that are unique. *Countercultures* have basic assumptions that conflict with the dominant culture.



An alternative conception distinct from subcultures is that of *cultural groupings* (Sackmann, 1991). Within the ideational perspective of culture, culture may be defined as "sets of commonly held cognitions" (Sackmann 1991, p. 40). A cultural grouping is not restricted to formal membership or physical presence in a group, but instead may consist of individuals located in different places within and across the organisation. A cultural grouping is formed by people holding the same cognitions in common. The boundaries of cultural groupings are therefore flexible. Further the membership in one cultural grouping may be just one of several for a person. Because individuals have a number of frames of reference at their disposal, the relevance of these frames may change depending on the issues at hand.

The concept of cultural groupings was proposed for this study for the following reasons. Firstly, in a disparate organisation such as the Queensland Lutheran school system, strong affiliation with a particular group is usually limited to within a particular school even though similar views may be evident within other schools. Secondly, within a system where individuals may fulfil different roles (e.g. teacher, parent, council member) cultural groupings provide greater understanding of the perceptions of these individuals and how these may vary in different circumstances.

### **3.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY**

Culture, as has been demonstrated within the preceding discussion, is a complex, multifaceted construct. As such, it may be examined from a variety of perspectives. Within this particular study, the ideational perspective was proposed as the most appropriate conceptual framework. The ideational perspective provides the conceptual basis for the researcher to identify and understand participants' perceptions of the culture, and hence the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools. In order for a more holistic perspective to be gained, further studies beyond the scope of this thesis, would need to be conducted.

The conceptual framework most appropriate for this study was the conception of different kinds of cultural knowledge as developed by Sackmann (1991, 1992) drawn from within

the ideational perspective. This conception was selected for the following reasons. Firstly, Sackmann's (1991, 1992) theory of different kinds of cultural knowledge recognised that cultural dimensions in any organisation need to be identified empirically within that particular organisation. This contrasts with the view that each dimension may be determined *a priori* on the basis of theoretical considerations alone. One purpose of this study was to identify and describe the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools (Research Question 1). Sackmann's (1991, 1992) theory provided a framework for this identification and description to be undertaken.

Secondly, this conceptual framework delineates the different cognitions which people may hold (Table 3.3). This suggested the hypothesis that the cultural dimensions empirically identified incorporate different kinds of cultural knowledge within an overall cultural map. This was an important consideration in the research design for this study (Section 4.3).

Thirdly, the proposed framework incorporates as axiomatic knowledge the basic assumptions which individuals and cultures develop (Table 3.3). Lutheran Schools have been developed on a particular world-view developed from the theology of the Lutheran Church of Australia. It is important that this theology, and the understandings developed from it, are recognised as part of the cultural map, and that these cognitions are an integral component of the study.

Fourthly, this model is analytically powerful within this study as it supplied the framework by which the cultural understandings of different cultural groupings may be analysed. Rather than the using the notion of sub-cultures which presents a more rigid framework, the concept of cultural groupings is recognised. This study acknowledged that cultural groupings may exist across schools as well as within a particular school. It is recognised that the boundaries of these cultural groupings are flexible and that a person may be a member of more than one cultural grouping, i.e. overlapping loosely coupled systems. Within this study, where the "system of Lutheran Schools" is not only geographically dispersed, but where schools exist in a number of levels and socio-economic contexts, this concept of cultural groupings provided the analytical structure to

examine these relationships. It was hypothesised that different cultural groupings may hold different perceptions in different cultural knowledge areas. For example, while all groups may share common understanding of axiomatic knowledge, differences may be apparent in dictionary knowledge. This model provided the theoretical understanding by which Research Questions 4a to 4f were examined.

Finally, this conceptual framework recognised the dialectical relationship between what people actually do and what they say they do, between espoused theories and theories-in-use (Argyris & Schon, 1978). It is important to recognise that this study identified cultural dimensions reflecting axiomatic, dictionary and recipe knowledge. Dictionary knowledge and recipe knowledge recognise what exists and how things should be done. It was proposed that the data obtained from *key informants*, was normative in nature and expressed the *should* of Lutheran schools and was therefore recipe knowledge. Identification of directory knowledge, how things are done, was outside of the scope of this study in that different research methods (e.g. participant observation) would be required to identify dimensions within this type of cultural knowledge. This is an important recognition for this study, highlighting the complexity of the culture concept and research within this construct, and the limitations of this study. Table 3.3 summarises the different kinds of cultural knowledge, their cognitive components, and manifestations, which were used as a framework for this study.

### **3.5 EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH IN THE CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE**

This major section reviews literature and research pertinent to this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools, extending the scope of the literature review to include literature and research from a cultural perspective related to the dependent variables investigated in this study (viz. school type, school size, denominational background of teachers, proportion of Lutheran teachers and students in a school, different stakeholder positions, and theological professional development). The section takes its structure from the research questions presented in Section 1.5 and reviews literature and research which pertain to Research Questions 1, and 4a to 4f. This review provides the theoretical and research background necessary to discuss the research questions in Chapter 8.

### 3.5.1 Dimensions of Culture

Within this section literature and research pertaining to Research Question 1 is reviewed. Given the dearth of literature related to this question within a Lutheran perspective, the decision was reached to examine literature from the Catholic tradition. This decision recognised the important contribution which this research and literature contributes to scholarship. Literature and research are presented from Catholic schools in Australia, the United States, and England and Wales.

**Research Question 1.** *What are the important dimensions of culture in Lutheran schools in Queensland?*

Section 3.3 presented the view that cultural dimensions be identified within the specific context in which they apply. This view is consistent with research conducted in Queensland Catholic Schools. "Project Catholic School" (Queensland Catholic Education Commission, 1978), a research project conducted within the Catholic community in Queensland, identified the profile of the ideal Catholic school of the future. This profile was further elaborated upon (Spry & Sultmann (Eds.), 1991) within the Self Renewing Catholic Schools project and was expressed as the cultural characteristics of the Catholic school (Table 3.4). These cultural dimensions provide an example of context-specific dimensions of a school system which espouses a distinctive Christian culture.

Table 3.4

The cultural characteristics of the Catholic school

*The Catholic school community will work towards the growth of*

<b>Community of Faith</b>	<b>Developmental Goals</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster a belief in God</li> <li>• model a Christian way of life within a Catholic tradition</li> <li>• acknowledge the link between God, people and nature</li> <li>• be active in the local Church and have a sense of the wider Church and society.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• foster the total formation of the child</li> <li>• integrate Gospel values in all subject disciplines and teaching methods</li> <li>• provide a broad curriculum which is meaningful to students and relevant to the community</li> <li>• foster a sense of social responsibility</li> </ul>

<b>Religious Atmosphere</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be prayerful</li> <li>• reflect Catholic values in symbols, rituals and behaviour</li> <li>• base religious education programs on the Archdiocesan guidelines</li> <li>• encourage Clergy to play an active role in the spiritual and liturgical life of the school</li> <li>• show concern for others</li> </ul>	<b>Parental Involvement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate with parents</li> <li>• involve parents in learning programs</li> <li>• seek advice and support from parents</li> <li>• encourage parent participation on a school board</li> <li>• use parents as resources</li> <li>• support P&amp;F activities</li> </ul>
<b>Relationships</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• foster positive human relationships</li> <li>• recognise the uniqueness of all community members</li> <li>• enable students, teachers and parents to feel personal support and care</li> <li>• make visitors feel welcome</li> </ul>	<b>Organisation/Administration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflect the mission of the school and Catholic Education policies</li> <li>• give priority to parents</li> <li>• create positive student and staff morale</li> <li>• support collaborative decision-making</li> <li>• recognise individual gifts</li> </ul>

Source: Spry & Sultmann, 1991, p.18

This perspective stands in contrast to research where cultural dimensions have been developed from a theoretical perspective. Flynn (1993) adopted cultural dimensions from a theoretical framework based on the work by Millikan (1987) and adopted *a priori* to his study (Section 3.2.2). These dimensions are illustrated in Figure 3.2. Catholic schools in both the United States and England have identified distinctive dimensions of Catholic schools empirically and theoretically from official church documents. Groome (1996) argues “that the distinctiveness of Catholic education is prompted by the distinctive characteristics of Catholicism itself, and these characteristics should be reflected in the whole curriculum of Catholic schools” (p. 107).

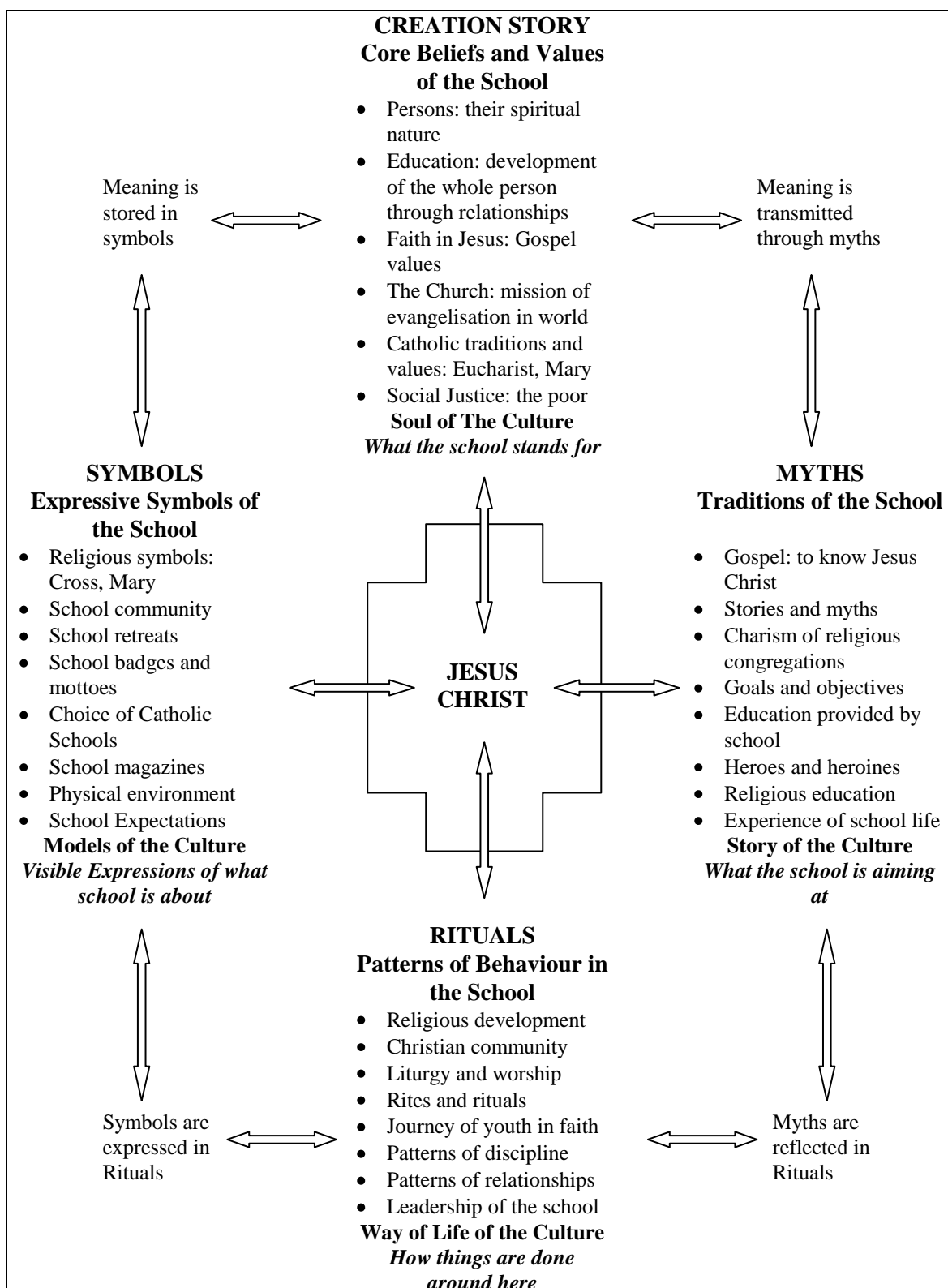
Groome (1996) proposes five “particular and distinguishing” (p. 108) theological characteristics, plus three “cardinal” (p. 109) characteristics which bind the five together. These characteristics should be evident within the cultural understandings of Catholic schools.

1. its *positive anthropology* of the person;
2. its *sacramentality* of life;
3. its *communal emphasis* regarding human and Christian existence;
4. its *commitment to tradition* as a source of its Story and Vision; and
5. its appreciation of *rationality* and learning, epitomised in its commitment to education.

(Groome, 1996, p. 108)

and

- Catholicism's commitment to people's 'personhood', to who they become and their life - an *ontological* concern;
- Catholicism's commitment to 'basic justice' - a sociological concern; and



*Figure 3.2 The Culture of Catholic Schools*  
Adapted from Flynn, 1993, p. 41

- Catholicism's commitment to 'catholicity' - a universal concern. (Groome, 1996, p. 109)

These characteristics are evident in research conducted by Bryk, Lee, and Holland (1993) in US Catholic schools which reports three major characteristics shared by Catholic secondary schools:

an unwavering commitment to an academic program for all students, regardless of background or life expectations, and an academic organisation designed to promote this aim; a pervasive sense, shared by both teachers and students, of the school as a caring environment and a social organisation deliberately structured to advance this; and an inspirational ideology that directs institutional action toward social justice in an ecumenical and multicultural world. (Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993, p. 10)

Three distinctive dimensions of Catholic schools were proposed by United States bishops in the statement *To teach as Jesus did* (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1972):

The educational mission of the church is an integrating ministry embracing three interlocking dimensions: the message revealed by God (*didache*) which the Church proclaims; fellowship in the life of the Holy Spirit (*koinonia*); service to the Christian community and entire human community (*diakonia*). (Paragraph 14)

Following from the contention that the Catholic school is unique because it is a religious community within an academic community, McDemott (1986) proposes conclusions derived from this statement. As learners within the Catholic school, students are to cultivate their intellectual, creative, and aesthetic potentialities, while as believers they are encouraged to grow in faith in Christ's presence within the community of the school. These conclusions support Groome's (1996) argument of Catholic characteristics being reflected in the curriculum of the Catholic school.

In England and Wales a statement, "Principles, Practices and Concerns" has been released by the Bishops stating the principles which determine the distinctiveness of Catholic schools (Catholic Education Service, 1996). The five principles are:



The search for excellence is seen as an integral part of the spiritual quest. Christians are called to seek perfection in all aspects of their lives. In Catholic education, pupils and students are, therefore, given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.

Within Catholic schools and colleges, each individual is seen as made in God's image and loved by Him. All students are, therefore, valued and respected as individuals so that they may be helped to fulfil their unique role in creation.

Catholic education is based on the belief that the human and the divine are inseparable. In Catholic schools and colleges, management, organisation, academic and pastoral work, prayer and worship, all aim to prepare young people for their life as Christians in the community.

The belief in the value of each individual leads Catholic schools and colleges to have the duty to care for the poor and to educate those who are socially, academically, physically, or emotionally disadvantaged.

Catholic education aims to offer young people the experience of life in a community founded on Gospel values. In religious education in particular, the church aims to transmit to them the Catholic faith. Both through religious education and in the general life of the school, young people are prepared to serve as witnesses to moral and spiritual values in the wider world. (Catholic Education Service, 1996, pp. 14-22)

These statements also reflect the theological characteristics of Catholicism, and offer an example of a comprehensive expression of a school system's distinctive characteristics.

This literature review presents a range of cultural dimensions which have been identified empirically, or derived from theoretical or theological considerations. These dimensions provide a point of comparison for the cultural dimensions to be identified in this study of Queensland Lutheran schools. Important for this study of Queensland Lutheran schools is the understanding that the characteristics of Catholic schools are derived from the theological principles of Catholicism.

### 3.5.2 School Culture and School Type

In this section school culture literature and research related to Research Question 4a is reviewed. Three themes are apparent in the literature: culture as community, research in US public schools, and faith development in Catholic schools which e the structure of this section.

**Research Question 4a.** *To what extent do the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools vary within different types of schools (i.e. primary, secondary, P-12)?*

Research of school culture suggests that primary and secondary schools exhibit different cultures (Ahola-Sidaway, 1988; Craig, 1993; Shaw & Reyes, 1992). This is an important issue in this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools as Lutheran schools in Queensland include primary, secondary and pre-school to year 12 (P-12) schools. Ahola-Sidaway (1988) in her study of two Catholic schools in Quebec investigated the key differences between elementary (primary) school culture and high school culture using the methods of symbolic interactionism and focusing on differences in *community* as the essence of culture. Community is a key concept apparent in the literature in comparing the culture in different levels of schooling. Authentic community is defined by characteristics of human relationships such as shared values, customs and purposes (Craig, 1993). Sergioivanni's (1996) definition of community bears striking resemblance to a definition of culture:

... collections of people bonded together by mutual commitments and special relationships, who together are bound to a set of shared ideas and values that they believe in, and feel compelled to follow. This bonding and binding helps them to become members of a tightly knit web of meaningful relationships with moral overtones. In communities of this kind, people belong, people care, people help each other, people make and keep commitments, people feel responsible for themselves, and responsible to others. (p. 100)

Duignan (1998), in discussing Catholic community, cites Kneip (1994), who suggests terms such as Catholic community have more than one meaning. For many people, their preferred meaning is an idealised stereotypical view dependent on old paradigms (Duignan, 1998). Different individuals and groups hold different understandings of Catholic community. In seeking an *authentic* Catholic community, Duignan (1998) promotes a community as “relationships based on shared mind-sets that promote and celebrate belonging, acceptance, affirmation, caring and love” (p. 47).

For the Lutheran martyr Bonhoeffer (1954), community, or the fellowship of believers, is a gift of God’s grace. Bonhoeffer argues that a Christian needs others because of Jesus Christ. The Christian is aware that God’s Word pronounces guilt, but equally, through Jesus Christ, justification is pronounced. This word of justification is spoken by others. Thus the goal of Christian community is to meet another as the bringer of the message of salvation that people are justified through God’s grace alone. Second, a Christian comes to another only through Jesus Christ. Discord easily exists between people and between God and people, but through Christ people come to know God and each other. This allows Christians to live in peace with each other. Third, just as Christians are united with God, so they are united with each other to eternity. Community consists in what Christ has done for all people. Bonhoeffer (1954) insists that Christian community is “not an ideal but a divine reality” (p. 15).

Christian brotherhood (sic) is not an ideal which we must realise; it is rather a reality created by God in Christ in which we may participate. The more clearly we learn to recognise that the ground and strength and promise of all our fellowship is in Jesus Christ alone, the more serenely shall we think of our fellowship and pray and hope for it.  
(Bonhoeffer, 1954, p. 18)

Further, Boenhoeffer insists that community is a spiritual not a human reality. The basis of Christian community “is the clear manifest Word of God in Jesus Christ” (Bonhoeffer, 1954, p. 19).

The classical sociological concepts of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* (Tonnies, 1955) offer a powerful analytical framework to understand community within schools (Ahola-

Sidaway, 1988; Craig, 1993; Furman, 1994; Sergiovanni, 1994). *Gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft*, although defying translation, are commonly translated as community and association. They are ideal types, reflecting two poles of a continuum, which provide a theoretical framework to study the social world (Furman, 1994). Conway (1994) cites Johnson (1990) in defining these two concepts:

*gesellschaft* - an association of people that is based primarily on the members' rational pursuit of their own self-interests.

*gemeinschaft* - an association of people that is based primarily on shared purposes, personal loyalties, and common sentiments. (p. 3)

According to Ahola-Sidaway (1988), the culture within an elementary school tends toward a *gemeinschaft* type of community whereas that in a secondary school tends to be more a *gesellschaft* type. Within the elementary school, integration was valued, whereas in the secondary school specialisation was valued with reintegration of people sought through bureaucratic means. Interpersonal relationships within the primary school amongst and between students and staff were more intimate and maintained a sense of balance, while within the secondary school experiences were transient and interpersonal relationships were often impersonal and lacked balance. Ahola-Sidaway (1988) hypothesised that similar types of structures and relationships which form the basis of both cultures paradoxically enhance the distinctiveness of each culture. This view is supported by Craig (1993) who asserts that a school with a *gesellschaft* emphasis will develop a *gesellschaft* structure to manage this. The *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* framework has provided a framework for other educational writers (Furman, 1994; Sergiovanni, 1993, 1994, 1996) who characterise schools as moving towards the *gesellschaft* pole, a situation which they argue needs to be redressed.

Lieberman and Miller (1992) in their research in public schools in America contrast elementary schools with secondary schools through the eyes of teachers. Teaching in an elementary school is characterised by a number of tensions including the tension between the personal (being familiar, liking, caring, showing warmth) and the professional (a more detached teacher-like position), the tension of how to cover the curriculum in the time allotted, grouping for differences while maintaining community, and teaching in isolation

while being expected to work together with other teachers. (Lieberman & Miller, 1992). Elementary teachers can be characterised as generalists who are responsible for the development of the whole child (Johnson, 1990).

Life in a secondary school is seen as very different from an elementary school. Firstly, secondary schools are “more bureaucratic, more formal and more difficult to negotiate” (Lieberman & Miller, 1992, p. 38). This relates to the hierarchy within the school, as well as teacher student contact. Secondary teachers teach one or two subjects to different classes at different levels within strict time constraints (Johnson, 1990). This specialisation leads to the development of a “faculty culture” and hence to teachers relating mainly to people within their own faculties, both professionally and socially (Lieberman & Miller, 1992). Teachers are more likely to relate to a teacher with the same area of specialisation than to meet with a teacher who teaches the same children (Johnson, 1990).

The usual difference in size and organisation between elementary and secondary schools contributes to the difference in role between elementary and secondary principals. While elementary principals interact largely with all teachers across the school, the secondary principal relates into the faculty culture through department heads and other senior staff and therefore has less direct influence on individual teachers (Lieberman & Miller, 1992).

Other research of school culture reports that the culture between primary schools and secondary schools differ in two areas: organisational commitment and value orientation Shaw & Reyes (1992). Primary teachers held higher perceptions toward shared attitudes and cultural values (organisational commitment) as well as higher emphasis on shared norms and values (value orientation) than secondary teachers.

The priority of faith development has been an important research direction in United States Catholic schools in both primary and high schools, an important consideration in this study of Queensland Lutheran schools. Research conducted by Helm (1990) reports that a high emphasis is placed on developing the faith community within primary schools. Similarly, Davis (1990) reports that pastors, principals, teachers and parents of primary

schools rated highly the efforts to nurture the faith of students and assist them to mature in their faith. Convey (1992) reports unpublished survey results which indicate a high emphasis on the faith community within the school and the development of a Christian community. Research in Catholic secondary schools also reports high emphasis on faith development. Yeager et al (1985) and Benson et al (1986) report compelling results for the priority given to faith development in Catholic high schools. In fact, the emphasis placed on faith development was equal to that for academic and social development (Benson & Guerra, 1985).

This section of the literature review has a number of implications for this study. First, school culture research in different levels of schooling has been identified and reviewed reporting differences between the culture of primary and secondary schools. Second, as this research suggests that difference in culture is described through the concept of community, various concepts of culture have been presented. The concepts of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* were introduced as an analytical framework for understanding community. Third, writing on Christian community has been reviewed as a basis to understand this concept. These concepts will be an important basis to discuss results of this present research investigating differing understandings of culture in the different school types in Queensland Lutheran schools.

### **3.5.3 School Culture and School Size**

School size, the subject of Research Question 4b, is the focus of this section of the literature review. Literature pertinent to this question is reviewed in four sections. Firstly, the effect of school size on community is considered. Second, research which considers the effects on student achievement from increases in school size is presented. The third section introduces the concept of undermanned settings. Literature is also reviewed which addresses the optimum size of schools and the argument for the formation of sub-schools. The final section reviews research on school size conducted in US Catholic schools.

**Research Question 4b.** *To what extent does the size of a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

Another important area of investigation in this study of Queensland Lutheran schools was the effect of school size on school culture. Research suggests that smaller schools show more promise for community development than larger schools (Royal & Rossi, 1997; Bryk & Driscoll, 1988; Newman et al, 1989). According to Conway (1994), large size mitigates against the effects of *gemeinschaft*. School cultures most conducive to learning are found in small organisations while larger organisations are hierarchical, impersonal and, bureaucratic (Swanson, 1991). The effects of school community on staff are as important as those on students (Royal & Rossi, 1997). Staff with a strong sense of community have enhanced personal well-being. They also have a clearer understanding of other's expectations on them and experience less stress. A stronger sense of community amongst staff may also be a precursor for the development of community amongst students. The effects of a stronger sense of community accrue to students with enhanced academic and social development.

Two conditions are necessary for community building: *continuity of place* and *manageable scale* (Sergiovanni, 1996). School size, although not enough in itself, is an important consideration in providing these pre-conditions. Yatvin (1994) argues the case for small schools or schools divided into small community units where classroom time, space and organisation allow flourishing personal relationships, play and open communication and authority in the hands of teachers. Where large schools exist these may be divided into smaller sub-schools to achieve the effects of a smaller school. Continuity of place is easier to achieve in small schools and large schools which think and act small (Sergiovanni, 1996).

Much of the school size literature focuses on effects apart from school culture, but these effects may contribute to the culture of a school (Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989; Hargreaves, 1995; Purkey & Smith, 1985). Fowler and Walberg (1991) and Fowler (1992), in surveying earlier research literature, contend that smaller size elementary schools generally had higher levels of student achievement, greater extracurricular

participation, student satisfaction and attendance. In their own study of secondary schools Fowler and Walberg (1991) conclude in part that larger school size negatively affects school climate, that small schools differ from large schools in terms of staff interaction, and that “small schools may be friendlier institutions, capable of involving staff and students psychologically in their educational purpose” (p. 200). However, Howley (1994) reports evidence that students in high socioeconomic status communities perform better in larger schools.

Other factors such as curriculum breadth and depth, and economies of scale have been important considerations in discussions of school size (Fowler, 1992; Swanson, 1991). However projected savings due to economies of scale have not resulted from larger schools according to Lee and Smith (1996). Fowler (1992) also contends that in schools which offer a greater curriculum variety, only a small percentage of students take advantage of the advanced and alternative classes.

The concept of *undermanned settings* (Kleinfield, cited in Sergiovanni, 1996), which occurs where there are insufficient people to fill the available roles, is one possible explanation of the more positive effects of smaller schools. Firstly, the levels of participation increase with people becoming generalists rather than specialists. Secondly, people are more willing to undertake more difficult and challenging tasks. Thirdly, more people take on more responsible and significant roles, and finally less attention is directed to differences between individuals. As everyone needs to be involved, criticism is less and people enjoy the freedom to be themselves. Kleinfield concludes that in undermanned settings such as small schools people “may be more than a big fish in a small pond. We have reason to believe they actually grow into bigger fishes” (Kleinfield, cited in Sergiovanni, 1996, p. 107). The effects of “undermanned settings” accrue to both teachers and students.

While the literature cited clearly argues for smaller schools, agreement on recommended sizes is inconsistent. Conant (1959) stated that the graduating class needs at least 100 students suggesting a secondary school of 500. Heath (1994) recommends a range of 200 to 350 students in a lower school, with 400 to 500 in a secondary school. Goodlad (1984)



suggests a lower school in the range of 225 to 250 students and a high school of less than 500 to 600 students. Gregory (cited in Sergiovanni, 1996) regards Goodlad's figures as too high, warning that it is not size alone which is important, but a commitment to community and the learning of students. Howley (1996a, 1996b) suggests that school size may vary from place to place with a community's relative affluence being a major factor, with more affluent students benefiting from larger schools.

Where large schools exist they should be divided into smaller, semiautonomous sub-units "to create more personal and supportive environments" (Royal & Rossi, 1997, p. 3). Further these sub-units or sub-schools need to establish a collective identity, projecting clear, identifiable boundaries and displaying clear differences which are acceptable to students (Raywid, 1995). Smaller units optimise the development of community among both staff and students.

The benefits of down-sized schools are contingent on two principles (Raywid, 1996). First, each sub-school requires definitive separateness in terms of facilities, instructional style, organisational arrangements, and school climate. It is important that each sub-school be delegated the autonomy necessary to achieve this distinctiveness: identification of goals and priorities, deployment of staff and other resources, the organisation and presentation of the curriculum, assessment and reporting methods, and student expectations. Second, sub-schools need to exhibit distinctiveness which become cultural features to which students and parents can identify and be affiliated. Howley (1996), however, expresses caution in the movement to sub-schools due to limited research of the simulation of small size through restructure in schools.

Research in Catholic schools in America also suggests advantages to smaller schools. Bamonte (1984) reported research in New York Catholic secondary schools which showed that smaller schools displayed a higher religious atmosphere when compared with small schools. Rivera (1994), also Yeager et al (1985), suggest that Catholic schools, which are smaller than public schools, achieve better results because of their sense of community.

Children do not do well in factory-style systems at any age, just as adults don't do well when dehumanised. The fundamental difference in parochial schools is that they are K-8 schools (sometimes with pre-school too) that keep families in the place for a very, very long time. The people in them feel personal ties. The parents know all the teachers, and the administrators, and those professionals know the whole family. (Rivera, 1994, p. 39)

This review of the literature in regard to school size and culture suggests that smaller schools have a number of positive features which lead to more positive perceptions of culture than larger schools. It also suggests important features which benefit the culture of sub-schools. These are important issues in this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools, which will assist in the discussion of results from this present research.

### **3.5.4 Religious Background of Staff and Students**

One important consideration in this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools is how different people within the school view the school culture. The previous chapter (Section 2.4.7) described the policies of Queensland Lutheran schools in regard to enrolment and staffing their schools. One important aspect of this research, as set out in Research Questions 4c and 4d, relates to how the perceptions of culture within the school are affected by the denominational background of teachers and varying proportions of Lutheran students and staff.

**Research Question 4c.** *To what extent does denominational background of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

*To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

**Research Question 4d.** *To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran students within a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

Flynn's (1993) research reports results comparing practising Catholic teachers and students with other teachers and students. Flynn defines a practising Catholic as one who attends the Eucharist each Sunday. The results reported for teachers indicate that practicing Catholic teachers had higher levels of religious values such as: the religious nature of the school, religious expectation and commitment, attitudes to the church, spiritual reading, and the Catholic character of the school than other teachers. However, no difference was found on other issues related to the school such as morale and attitudes to the principal. Flynn (1993) concludes that the teachers make an important difference in developing the religious character of the school which will support the developing of faith. While respecting the integrity and service of all teachers in Catholic schools, Flynn (1993) implies that this development of faith is best achieved by a practising Catholic teacher. This is consistent with research conducted in Church of England schools in England and Wales on teachers' attitudes towards church school systems and the distinctiveness of church school systems (Wilcox & Francis, 1996). The strongest predictor of perceptions of these two effects was the personal church attendance of those surveyed. The matter of the proportion of Catholic staff is also of concern in England and Wales. Again the major issue pertinent to this study relates to the proportion of Catholic staff necessary for a Catholic school to retain its Catholic distinctiveness (O'Keeffe & O'Keeffe, 1996).

A similar pattern was recorded between practising Catholic students and other students (Flynn, 1993). For all religious items investigated, large differences were reported between practising Catholic students and non-practising Catholic students. Further, a comparison between practising Catholic students and all students reports higher results for the practising Catholic students on all religious issues. Flynn (1993) also reports that practising Catholic students achieved more highly on the Higher School Certificate than non-practising students. Flynn (1993) concludes that Catholic education has an "integrating and strengthening effect" (p. 372) on student's lives. Research in US Catholic schools concludes that students with a strong religious orientation are more likely to exhibit constructive school behaviours, and avoid social misbehaviour (Bryk, Lee and Holland, 1993). However no evidence was reported to suggest any direct relationship between religiousness and academic achievement.

The effects of declining proportion of Catholic students and teachers on Catholic schools is an important issue in Catholic schools in England and Wales (O'Keefe & O'Keefe, 1996). Concern is expressed as to whether a non-Catholic enrolment will lead to a risk of undermining the character of a Catholic school (McLelland, 1996). Zipfel (1996) reports that a number of diocese in the United Kingdom have settled on a notional enrolment of 15% non-Catholic students leading to a Catholic school losing its distinctive ethos. Other schools suggest that this figure is between 10% and 15%. O'Keefe and O'Keefe (1996) and Murray (1996) also report the case of a Catholic college where its trustees proposed that the college be closed because Catholics accounted for less than a third of the student population.

Research conducted in Catholic schools in England and Wales concludes that church going non-Catholic students do not appear to be good for the ethos of these Catholic schools and may in fact be damaging the religious development of the Catholic students (Francis, 1986a). According to Francis (1986b) this leaves Catholic schools with two options: either accept practicing Catholic students, or accept pupils from non-Catholic backgrounds but change the way in which the school operates to reflect this more diverse background. Egan (1988) also concludes that students from a non-Catholic background, as well as non-practising Catholic students, have a negative influence on the culture of the Catholic schools from which three responses are possible. First, Catholic schools could retain their traditional model and restrict enrolment to practising Catholic students. Second, the traditional model could be reviewed in light of accepting non-Catholic enrolment, or third, an ecumenical model could be adopted in co-operation with other church schools.

This issue has become a more important issue for Catholic schools in Australia (Hurley, 1997; Lambert, 1990) with the enrolment policy of Catholic schools placed under scrutiny. *Catholic School Studies* in its May 1999 issue contains a discussion starter on this issue which examines these two options for the future of Catholic schools in Australia and New Zealand. Section 2.4.2 outlines the position in Queensland Lutheran schools where, while Lutherans are generally extended first preference, students regardless of their

denominational background are accepted into the school. This reflects a mission focus within a school, whether Lutheran or Catholic (Quillinan & Ryan, 1994).

An important conceptual insight in this discussion of the effects of the proportion of students and staff from a different denominational background on community in Catholic schools, is the distinction between a *value community* and a *functional community* proposed by Coleman and Hoffer (1987) from their research in United States Catholic schools. A value community is one where people share a common set of values, where there is “value consistency”. A functional community, not only has value consistency, but also operates to effect a particular outcome (Convey, 1992).

In a school that is a functional community, most of the people whom the students know and to whom they relate in the school and outside of it, especially the adults, are closely linked. The adults in the functional community know each other and each other’s children. Furthermore, the values to which the children are exposed are the values of the adults in the community ... in a functional community, value consistency exists between children and their friends, between parents and their friends, and between parents and children. (Convey, 1992, p. 91)

A school can be a value community without being a functional community (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987). However a functional community requires value consistency to be a functional community. *Social capital* is a further concept used to explain the functional community (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987). Social capital exists in relationships between individuals with its quality being a function of the quality and intensity of the relationships (Convey, 1992).

All teachers and students possess a certain level of human capital. The relationships among teachers (collegiality), among students (peer friendships, community of caring), and between teachers and students (school's ethos or culture) produce social capital ... the social capital that has value for a young person's development does not reside merely in the set of common values held by parents who chose to send their children to the same private school. Social capital resides in the functional community, the actual social relationships that exist among parents of different children, in the closure exhibited by these relationships, in the parents' relationships with the school, and in the relationships among the individuals within the school. (Convey, 1992, p. 92)

A Catholic (Lutheran) school has the opportunity to create an efficacious functional community among the parents, staff, and students of the school derived from three sources: the religious nature of the school which provides the mission of the school, the commitment of the teachers who choose to work within the school expressing their desire to minister to the faith community of the school, and the shared values of the parents who send their children to the school (Convey, 1992). These combine together the concepts of the functional community and social capital. The following conclusions concerning the improvement of the culture of the school can be drawn from this discussion. The perceptions of culture of a Lutheran school will be more positive with, first, a greater percentage of teachers who share the concept of ministry through the school, and second, a greater percentage of students (families) with similar faith values to the school.

### 3.5.5 Position

This study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools seeks information from different stakeholders within Queensland Lutheran schools: teachers, senior staff, school chaplains and pastors, school council members, and parents and friends executive members. This section explores school culture literature and research which addresses the respective views of the different groups listed as related to Research Question 4e.

**Research Question 4e.** *To what extent do perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools vary amongst major stakeholders (i.e. senior staff, teachers, school council members, pastors and chaplains, and parents and friends members)?*

Flynn (1993) reports a number of features concerning teachers, two of which are pertinent to this study of Queensland Lutheran schools. First, in Flynn's (1993) study, teachers were invited to describe what they appreciate and value about Catholic schools with the ten most frequent responses being:

1. The friendly environment of the school and the mutual respect which exists between staff and students
2. The pastoral care shown by teachers to individual students
3. The religious atmosphere of the schools and their underlying Christian basis
4. The Christian community of staff and students in Catholic Schools
5. The support and friendship which teachers experience at school.
6. The professionalism and dedication of other teachers
7. The friendliness of students [and] staff: students' relationships at school
8. The students as people: their talents, sense of life, enthusiasm and fun
9. Supportive, firm and understanding Principal and Deputy
10. The standard of discipline in the school. (Flynn, 1993, p. 119)

This study also sought responses as to why teachers had chosen to teach in Catholic schools. Four fundamental underlying dimensions of teachers' motivation were outlined: "a love of teaching, the quality of teachers in the school, the religious nature of the school, and quality of the curriculum in the school" (Flynn, 1993, pp. 146-147).

These responses may be compared with the rankings of personal teaching goals of teachers in low-income-serving Catholic High Schools for religious, Catholic lay, and non-Catholic teachers (Table 3.5). Only the teachers who were religious included spiritual development in their first five responses.

*Table 3.5*

Personal teaching goals of teachers in low income US Catholic schools

Rank	Religious	Catholic Lay	Non-Catholic
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1	Spiritual Development	High moral standards/ Citizenship	Critical thinking
2	High moral standards/ Citizenship	Critical thinking	High moral standards/ Citizenship
3	Understand, participate in & accept church	Responsibility	Prepare for college
4	Build community	Life skills	Life Skills
5	Critical thinking	How to get along	How to get along

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Benson et al. (1986), cited in Convey (1992), p. 135.

Leadership is an important role exercised by the senior staff in developing and maintaining school culture. According to Schein, (1985) "... the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture" (p. 2). Thus what is important for leadership within the school is derived from the culture of the school. Duncan (1998) supports this view in advocating that leaders in Catholic schools "have the opportunity to construct a social reality in the school that is distinctly and uniquely Catholic through the development of a strong Catholic culture" (p. 57). Duignan (1998) argues that leadership is to be authentic and based on concepts of servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) and stewardship (Block, 1993). Hence leadership is expressed through core values and beliefs being made explicit in 'authentic community' (Duignan, 1998) and the faith community (McLaughlin, 1998).

This view of leadership is supported by research in United States Catholic schools. Bamonte (1984) reports research which demonstrated a strong correlation between the leadership behaviour of the principal and the religious atmosphere of the school. Writers in Australian Lutheran schools have expressed similar views. Schoff (1998) draws on work by Everett, Sultmann and Treston (1990) to suggest the following in relation to leadership:

The leader is thus one who ministers to others in a spirit of service, drawing inspiration and strength from Christ. Leadership involves harnessing the richness of all within the group so that each person may be made powerful. It is then through shared values and collective competence that the group moves forward. (p. 17)



Weier (1998) also advocates servant leadership as “the ultimate goal for those called to leadership in a Christian community” (p. 30). For Weier (1998), the leadership model lies on the

... foundation of Christian confessions and values. The model provides a process for growth for all Christians and not only those aspiring or called to leadership. It promotes a servant mentality, and a school community based on shared leadership, collegiality, team work, compassion, and forgiveness. (p. 35)

Thus leadership is to be authentically based on the values and beliefs of the school. This is consistent with the research reported by Flynn (1993) of student and teacher perceptions of the leadership of the principal. Both students and teachers perceived the principal to place great emphasis on the religious leadership of the school, on ensuring provision of a quality education, and building a sense of community and belonging. Teachers also perceived a high level of pastoral care for staff from the principal.

Flynn’s (1993) study also sought the views of parents as to their choice of a Catholic school for their children. Three underlying dimensions of choice were identified: the quality of the teacher, the quality of education provided by the school, and the religious nature of the school. It is important to note that the second and third listed dimensions were equally ranked by parents. When compared to teacher’s perceptions it can be seen that teachers and parents share similar perceptions.

Griffiths (1999) conducted research in a Catholic secondary school in South Australia to investigate parents’ perceptions of the school. Using the Parent Expectations of Catholic Secondary Schools Questionnaire, Griffiths (1999) investigated the difference between the ideal and actual perceptions of parents for nine aspects of Catholic schooling. In all areas the results reported higher perceptions for the ideal scales than the actual scales. While Griffiths (1999) concludes that generally parents did support the school, it is also apparent that the school was not meeting the ideal expectations of the parents.

Section 2.4.1 briefly described the function of school councils or boards. As stated, these councils are composed from Lutherans drawn from the local church community in the

case of primary schools, and the wider environment of the church in the case of secondary schools. Council members do not necessarily have to have children attending a Lutheran school as a prerequisite for council membership. The statement “The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools” (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a) outlines the expectations of governing councils and principals:

The Lutheran Church of Australia expects the governing councils and principals of its schools to

- staff its schools with skilled and registered educators who are able to uphold the teachings of the church and model the Christian life-style. In the first instance it seeks to use the services of active members of the church. Beyond that, the church seeks to staff its schools with people who are active Christians from other denominations willing to uphold the Lutheran teaching of the school.
- support and encourage in-service training - including theological training - for the professional development of teachers;
- promote the ministry of the school in the local congregation, zone, or district;
- help the local congregation, zone, or district to use the school as a means of establishing and maintaining contact with the wider community;
- actively pursue every opportunity for maximising the school's effectiveness as a mission agency of the church. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a)

The school council is elected to govern the school: to enact and enable policy within the constraints of policy from the Board for Lutheran Schools and the District Church Council. The Principal, the executive officer of the council, reports to the council and is responsible for implementation of the decisions of the council. The council may also promote local concerns or issues and, according to Furman (1994), school councils are able to promote "the authentic involvement of local community members in school governance, including determination of the values (*gemeinschaft* or *gesellschaft*) that prevail in the school" (p. 14).

### **3.5.6 Theological Professional Development**

Section 2.4.7 described the theological professional development requirements of teachers in Queensland Lutheran schools. This professional development requirement is premised on the view that professional development will benefit both the teacher and the school (Abdal-Haqq, 1996). Research question 4f seeks to investigate the effectiveness of this theological professional development for teachers in Queensland Lutheran schools.

**Research Question 4f.** *To what extent does theological professional development of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

Literature reviewed in this section focuses on those factors important for effective professional development and also varying delivery methods of professional development. Bull, Buechler, Didley, & Krehbiel (1994) and Corcoran (1995) criticise traditional approaches of professional development for “being fragmented, unproductive, inefficient, unrelated to practice, and lacking in intensity and follow-up” (Abdal-Haqq, 1996, p. 2). The following points suggest that effective professional development:

- is ongoing;
- includes training, practice and feedback; opportunities for individual reflection and group inquiry into practice; and coaching or other follow-up procedures;
- is collaborative, providing opportunities for teachers to interact with peers;
- focuses on student learning, which should, in part, guide assessment of its effectiveness;
- encourages and supports school-based and teacher initiatives;
- is rooted in the knowledge base for teaching;
- incorporates constructivist approaches to teaching and learning;
- recognised teachers as professionals and adult learners;
- provides adequate time and follow-up support; and
- is accessible and inclusive. (Abdal-Haqq, 1996, p. 2)

Bull and Buechler (1995) draw on research to suggest five principles for effective professional development: that the professional development is based within the school, that it uses coaching and other follow up procedures, that is collaborative, that it is embedded in the daily lives of teachers, and that it focuses on student learning. They also propose four conditions necessary for effective professional development: leaders being advocates for professional development, resource and policy support, norms of collegiality and experimentation, and adequate time.

Nwosu (1998) in investigating professional development practices in Christian schools draws a distinction between two kinds of knowledge: declarative knowledge which is

cognitive understanding, and procedural knowledge which is the ability to perform a skill. Effective professional development according to Nwosu (1998) includes activities which address both kinds of knowledge. Declarative knowledge is addressed through discussion of theory and in readings and lectures. Procedural knowledge is gained through demonstrations or modelling of skills, practicing skills under simulated conditions, feedback, and peer coaching.

One issue for Queensland Lutheran schools is that professional development is provided using distance education methods. This requires adaptation of the principles of effective professional development. Bohrer, Coleman, and Zide (1998) present a case study of a United States university providing professional development in Bermuda. A two tier approach was adopted in this instance. One tier of the course was taught through intensive programs by visiting faculty. The second tier utilised computer networks including Internet. The courses designed as on-line courses required students to respond to a number of questions related to current class material. Each student provides an individual response in the discussion area and students are then required to read each response and respond further to two of these, drawing students into a “virtual” discussion. To assist in the on-line communication, students complete a “Distance Learning with Computer Technology” subject. The issue of students responding immediately to information is an important component of distance professional development according to Jakupcak and Fishbaugh (1998). Quick classroom techniques such as pair and share strategy; plus, minus, interesting; and problems-solutions; provide useful techniques for reflection and consideration of procedural knowledge.

This review of the literature of effective professional development suggests the essential features necessary for any successful program of teacher professional development. It provides a basis for discussion of results of how perceptions of teachers are affected by theological professional development in Queensland Lutheran schools.

### 3.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter fulfilled three major purposes in this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran Schools. Firstly, following a review of the three dominant perspectives of culture (viz. the holistic perspective, the adaptational perspective, and the ideational perspective), the ideational perspective was identified as that most appropriate for the conceptual framework for this study. This perspective focuses on an individual's perceptions of culture rather than studying manifestations of behaviour and artifacts to understand underlying meaning. In this study of a system of schools the ideational perspective invites a methodology appropriate to the scope of this research and a conceptual framework to guide the analysis of data.

Secondly, this chapter identified Sackmann's (1991, 1992) theory of different kinds of cultural knowledge as most conceptually suitable for this study. This conceptual framework recognises the importance of identifying context specific cultural dimensions; an important purpose of this study (Research Question 1). It also delineates the different kinds of cultural knowledge which provided a framework for the analysis of data to identify cultural dimensions. Also advanced by Sackmann's (1991, 1992) theory is the notion of cultural groupings which is an important consideration in this study where the perceptions of different groups were compared (Research Questions 4a to 4f).

Finally, this chapter has related culture research to important issues in this study including the independent variables contained within Research Questions 4a to 4f. Not only does this review describe and synthesise the literature, but it contextualises this study within the literature. This provides a frame of reference for the discussion of results in Chapter 8. The following chapter focuses on the methodology for the study designed to answer the research questions. Following an examination of the research orientation - post-positivism, and theoretical framework for the methodology derived from the principles of symbolic interactionism, the research design is presented.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DESIGN OF RESEARCH**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses the methodological issues involved in this study of the culture of Lutheran Schools in Queensland. The theoretical basis of the methodology was guided by the following considerations. Firstly, the methodology for the study was guided by the research questions enunciated in Section 1.5 and listed in Section 4.2. Secondly, the conceptual framework proposed in the previous chapter indicate the type of data required to answer the research questions. Thirdly, the assumptions and pre-suppositions involved in the collection and analysis of data are considered in this chapter. Research principles developed from the theory of symbolic interactionism were adopted to guide these data collection and analysis. A three stage research design was employed in this study to gather data which were then analysed to answer the research questions.

This chapter expands on these issues in the following main sections. Section 4.2 positions the research orientation in the post-positivist paradigm and Section 4.3 establishes the theoretical basis for the methodology for this study. The research process was hypothesised as being a form of symbolic interactionism. Research principles derived from this theory are presented as the research principles for this study. Section 4.4 presents the research design developed in light of these conceptual considerations. This section outlines the overall research design, before considering issues pertinent to the two stages of the research including the research population, selection and sampling methods, data collection methods, variables, units of analysis and data analysis methods. Section 4.5 discusses ethical considerations pertinent to this study of Queensland Lutheran schools. Section 4.6 comments on the reliability and validity for each research stage utilising theoretical considerations introduced in section 4.3.

## 4.2 RESEARCH ORIENTATION

The starting point in consideration of a theoretical perspective, or methodology, or even the research methods used lies with the research questions (Crotty, 1998). The research questions which guided this research are as follows:

1. What are the important dimensions of culture in Lutheran schools in Queensland?
2. Is it possible to develop a context-specific, valid, reliable, and economic research instrument that assesses the important dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?
3. How closely do the research data agree with the rhetoric of a distinctive culture in Queensland Lutheran Schools?
4. How do the perceptions of culture vary between different groups in Queensland Lutheran schools?
  - 4a. To what extent do the perceptions of culture vary between different types of schools (i.e. primary, secondary, P-12)?
  - 4b. To what extent does the size of a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?
  - 4c. To what extent does denominational background of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools? To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?
  - 4d. To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran students within a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?
  - 4e. To what extent do the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools vary amongst major stakeholders (i.e. senior staff, teachers, school councillors, pastors and chaplains, and parents and friends members)?
  - 4f. To what extent does theological professional development of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?



These questions were developed within a system of basic assumptions about knowledge and reality which characterise this research as post-positivist. Firstly, an ontology was assumed which could be labelled “critical realism” (Cook & Campbell, 1979). This realism assumed that an objective reality exists which may be “imperfectly apprehended” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Thus in this research, it was assumed possible to develop an understanding, although imperfect, of the reality of the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools (Research Question 1).

Secondly, a post-positivist orientation adopts a “regulatory ideal” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110) on objectivity. Emphasis is placed on “external ‘guardians’ of objectivity” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 100) such as whether results “fit” with other findings. Replicated findings indicate results are probably true. However, within the comparison of results, plural realities which are “only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehendable” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 109) are acknowledged. In this research, the cultural dimensions were subjected to critical examination to verify their reality as closely as possible (Research Questions 3 and 4a to 4f).

Thirdly, rather than the absolute objectivist standpoint of positivism where hypotheses are subjected to empirical tests and where scientific method holds a privileged position (Crotty, 1998), this research adopts the “humbler” (Crotty, 1998, p. 40) post-positivist approach. Instead of being limited strictly to the scientific method, inquiry occurs in a more natural setting, discovery is acknowledged as an element in inquiry, and the views of insiders are respected in determining “the meanings and purposes people ascribe to their actions” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110). Thus, the post-positivist approach adopted for this study, may utilise research methods from the range of qualitative techniques (Candy, 1989).

Thus, although this research adopted an overall post-positivist orientation, the interpretation of symbolic interactionism was used to inform the research methods used in this study. The approach of using a complementary research method recognises any paradigm will have some “blind spots” (Candy, 1989, p. 10) which may be addressed by another paradigm, and that the research problems “act as a guide to the choice of research approach” (Candy, 1989, p. 10). Within this research two theories, the post-positivist

orientation, and the theory of symbolic interactionism, were used in a complementary manner to enhance the methodology of this study. The interpretation of symbolic interactionism was used particularly to inform the data collection techniques utilised within this study. This approach was adopted in recognition of the three central principles of symbolic interactionism detailed in Section 4.3.1, and their relevance to this study of Queensland Lutheran schools which is elaborated on in the next section of this thesis.

### **4.3 THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE FOR THE METHODOLOGY**

This study had two fundamental purposes. Firstly, the study aimed to identify the cultural dimensions of Lutheran Schools in Queensland and secondly, to determine the extent to which these dimensions were supported by different groups within the Queensland Lutheran school system. Since "research questions should drive data collections techniques and analysis rather than vice versa" (Howe & Eisenhart, 1990, p. 5) it was appropriate to use the research questions and conceptual framework of the study discussed in the previous chapter (Section 3.4) to establish the data collection methods and techniques for data analysis in the study.

As explained in the previous chapter, it was considered important to explore participants' perceptions when determining the cultural dimensions of Lutheran Schools. The cultural knowledge gained was derived from their own beliefs, and also the beliefs on which Queensland Lutheran schools were based, and were formed through social interaction within the schools of the church. During this social interaction, individuals "internalised" these cultural cognitions, developing and modifying them, which in turn through further interaction modified others' cognitions. Thus the researcher needed "to explore" the participants' world, to attempt to think like the participants in order to understand their philosophy of Lutheran schools. It was proposed that, for the purposes of this study, this best occurred in an interview situation where free ranging and open discussion occurs. Analysis was focussed on identifying categories of cultural dimensions and properties which describe those cultural dimensions.

The conceptual framework proposed in the previous chapter supplied the focus for these explorations. The four kinds of cultural knowledge: dictionary knowledge, directory

knowledge, recipe knowledge, and axiomatic knowledge together form a cultural map which describes the culture present within the school. In considering the data to be collected, it was important that investigations explored the different kinds of cultural knowledge.

Secondly, this study aimed to determine how widely the dimensions identified in the first phase of the study were shared by various groupings within the Lutheran Schools of Queensland. As these schools are geographically diverse, and because a wide sample was required, a survey questionnaire was considered the most appropriate data collection method for this component of the research. Data analysis incorporated comparisons between various groupings within Queensland Lutheran schools utilising multivariate statistical techniques.

#### **4.3.1 Symbolic Interactionism**

Any research effort presupposes assumptions which guide the methodology to answer the research questions. This research attempted to tap participants' perceptions of the culture of Lutheran schools. Information was obtained through interaction between researcher and participant, whether in interviews or through a survey questionnaire. In both cases the researcher sought perceptions from participants which accurately reflected participants' actual beliefs. To achieve this, the researcher adopted the assumptions of symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1966, 1969; Mead, 1934) to guide the methodology. The three central principles of symbolic interactionism are:

1. Human beings act towards things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them.
2. The meaning of things arises out of the social interaction one has with one's fellows.
3. The meaning of things are handled in and modified through an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he (sic) encounters. (Patton, 1990, p. 76)

These principles have significance for this research. The cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools under study have been imparted to participants through

social interaction and given meaning by each individual. The perceptions formed by individuals developed through the ability of the individual to interact with one's self. The individual engaged in a form of internal social interaction where cognitions and actions were developed and modified by the individual "taking the roles of others, addressing himself (sic) through these roles, and responding to these approaches" (Blumer, 1975, p. 68).

The meaning developed by the individual is then conveyed to others through a similar process. Meaning is conveyed through symbols which are interpreted in the other's experience and through social interaction. Within symbolic interactionism, symbols are taken to mean signs, language, gestures, or anything which conveys meaning (Woods, 1992). Meaning is constructed by means of the ability of the individual to take the role of the other, to put oneself in the position of the other, and to interpret from that position (Woods, 1992). Social life is composed of many such transactions which through the dual process of definition and interpretation operate to both sustain existing patterns of joint conduct, as well as opening them up to transformation. This means in effect that individuals see their own behaviour not only from the point of view of significant others, but also in terms of generalised norms, values and beliefs in terms of a cultural group (Blumer, 1966: Woods, 1992). Blumer (1966) attributes the term *generalised other* to Mead. Social action

.... takes the form of a fitting together of individual lines of action. Each individual aligns his (sic) action to the actions of others by ascertaining what they are doing or what they intend to do - that is, by getting the meaning of their acts. For Mead, this is done by the individual 'taking the role' of others - either the role of a specific person or the role of a group (Mead's 'generalised other'). In taking such roles the individual seeks to ascertain the intention or direction of the acts of others. (Blumer, 1966, p. 184)

These processes take place in all interactions, including conducting research as in this study. Within the research process all participants strive to ascribe meaning and understanding within an interview, or in completing a questionnaire, to the research process. During the research, perceptions of these cultural dimensions were conveyed by respondents to the researcher. This has clear implications for this study which are discussed in the next section.

### **4.3.2 Methodological Implications**

The theory of symbolic interactionism highlights a pertinent issue for this study: the hypothesis that researcher and respondent will constantly endeavour to reach a mutually agreed understanding of the research situation. Symbolic interactionist theory predicts that respondents will search for clues in understanding the research process unless these are provided by the researcher. The researcher's reasons for asking questions, definitions used, researcher's assumptions and understandings will be ascribed meaning by the participant unless this meaning is conveyed to the participant by the researcher. Just as the participants seek to understand the context of the research, so the researcher needs to understand the participants' context, symbols, and interactions so as to understand the answers supplied by respondents (Foddy, 1993). This hypothesis leads to the adoption of eight research principles for this study.

### **Research Principles**

The following set of principles proposed by (Denzin, 1989, pp. 18, 25), and developed from the principles of symbolic interactionism guide the research design.

1. Symbols and interactions must be combined before an investigation is complete.
2. The investigator must take the perspective or role of the "acting other" and view the world from the subjects' point of view; but in so doing the investigator must maintain the distinction between everyday and scientific conceptions of reality.
3. The investigator must link the subjects' symbols and definitions with the social relationships and groups that provide these conceptions. Gender must be studied.
4. The behaviour settings of interaction and scientific observations must be recorded.
5. Research methods must be capable of reflecting process or change as well as static behavioural forms.
6. Conducting research and being a sociologist is best viewed as an act of symbolic interaction. The personal preferences of sociologists (definitions of methods, values and ideologies and so on) serve to shape fundamentally their activities as investigators, and the major way in which they act on their environment is through their research methods.

7. The proper use of concepts is first sensitising and then operational; the proper theory becomes formal and not grand or middle-range; and the causal proposition more properly becomes interactional and universal in application. (Denzin, 1989, p. 18)
8. Multiple methods should be used in every investigation, since no method is ever free of rival causal factors (and thus leads to completely sound causal propositions), can ever completely satisfy the demands of interaction theory, or can ever completely reveal all the relevant features of empirical reality necessary for testing or developing a theory. (Denzin, 1989, p. 25)

These principles were used to guide the research design which is the focus of the next section. The principles are discussed further as they are applied to the design of this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools.

#### **4.4 THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

This section provides a comprehensive discussion of the important elements of the research design. Within this section a number of important elements of the study converge: the aims of the study, the theory of different types of cultural knowledge, and the research principles of symbolic interactionism. Following a statement about the overall design of the study, specific data collection and analysis methods are summarised.

##### **4.4.1 The Overall Design of the Study**

A three stage sequential research program was developed. Its elements are depicted in Table 4.1. Stage 1, an exploratory phase, provided data to answer Research Question 1, establishing the Cultural Dimensions of Lutheran Schools. These data were then used as the basis for Stage 2 of the research which addressed Research Question 2, the development of a survey questionnaire. Chapter 5, Development and Validation of Instruments, provides full details of the instrument development and validation. Stage 3 of the research addressed Research Questions 3 and 4, including 4a to 4f. The results from the administration of this questionnaire are presented in Chapter 7 and discussed in Chapter 8.

*Table 4.1*

The research program

Research Stage	Activity	Data Collection Methods	Data Analysis Method(s)
Stage 1	Identification of the Cultural Dimensions of Queensland Lutheran Schools	Interviews	Analytic Induction
Stage 2	Development and validation of questionnaire	Preliminary survey questionnaire	Item analysis Factor analysis
Stage 3	Analysis of questionnaire data	Survey questionnaire	Multi-variate Analysis

#### **4.4.2 The Population for the Study**

Within this research, the research population is the schools and education offices of the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District (LCAQD). Schools are defined as those institutions which offer education within the range of Years 1 to 12 and which receive funding through the "Lutheran system" from the Commonwealth Government Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs. The population also includes those officers who administer and manage the affairs of the system and which, through the Lutheran Church of Australia (LCA), have direct influence, policy and otherwise, over the schools of the system. Thus the National Director for Lutheran Schools, the Board for Lutheran Schools (BLS), and Luther Seminary are all conceptualised as being components of the total population.

#### **4.4.3 Issues Pertaining to the Identification of Cultural Dimensions of Queensland Lutheran Schools**

The exploratory stage of the research had two main purposes. Firstly, it represented the first tentative and investigatory steps in identifying the cultural dimensions of Lutheran schools where the researcher became acquainted with the range and divergence of understandings held by participants. Secondly, during this exploratory stage the concept of different kinds of cultural knowledge was used to "sensitise" the research procedures (Research Principle 7). That is, the impetus for the type of data collected was given a

general sense of reference and guidance (Wallace & Wolf, 1995) by the theory of different kinds of cultural knowledge (Section 3.4). This theory of different kinds of cultural knowledge provided the direction for the research to proceed.

### **Boundedness of Groups**

*Naturally bounded groups* are those groups which exist independently of researcher interest and are formed, or at least recognised, and confirmed by their constituent participants (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The following groups were conceptualised in this study. Primary teachers were teachers who predominantly teach in Years P - 7. Secondary teachers were involved predominantly with Years 8 to 12. A third group of teachers taught in years P to 12 schools. Senior staff were educators responsible for administration of schools and the system, and included Directors, Principals and Heads, Deputy Principals, Deans, and Heads of Departments. School council members were members of governing bodies of schools. Pastors were clergy serving as chaplains within a school or a minister in a sponsoring congregation. Parents and Friends members were those parents and friends elected to the executive committee of that organisation.

### **Selection Procedures**

Section 4.3.2 defined the total population for this study. Within this section, the smaller subset researched in the exploratory stage of the study is identified. A criterion based selection process was used to identify respondents for both individual and group interviews. *Reputational-Case* selection was used to identify "key-informants" on the recommendation of "experts". This approach aimed to ensure collection of data suitable for comparative purposes (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The National Director for Lutheran Schools, the Principal of Lutheran Teachers' College and the Director for Lutheran Schools, LCAQD, were approached to supply names of "key informants" (Jacob, 1987) for the interview process for the different groups identified (see next section). These "experts" were also interviewed using procedures outlined below.



## Demographic Characteristics of the Interview Sample

In all, eight interviews were conducted with sixteen participants. Three of the interviews were group interviews: primary teachers, secondary educators, and parents. Within the selection of participants for interviews, balance of gender, level of schooling, and location of schools was sought. All of the participants were Lutheran except for one teacher and two parents, all of whom were Christian. One of the teachers was employed on a part-time basis. Table 4.2 summarises the demographic information of the participants.

*Table 4.2*

Demographic characteristics of interview participants

Stakeholder Group	Gender		School Location			Total
	Male	Female	Suburban	Provincial City	Rural	
Administrators	5	1	4	1	1	6
Teachers	-	5	1	3	1	5
Chaplain	1			1		1
School Council Member	1		1			1
Parents	1	2	3			3
Total	8	8	9	5	2	16

## Data Collection Method

Within this phase of the study, the researcher identified the cultural dimensions of Lutheran schools in Queensland. These dimensions were conceptualised as being composed of the different kinds of cultural knowledge held by participants. In order to identify these dimensions, the researcher was involved in interviews, a social interaction. The research principles for the study, developed from symbolic interactionism, were applied to the research methodology. Thus the researcher entered the world of the "other", attempting to be immersed in the interactions and symbols, i.e. the language, of the respondents. Within all interactions the researcher attempted to take the role of the "other", and to link the subject's perception of their world with their social relationships.

While the researcher obtained explanations from the respondents these were recognised in the analysis as an everyday conception of reality, as opposed to a scientific conception of reality (Research Principle 2). This principle recognises that the meaning which participants ascribe to their perceptions may vary from that of the researcher. The participant's conception of reality may be contextually specific and lack generalisability, whereas the researcher's analysis is focussed toward development of formal theory (Denzin, 1989).

Denzin (1989) suggests six criteria for evaluating interview formats. These criteria, together with the research questions (Section 1.5), the conceptual framework of different kinds of cultural knowledge (Section 3.4), and the research principles for the study outlined in section 4.3.2, formed the basis for determining the interview format for this stage of the study. The six criteria are:

- 1) conveying meaning, (2) securing respondent's interest, (3) ensuring the interviewer's clarity, (4) making intentions precise, (5) relating each question to overall intent, and (6) handling the problem of fabrication. (Denzin, 1989, p. 109)

The unstructured schedule interview (Denzin, 1989; Patton, 1990) was best suited to this particular research. In this type of interview general questions to be addressed and specific information desired by the researcher are anticipated but are addressed informally during the interview in whatever order or context they arise. The interview guide was a checklist to ensure that all relevant topics were covered for each respondent. The unstructured schedule interview allows freedom for the researcher and participant to participate in an authentic social interaction.

This interview format fulfilled the criteria stated above. Meaning was conveyed as questions were reordered or reworded to ensure participants' understanding. Similarly, particular interests of respondents were probed and then used to introduce other areas to maintain interest throughout the interview. As only the researcher conducted interviews, criteria 3, 4, and 5 were not problematic, relying on the interviewing skills of the researcher. Criterion 6, which refers to the problem of fabrication, is also fulfilled within the unstructured schedule interview. Respondent's answers were challenged and replies

checked. "Devil's advocate", propositional and hypothetical questions were asked in order to probe to determine respondent's true understandings (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

The research principles adopted were evident in this interview format. Firstly, this form of the interview especially allowed the investigator to take the role of the "acting other" and to probe to be able to view the world from the subject's viewpoint. Secondly, especially in a group interview, the subject's symbols and definitions were linked with the social and group relationships. Further, as the researcher had extensive background in Lutheran education and schools, much of the symbolic language and definitions were well known. Thirdly, this format of interview closely combined symbols and interactions and probed the subject's perceptions of these two aspects of the research. Fourthly, this format of interview, allowed the questioning to be recursive (Stainback & Stainback, 1984). That is, information which was gleaned from the interview was used to determine or define further questions which might expand the knowledge base.

Interviews were not only conducted with individuals but also with groups, as some data are more productively elicited from several individuals at once (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). Schatzman & Strauss (1973) recommend this method for discovering variations in people's responses and for revealing significant controversies among naturally bounded groups (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Blumer (1969), in commenting on the value of group interviews writes:

A small number of individuals, brought together as a discussion or resource group, is more valuable many times over than any representative sample. Such a group, discussing collectively their sphere of life and probing into it as they meet one another's disagreements, will do more to lift the veils covering the sphere of life than any device I know of. (Blumer, 1969, p. 41)

A copy of the interview guide used in the study is included as Appendix 5. The length of interview was determined by the data collected, but was as brief as possible, with only one session being used for each group. In keeping with the research principles, the interviews (except for the parents and system administrators) were situated within the school

environment in a room normally used by the respondent. The system administrators and parents interviews were conducted in locations suggested by the participants.

Consideration was given to the kind of interaction to be established with participants, which led to interviews being conducted in the conversational style of everyday interaction (Denzin, 1978; Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). This mode communicated empathy, encouragement, and understanding (Lofland, 1971). Patton (1980, 1990) notes that an everyday conversational style permits interviewers to respond neutrally without risking the loss of rapport. The conversational model, familiar and comfortable to all respondents, was considered most likely to elicit the trust, confidence, and ease among respondents necessary for yielding the elaborate, subtle, and valid data sought in this study. However the differences between friendly conversations and interviews were also noted (Spradley, 1979). The interviews, unlike most friendly conversations, had an agenda and a purpose determined by the researcher. They also required greater clarification and attention to details than conversations among friends, who presumably share inside information not accessible in the researcher-participant relationship (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

The data collection methods reflected the aims of this phase of the study and the research principles derived from symbolic interactionism set out in section 4.2.3. Within these methods an emphasis was placed on taking the role of "the other" and linking the subject's symbols and definitions with the social relationships and groups that provide these conceptions.

In any discussion of analysis, the seventh naturalistic interactionist principle becomes particularly pertinent. This principle states that:

The proper use of concepts is first sensitising and then operational; the proper theory becomes formal and not grand or middle-range; and the causal proposition more properly becomes interactional and universal in application. (Denzin, 1989, p. 18)

Sensitising concepts are those concepts which give the analyst "a general sense of reference and guidance in approaching empirical instances" and suggest "directions along which to look" (Blumer, 1969, pp. 148-149). Within this thesis the sensitising concepts were provided by the conceptual framework of different kinds of cultural knowledge discussed in Chapter 3. In this exploratory stage of the research, concepts were sensitised. They were operationalised in stages 2 and 3 of the research.

Within this research the cultural dimensions of Lutheran Schools in Queensland were identified using the analysis techniques of constant comparison. Constant comparison, a form of analytical induction (Hammersley, 1989; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993) involved the researcher initially scanning the data for categories of phenomena, properties of categories, and for relationships between these categories (Stainback & Stainback, 1984). A category "stands by itself as a conceptual element of the theory. A property, in turn, is a conceptual aspect or element of a category" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 36). On examination of initial cases hypotheses were developed, and then modified and refined on the basis of subsequent cases (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Within the process negative cases were sought to expand, adapt or restrict the original constructs.

The strategy of constant comparison combined inductive category coding with a simultaneous comparison of all interactions observed and coded (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Each interaction was coded in terms of as many categories as were relevant, and all instances assigned to a particular category were compared. As conflict occurred in the placement of an interaction into a category, the properties of the category were more clearly defined (Groves, 1988). Thus, a set of coherent categories was produced, together with the properties of each category. As the analysis progressed, the categories became the guiding criteria in the analysis of data and the categories and their properties became integrated into a theoretical core. During this process the number of categories declined as underlying uniformities were discovered (Hammersley, 1989). An important aspect of the analysis was exploring the relationship between categories.

The data collected were analysed throughout the data collection to tentatively suggest the cultural characteristics of Lutheran schools. Each category represented a cultural dimension. The properties represented characteristics for each cultural dimension. In the

analysis, the dimensions were identified cognisant of the different kinds of cultural knowledge which form the conceptual framework for the study (Section 3.4). In the second phase of the research design, these characteristics were operationalised through the development of a contextually developed questionnaire. This procedure is outlined in Chapter 6. The research design for the administration and analysis of the questionnaire survey, the third stage of the research design, is the focus of the next section.

#### **4.4.4 Issues Pertaining to the Comparison of Perceptions of the Cultural Dimensions of Lutheran Schools**

Within this stage of the study, the researcher used a context-specific instrument developed from the cultural dimensions identified in the first phase of the study, to determine how widely these dimensions were shared by various groupings within Lutheran schools of Queensland depending on school type (e.g. primary, secondary, P-12), school size, the percentage of Lutheran students within the school, the percentage of Lutheran teachers in a school, position (e.g., teachers, senior staff, chaplains and pastors, school council members, and parents and friends members), the theological professional development completed by teachers, whether a teacher teaches Christian Studies, and religious background. These data were then used as a basis to answer Research Questions 3 and 4a to 4f. Once more, the principles of symbolic interactionism were applied to the research methodology.

#### **Surveys**

The survey used in this study was a questionnaire designed to verify the applicability of key informant data to the overall study group. The survey was used to assess the extent to which participants held similar perceptions of the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools. Surveys are appropriate in educational research where an investigation involves large numbers of participants (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993).

The development and use of a survey was based on the following considerations. Firstly, the research questions directed that the perceptions of a large number of people within the groupings defined above were needed for analysis. Due the financial and time limitations

of the study, these could only be obtained through the use of a survey. Secondly, the survey scales were developed specifically for this study, cognisant of the context of the study, the conceptual framework of different kinds of cultural knowledge, and the research principles. This questionnaire development involved using concepts developed from the theoretical framework of the methodology and sensitised during the exploratory stage of the study. During this stage of the study the concepts were operationalised. Chapter 6, Development and Validation of the Instrument, discusses the use of research principles in the development of scales and items for the survey. Thirdly, research principle 7, states that proper theory becomes formal, i.e. universal interactive propositions may be developed which apply to all instances studied. Within this study, the context of the study was the Lutheran school system of Queensland, which dictated the use of a large number of participants from within these schools. The theory developed through this analysis may be generalised to the Lutheran school system in Queensland.

### **Sampling Procedures**

Principle 8 of the research principles, which states that triangulation is an important element in this research design led to the adoption of data triangulation as an important element of the research design. Data triangulation refers to the collection of data from different sources using the same methodology (Denzin, 1989). These triangulated data were based on groupings within Lutheran schools identified as important elements in the research sample. Respondents were selected using theoretically based probabilistic sampling procedures (Denzin, 1989): namely stratified cross-sectional sampling (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). This sampling procedure directs that the sample is divided into the relevant groups, with respondents selected from each group. Within this study teachers, senior staff, school council members, parents and friends executive members, and pastors were sampled from primary, secondary, and P-12 schools in metropolitan, rural, and provincial city Lutheran schools within Queensland. Table 4.3 describes the geographical location of Queensland Lutheran schools. A selective sampling technique which is summarised in Table 4.4 was used within each group surveyed.

*Table 4.3*

Geographical locations of Queensland Lutheran schools

School Location	Type of School			
	Primary	Secondary	P – 12	Total
Metropolitan Brisbane	5	2	1	8
Provincial City	5	2	4	11
Rural	4	-	-	4
Total	14	4	5	23

Table 4.4

Questionnaire sample for different stakeholder groups

Stakeholder Group	Sample
Senior Staff	All senior staff
Secondary Teachers	Every third teacher by alphabetical order of surname
Primary Teachers	Every second teacher by alphabetical order of surname
School Council Members	Every second member by alphabetical order of surname
Parents and Friends Executive Members	Every second member by alphabetical order of surname
Chaplains and Pastors attached to schools	All Pastors and Chaplains

## Variables

This study focused on the culture of Queensland Lutheran Schools. Accordingly, the criterion or dependent variables were the dimensions of culture identified in stage one of this study. In this stage of the study, the measurement of these variables was achieved using a context-specific instrument, which possessed several conceptually distinct scales (see Chapter 6).

The independent variables for this stage of the study were variables needed to answer Research Questions 4a to 4f, namely: school type (e.g. primary, secondary, P-12), school



size, denominational background of teachers, the percentage of Lutheran teachers within the school, the percentage of Lutheran students in a school, position (e.g., teachers, senior staff, pastors, school council members, and parents and friends executive members), and theological professional development completed by teachers including whether a teacher teaches Christian Studies.

*School Type* Investigating the effect of school type on perceptions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools is important to the Lutheran school system. Lutheran schools purportedly have a unifying culture which is common to all schools. However differences between primary and secondary schools in terms of staffing policy, the advent of P-12 schools, and the difference in operation between primary and secondary schools suggested that differences in the perceptions of culture may exist between different types of Lutheran schools. Section 3.5.2 reviewed research on the effect of different school types on culture which supports this view. Thus it was logical to investigate the culture in Lutheran primary, secondary and P-12 schools.

*School Size* Lutheran schools have often been characterised as being caring communities due to their small size. The variable size was included to determine whether the culture was in fact affected by the size of the school or whether the culture of a school may be managed in a larger school to reflect as closely as possible the ideal culture of a Queensland Lutheran school. Section 3.5.3 discussed research which suggested that school size is an important variable on the effect of school culture. Thus it was important to investigate whether this same effect is apparent in Queensland Lutheran schools.

*Denominational background of teachers* Denomination is another important independent variable worthy of study. In the past Lutheran primary schools have been virtually exclusively staffed by Lutherans (Section 2.4.7), while Lutheran secondary schools, through necessity, have been staffed by Christian teachers who have been drawn from different Christian denominations. It was important to examine whether these differing backgrounds affect the perceptions of the culture of Queensland Lutheran Schools. This represents an important research direction within this study.

*Percentage of Lutheran Teachers* Lutheran primary schools have traditionally been staffed by Lutherans. While this desire has also existed within secondary schools, it has

been impossible to attract staff who are Lutheran and also have the necessary expertise in particular subject areas. The staffing policy of the Lutheran Church of Australia states that schools are to employ “quality Christian educators” (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b) with a preference given to Lutherans. However, even in primary schools with the employment of specialist teachers and a regard to the quality of education, the employment of staff becomes an important issue. Thus any effect of the percentage of Lutheran staff on the culture of the schools was of great interest.

*Percentage of Lutheran Students* Within church and schools concern has existed over the effect which the percentage of Lutheran students has on the culture of the schools (Section 2.4.7). Historically Lutheran schools have had a nurture focus. That is, schools have existed as institutions for the Christian education of Lutheran children, who have a family Christian background. Over recent years the focus has been redirected to mission of unchurched families. This has seen a shift in emphasis towards attracting children from unchurched backgrounds, and their families, into the church through the program of the schools. This has led to two concerns in regard to the percentage of Lutheran families within a school. Firstly, if schools operate in areas where the traditional Lutheran numbers are low, the culture of the school may be affected by having too low a proportion of Lutheran students within the school. Secondly, where schools have had a higher percentage of Lutheran students, this redirection of focus to mission may not have been as strong. Therefore the percentage of Lutheran students within a school was an important variable to be studied.

*Position* Another independent variable for this study investigated different perceptions of culture due to differing positions in the school. This recognised that perceptions of these different groups contribute significantly to the culture of the school. Importantly the rhetoric of the schools is centred on the specific ethos which Lutheran schools should display. This culture has theological presuppositions in contrast to desires which stakeholders may bring into a Lutheran school. Whereas this may be understood by senior staff and pastors (Section 3.5.5), parents may see this in quite a different light. Similarly teachers may also have their own views on this matter. Thus it was important for the different perceptions of these stakeholder groups to be empirically identified to gain an overall picture of Lutheran school culture.

*Theological Professional Development* It has already been stated that the staffing policy of Queensland Lutheran schools is to employ quality educators who are practicing Christians. An employment condition is that teachers in all Queensland Lutheran schools are to undertake the *Theological Orientation Program for Staff (TOPS)* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b). This is a brief orientation course in Lutheran theology and its application to schools. As well, teachers of Christian Studies are to undertake the *Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education* offered through Luther Seminary. What is pertinent to this study is whether these courses have any effect on teacher's perceptions of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. If there is an effect, it is also important to determine which dimensions of culture are affected. Within Queensland Lutheran schools, those teachers who teach Christian Studies should ideally have very positive perceptions of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. Investigation of this variable determined whether this was in fact the case.

### **Units of Analysis**

In this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran Schools data were collected at the individual level. Within a study such as this, consideration needs to be given to the appropriate *unit of analysis*. Three different levels are available: between individuals overall (total analysis), between groups, and between individuals within groups (Keeves & Sellin, 1988; Sirotnik, 1980; Sirotnik & Burstein, 1985). *Total analysis* ignores possible grouping factors simply using individual data pooled into a total sample. *Between groups analysis* aggregates individual data to compute a group mean which is then used as the unit of analysis. *Within group analysis* treats the individual response within each group separately. If appropriate these analyses may be averaged leading to a pooled within group analysis. The fundamental issue in this discussion relates to the presence of "grouping effects" which need to be accounted for in the analysis. If the data are independent of grouping effects then a total analysis is appropriate. If data are dependent within a group, then either of the two other analyses is more appropriate.

Burstein (1988) cites three issues to be considered in selecting and justifying the choice of appropriate units of analysis: research and design contexts, conceptual considerations, and

finally technical considerations. The research and design contextual consideration relevant to this study of Queensland Lutheran Schools is the recognition of the use of a survey questionnaire to collect data from a variety of respondents (primary and secondary levels of teachers, senior staff, school council members, parents and friends, and pastors). While grouping effects exist within schools which suggests that the school be used as the unit of analysis, so groupings within schools also influence the thoughts and perceptions of respondents, e.g. senior staff. Thus school means for each group would be an appropriate unit of analysis.

The second issue in the selection of units of analysis is a consideration of conceptual issues which pertain to the purpose of the research. Thus in this study of Queensland Lutheran schools the research questions themselves (Section 1.5), the conceptual framework for this study (Section 3.4), and the research principles (Section 4.3) all influence the selection of the appropriate units of analysis. The research questions relate overall to the system of Lutheran schools in Queensland. However schools within the system of Queensland Lutheran schools exists as discrete schools having their own site-based management emphasising the need to consider the grouping effect of each school. To answer Research Questions 4a to 4f it was necessary to compare different schools or the different perceptions of groups within the schools. This required the use of the school mean as the unit of analysis, with school means being calculated for different groups within schools where appropriate. The use of the school as the unit of analysis is strengthened when also considering the theory of different kinds of cultural knowledge (Section 3.3.2). The important point is that perceptions are held by groups of people within a school. To ignore these grouping effects by using the individual as the unit of analysis would invalidate the analysis. Finally, Research Principle 3 (Section 4.3) states that it is important to link the individual's symbols with the social relationships and groups which provide that conception. When using a questionnaire the only method to achieve this is by using the school as the unit of analysis.

The third issue considered in the selection of the appropriate units of analysis involves technical considerations which include statistical considerations and practical considerations (Burstein, 1988). However this issue is the least important and should not dictate to the previous two. Statistical considerations include measurement reliability,

degrees of freedom, and analysis considerations. Practical considerations include missing data problems. As these issues should not guide the selection of the appropriate unit of analysis it was apparent that the school be the appropriate unit of analysis unless a technical reason preclude this decision.

An alternative perspective to unit of analysis is that of *hierarchical linear modelling* (Goldstein, 1995; Keeves & Sellin, 1988). Rowan, Raudenbush & Kang (1991) present a two-level hierarchical linear model which explicitly capitalises on the hierarchical nature of data collected in a school setting. In this two level model, variance is calculated at both *within-school* and *between-school* levels gaining an important theoretical advantage in allowing investigation of both within-school and between-school factors. This solution is similar to a combination of the between group analysis and the within group analysis.

From the above discussion, it was evident that the school mean is the appropriate unit of analysis. However, for those effects designated as within-school effects, the school mean was calculated for all examples of the effect so that both the between-school effects and the within-school effects were investigated. For example, calculation of school means for the variable Graduate Diploma involved calculation of two school means for each school, one for those who have completed the course and one for those who have not. These data were then analysed as explained in the following section.

## **Data Analysis**

Data collected were analysed at the levels described above in relation to the dimensions of culture identified in the first stage of the study. These dimensions, treated as dependent variables, formed the conceptual basis for the development of the six cultural dimension scales. Participant's perceptions to these scales were then gathered with the data analysis to be performed on a number of independent variables (Section 4.3.4). The reality of this situation presents a challenge to the researcher:

The many faceted nature of educational processes demands that measurements should be made on many variables, and that the procedures of analysis employed should be capable of the simultaneous examination and analysis of the many variables on which data have been collected. (Keeves, 1988, p. 700)

This was achieved by the use of multivariate statistics. The conceptual distinctiveness of the questionnaire scales were preserved through the use of Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA). Within MANOVA the relationship between two sets of variables (the dependent and independent variables) are simultaneously analysed. Using the MANOVA is preferable to a series of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tests in that the MANOVA indicates the overall relationship between the set of dependent variables and independent variables. ANOVAs (one for each dependent variable) were only conducted when the MANOVA yielded a significant result.

Three statistical reasons favour the use of MANOVA (Stevens, 1992). Firstly, the use of a series of univariate ANOVAs leads to an inflated Type I error rate (i.e. the possibility of false rejection of the null hypothesis). Secondly, univariate tests ignore the correlation among variables which is incorporated in multivariate tests. Thirdly, multivariate tests are more powerful, particularly when individual differences on several variables may combine to produce a significant result (i.e. a single ANOVA may not produce a significant result which is produced in a MANOVA).

Within this study, some grouping variables had more than two values (e.g. school type) and the ANOVA will not indicate which groups and variables were significant. Where the ANOVA result was significant, Tukey's post-hoc procedure (Stevens, 1992) was used to identify the pairs of grouping variables significantly different from each other. The level of statistical significance accepted for all statistical sets was .05.

A distinction was made between statistical significance and practical significance. Even though an effect may be statistically significant, it was important to determine whether the result was practically significant. One method of determining practical significance is through the use of the Cohen effect size measure (Stevens, 1992). In essence the effect size indicates how many standard deviations the groups vary by, and is calculated by

finding the difference between the means of the groups being compared divided by the standard deviation. An effect size of 0.65 would be considered to be in the medium range, while an effect size of 0.8 is considered large. Although effect size measure gives an indication of practical significance, at times practical significance can be judged by considering the means and ranges of results (Stevens, 1992).

A number of variables have been characterised as “within-school effects”. These variables were analysed using a “repeated measures” MANOVA. This form of MANOVA analyses within-schools effects, between-schools effects, and interactions between these effects. This is theoretically advantageous to this study to gain understanding of the culture within Queensland Lutheran schools.

Three variables: school size, percentage of Lutheran teachers, and percentage of Lutheran students are distinguished from the other variables as they are continuous variables which are best analysed using regression techniques. It was hypothesised that each of these dependent variables would be in a linear relationship with each dimension of culture, i.e. each scale of the questionnaire. ANOVAs were performed within each regression to determine whether the variables were statistically significant. Table 4.5 presents each variable and its associated method of analysis.

*Table 4.5*

Independent variables and their associated analysis techniques

Independent Variables	Statistical Procedure
School Type	MANOVA
Size of School	Linear Regression
Religious Denomination	MANOVA Repeated Measures
% of Lutheran Staff	Linear Regression
% of Lutheran Students	Linear Regression
Position	MANOVA Repeated Measures
Theological Professional Development	MANOVA Repeated Measures

#### 4.4.5 Research Period

The research reported in this thesis was conducted during 1996 and 1997. The key periods of the research are shown in Table 4.6.

*Table 4.6*

Research period and activity for each stage of the research program

Stage	Period	Activity
1	June 1996 to February 1997	Identification of dimensions of Culture of Queensland Lutheran schools
2	March 1997 to July 1997	Instrument development and validation
3	August 1997 to October 1997	Questionnaire data collection in 21 schools

#### 4.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

An important consideration within the research design concerned the rights of the participants. The research was conducted within the standard ethical considerations of educational research (Babbie, 1990; Schumacher & McMillan, 1993) and the policies of the Australian Catholic University Research Projects Ethics Committee. Ethical Approval was granted by this committee for all contact with participants. Approval was also obtained for this research from the Schools Department of the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District, and individual schools within the system prior to the research being conducted.

Within social research, participants are to be assured that participation is voluntary, that they will come to no harm through the research, and their identity will be protected (Babbie, 1990). All participants in this research were appraised of their rights prior to their participation, and informed consent (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993) obtained. Interviewees understood that information provided by them was available to be published in this thesis, but no information would be attributed to them or their school. Interviewees also reviewed the interview transcript and the analysis and quotations used to ensure they



were correctly recorded and understood. Participants understood they could withdraw at any time during the research process. Taped data and the associated transcripts were maintained in a secure and confidential manner.

Questionnaires were distributed to schools with school personnel distributing and collecting questionnaires for return to the researcher thus ensuring confidentiality. The first page of the questionnaire outlined the rights of participants with contact details being available for the researcher and the University Research Projects Ethics Committee. It was clearly stated that return of the questionnaire constituted agreement to participate in the research and for the information collected to be used in the research. Questionnaires and any analysis from this data were securely maintained. While responses to questionnaires were anonymous, it is possible in a number of cases to infer an individual's identity. Where an individual's identity may be inferred, or, as in the case of interviewees, an individual's identity is known, the identity of these individuals was kept confidential.

It is important to acknowledge the researcher's position during the research period as a principal of a Queensland Lutheran primary school. It is important to note that the staff of the researcher's school were not involved in any stage of the research. In all interactions with participants, it was clearly stated that their responses would be kept confidential and it was important that all responses be reported truthfully and accurately. No response would be used in any negative manner in regard to any individual participant or their school.

#### **4.6 ISSUES OF RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

"Reliability is concerned with the replicability of scientific findings, conventional validity is concerned with the accuracy of scientific findings" (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993, p. 331). Reliability may further be considered in two ways: internal reliability relates to the question of whether multiple researchers would agree with the analysis of data (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Wiersma, 1991); external reliability involves the extent to which independent researchers working in the same or similar context would obtain consistent results (Wiersma, 1991). Similarly validity too involves both external and internal validity. Internal validity is concerned with the efficient control of extraneous variables so

that comparisons can be produced which are free from bias (Glass & Stanley, 1970). External validity refers to the generalisability of research beyond the populations or settings in which the research was conducted (Rosenthal & Rosnow, 1984).

The issues of reliability and validity were considered within the framework of the principles of symbolic interactionism. For any research interaction to occur the following elements must be present: "two or more persons able to take the role of the other, a situation in which interaction can occur, and time to carry out that interaction" (Denzin, 1989, p. 22). Further, the following elements are also aspects of an interaction: social objects are present within the setting which are acted upon by the participants, people involved in the interaction are "differentially related to each other" (Denzin, 1989, p. 6), and the interaction is guided by a set of "rules" which shape and guide the interaction.

As has been argued previously, research is a form of symbolic interaction. Role-taking occurs, meaningful symbols are present, situations are available, and time must be available for the research. Each of these interactive elements (time, rules, relationships, objects, characteristics of the observers and the observed) can introduce potentially distorting factors into any study (Denzin, 1989). Potential sources of unreliability and invalidity are discussed under the following headings: the researcher, the participants, the situation, and time and its passage.

#### **4.6.1 The Researcher**

Researchers vary in their style of interaction, their self-concepts, interpretations of the research questions, and their relationships with participants. It was assumed that any researcher will bring into the research process a series of attributes making their perceptions of data different from those of another researcher (Denzin, 1989). These attributes are discussed below under various sub-headings.

*Researcher Status Position* Interviews may be potentially distorted by the rules and relationships which exist between the researcher and the participants. Thus it needs to be quite clearly stated that during the research period the researcher was employed as a primary principal in a Queensland Lutheran school. The researcher was also a member of the Schools Council of the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District Schools

Department and the member of a college council for part of the research period. This factor will be acknowledged and recognised when considering the conclusions of this research. During any interview situation the researcher sought to establish a relationship where both the researcher and participant were engaging in a mutual research activity where the participant's input was both necessary and respected as being informed.

The system of Queensland Lutheran schools is a small system of schools with many people within the system being known to each other. This may have a negative effect on the participants completing the questionnaire knowing that the researcher is a principal in one of the schools and thus considering they should respond "correctly". To counterbalance this effect, the introduction to the questionnaire stressed that the respondent's perceptions were important to this research. As questionnaires were distributed and collected by a member of each school community, the effect of the researcher's position was reduced.

Another implication of the researcher being a principal in the Queensland Lutheran School system is the problematic role of friendship. Friendship may bias data selection and minimise objectivity in three ways: data bias from the selection process in subjectively selecting persons who are friendly or who support a particular view, the access to data is restricted because of their friendship with others, and the tendency for the researcher to over identify with the participants (Glesne, 1994). The first two of these potential problems were overcome by strictly following selection processes as outlined. The rationale for selection of participants was discussed with fellow researchers. The tendency to over identify with the participants was reduced by the researcher establishing rapport rather than friendship with the interviewees (Glesne, 1994).

Another potential problem involved the researcher as a Principal within the system interacting with teachers, school council members, pastors, and other principals. All of these interactions may be characterised by different rules of etiquette and relationships (Denzin, 1989). As such, the researcher sought to minimise this effect by establishing rapport with the interviewees within a co-researcher relationship.

*Analytic Construct Effects* relate to the extent to which abstract terms, generalisations or meanings are shared across settings, and populations (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). In

order to overcome this effect, where possible, participants were fully briefed on terms used in the research. The analytic constructs and premises were explained so any subsequent researcher should have a clear understanding of the conceptual basis for the study, together with the theoretical basis for the research design. These are elaborated in Chapters 3 and 4.

It is most important in survey questionnaires to consider carefully the meanings of terms in constructing the questionnaire. As much as possible the terminology used within the questionnaires was “sensitised” by the interview data which were utilised as *low-inference descriptors*. The researcher’s knowledge of the “symbols” of language within Queensland Lutheran schools was advantageous in using language familiar to Lutheran schools.

*Low-Inference Descriptors* One form of principal evidence of the reliability of data is the use of verbatim accounts of interviews, descriptions taken directly from field notes or other recordings. These accounts enable others to have the means to accept, reject or modify a researcher’s conclusions (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). As well, negative and discrepant data need to be reported together with supporting evidence (Erickson, 1986: Patton, 1980). Thus this study uses verbatim data extracts in support of conclusions.

*Co-Researchers:* Within this study, the use of multiple researchers was not possible due to the constraints of time and finance. However in an attempt to alleviate any disadvantages caused by this, participant research assistants and peer examination (see below) were a feature of the research design. The purpose of the strategies which are outlined below was to confirm that data were understood in a similar manner by both researcher and participant (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). In essence, the relationship between researcher and participant is that of a “co-researcher” (Clandinin, 1986, p. 27). The participant was acknowledged as assisting the researcher in explaining their perceptions and understandings of a Lutheran school. Firstly, transcribed data from interviews were sent to the respondents to ensure their accuracy. Secondly, any aspects of the data where the observer was unclear as to the meaning of the data were discussed with the respondent. Thirdly, three key informants were also consulted in terms of understanding the data and the conclusions from the data. These strategies may be summarised as “researcher-subject corroboration” (Stainback & Stainback, 1984, p. 300).

These approaches were also utilised through the process of questionnaire development (Sections 6.2.2 and 6.3.2) to enhance the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

*Observer effects* is a factor which requires careful consideration (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). It was necessary to qualify the validity of the data received. Firstly, the data from particular interviews are considered to be valid within the context in which they were gathered, and represent an individual's perception. These data are problematic when used outside of the context in which they were gathered. Secondly, it was accepted within this thesis that perceptions may vary amongst sub-groupings within the culture of Lutheran Schools of Queensland. An overall view of the culture of these schools can only be valid when an amalgam of perceptions is considered. Finally, validity was ensured by the researcher allowing time for argument and discussion of discrepant data, particularly in group interviews. These data were used within the interviews to clarify the views of the participant, even when in conflict with other views, and to allow the participant to present their own view, and not a view which they believed the researcher was seeking. This issue was previously discussed in the section on low inference descriptors.

This effect, also known as the Hawthorne Effect (Campbell, 1963b), was also considered in the development of the questionnaire to reduce the tendency of people to respond differently simply because they were part of a research effort. It was hoped that by keeping the questionnaire as simple as possible, participants would provide their own perceptions and not be influenced unduly by their involvement in the research process. Participants were informed that the information was confidential, that there were no correct answers and that it was important for them to answer using their own perceptions. Participants were unaware of data analysis procedures.

#### **4.6.2 The Participants**

Because no participant will be the same as another distortion may be introduced into an observation due to the unique characteristics and perceptions of the participant. It is therefore apparent that when a researcher interacts with participants differences may be created across any interaction between the researcher and the participant (Denzin, 1989).

*Informant Choices* It has already been stated that respondents are unique and bring into the research their own particular characteristics. In this regard the problem of external reliability has been minimised by describing as fully, within the constraints of anonymity, the selection process and the respondents who provided the information.

*Selection Processes* which identified participants for the interviews were based on the criteria of reputational case selection. These processes ensured a comparable selection of respondents, thus avoiding bias from differential recruitment of respondents. Respondents to the survey questionnaire were selected using stratified probabilistic sampling thus reducing effects from statistical regression and differential selection (Campbell, 1963a) and ensuring a representative sample from the total population was selected. All selection process are clearly outlined in sections 4.3.3 and 4.3.4.

*Selection Effects* cause threat to external validity where the researcher does not recognise that some constructs cannot be compared across all groups. This effect is minimised in this research as concepts are not constructed by the researcher, but instead are derived from the data gathered. The researcher was sensitive to the possibility that these participant-derived categories were not common to all bounded groups within the study and as such data may not exist for some constructs within certain groups (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). To reduce this effect, *Peer Examination* which took two forms, was used. Firstly, academics working closely with the researcher examined the data and conclusions to ensure their reliability. Secondly, "co-researchers" using similar conceptual frameworks, but in different settings, were also given the opportunity to review the data.

#### **4.6.3 The Situation**

Another potential source of unreliability and invalidity is the setting of the observation (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). An interview may take place in an office, a staff room, or a class room. Each of these settings has different rules governing "permissible, comfortable and serious interaction" (Denzin, 1989, p. 23). In so far as any variation occurs in settings, it follows that data collected may vary according to the setting in which interviews occurred. In accordance with research principle 4 the setting of each interview, together with the number of people present, their relative positions and the manner in which they interacted were recorded. This enables replicability of the study to be more easily attained.

#### **4.6.4 Time And Its Passage**

Every research interaction unfolds over a temporal period: some short, some long. Over time, events extraneous to the observation may occur or changes may occur both in observers and those observed. Self-concepts may change, the focus of the research may shift, and symbols may take on new meanings (Denzin, 1989).

It is acknowledged that over the passage of time, participants' perceptions may vary. To reduce effects which may be caused by induced pressure on participants, interviews were conducted during term time, after school, and at a time away from major assessments, holidays, or other occasions which may influence their thinking.

Internal validity threats to the questionnaire related to time and its passage (history, maturation, and attrition (Campbell, 1963a) were not considered serious to the present research as data were collected only once. Because the questionnaire was only administered on one occasion and one analysis conducted, the effects of testing and instrumentation (Campbell, 1963a) were also not serious threats to the internal validity of the questionnaire. Any instrumentation effects were further reduced by ensuring that generally accepted guidelines for scale development were utilised during the development of the instrument.

### **4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. This chapter provides a detailed discussion of the particular methodological issues and decisions within the research design. The theoretical orientation and theoretical basis for the methodology were established with eight research principles derived from the theory of symbolic interactionism being adopted to guide the design of the research.

A three stage research program developed using the eight research principles was adopted. In the first stage, interview data were analysed using analytical induction techniques to identify the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools. Full details of the data

collected and analysis of this data resulting in the identification and description of the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools are reported in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

The second stage of the study involved the development and validation of a contextually specific instrument for assessing the cultural dimensions in Queensland Lutheran schools. Full descriptions of the development and validation of the instrument is provide in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

The third stage of the study involved the analysis of the data from the final form of the instrument to answer Research Questions 3 and 4, including 4a to 4f. Following consideration of the unit of analysis issue, the school mean was selected as the appropriate unit of analysis. Data were analysed using MANOVA and ANOVA to investigate the influence of the independent variables on the dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. Repeated measures and linear regression techniques were also utilised within this analysis.

Ethical considerations in relation to this research were discussed as well as considering possible threats to the reliability and validity of the research. The research was designed to protect the rights of participants and to minimise any threats to either the reliability or validity of the research. The focus on the following chapter is the identification of the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools.



## **CHAPTER FIVE**

# **THE CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF QUEENSLAND LUTHERAN SCHOOLS**

### **ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEW DATA**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

As discussed in Chapter 4, the methodology adopted for this study required interview data to be collected from key stakeholders in Queensland Lutheran schools. The purpose of the present chapter is to analyse these data and propose cultural dimensions which will form the basis for an instrument to assess the cultural dimensions of Lutheran schools. Data were collected from “key informants” within Lutheran schools to obtain *first hand perceptions* of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools from a cross-section of personnel who are experienced in Lutheran schools. Interviews were conducted from both individuals and groups using a semi-structured interview format (Section 4.4).

Chapter 3 presented the conceptual framework of different kinds of cultural knowledge, namely: axiomatic knowledge, dictionary knowledge, recipe knowledge, and directory knowledge (Section 3.3.2). The analysis is presented in three main sections reflecting the cause and effect relationships of the different kinds of cultural knowledge. Axiomatic knowledge, the presuppositions and underpinnings of Lutheran education is presented initially (Section 5.2). This is followed by the presentation of the findings in regard to dictionary knowledge which states what it is that Lutheran schools seek to achieve (Section 5.3), followed by recipe knowledge which expresses how this should be achieved (Section 5.4). Following these analyses, Section 5.5 comments on directory knowledge, which tells what actually occurs rather than what should occur. Section 5.6 proposes cultural dimensions for Queensland Lutheran schools. A summary of the chapter is provided in Section 5.7.

## 5.2 AXIOMATIC KNOWLEDGE

Axiomatic knowledge is that knowledge which expresses the question of *why*, it expresses the fundamental beliefs of all that occurs within the Lutheran school. It was apparent that all participants viewed the culture of Lutheran schools as distinctive from that of other schools, clearly expressing those aspects which were distinctive.

Because it is distinctive from other Christian schools and from other private schools, and I think some people tend to be a little confused about the definition of a private school and a Christian school, ... and the more you get involved or experience you have with the different Christian schools and even just the variety that is around here, they are all very different in culture. (Teacher 1)

The data suggest that such a perspective is the result of the particular theological beliefs of Lutheran schools. Not only was this apparent from explicit statements, but also during discussion of the other cultural dimensions. One principal described the importance of theological beliefs.

Increasingly over the years I have come to the view that it's not the organisational things, it's not the ecclesiastical things that make the difference. It is probably what people think is the least likely to be an influence and it's the theological. And I've come to that view by seeing the reverse of it. By seeing what happens when there is not what I would consider an adequate theological underpinning for the actions of the people in the classrooms and the administration, and seeing the change that occurs in individuals and the areas of their responsibilities as they develop those theological underpinnings and understandings. (Administrator 2)

These beliefs are the guiding wisdom for all aspects of school life, particularly the formal education. As such these presuppositions are to guide and enlighten both the formal and informal curriculum of the school.

So there is an opportunity to really get an interaction between our theology and what is happening within the educational scene within this school. That's the real dialogue between theology and education. Somehow we've got to get that as a real dialogue in a sense of equal partners although in one sense theology is an unequal partner because it

has a dimension of revelation. But at the same time to really get those to ... mesh because that's really what's going to have to apply right throughout the school. (Administrator 4)

The interviewees also clearly stated that it is not sufficient for statements to be made proposing that Lutheran theology be the basis for the schools, but that these beliefs be made explicit through the actions of members of the schools, in particular the staff of Queensland Lutheran schools.

Ideally, I would say the distinction comes when those who lead and teach in the schools are able to convey by their words and actions, that is the way they do things, the fundamentals of Christian belief and action. Specifically that they are so filled with God's love and forgiveness that they act in a particular way towards their students. (Administrator 5)

It was evident that the theological understandings and beliefs of the Lutheran Church of Australia contain the basic presuppositions and beliefs which are the guiding wisdom to inform what occurs within Queensland Lutheran school. The doctrines of the Lutheran Church of Australia form important cultural axiomatic knowledge for Lutheran schools. They generate the bases for, and provide insight into the presuppositions and assumptions of the other areas of cultural knowledge which are discussed in the following sections. They are the foundation for Queensland Lutheran schools.

### **5.3 DICTIONARY KNOWLEDGE**

Dictionary knowledge is described as that knowledge which refers to the knowledge of things or events at a descriptive level comprising labels and definitions within Queensland Lutheran schools. Two cultural dimensions of dictionary knowledge were evident from the data: namely, *Caring*, *Christ-centred Community* and *Quality Christian Education*.

#### **5.3.1 Caring, Christ-centred Community**

As stated above the first directory knowledge dimension identified was that of *Caring*, *Christ-centred Community*. The Christo-centric nature of the schools is that common bond of Queensland Lutheran schools irregardless of how divergent other aspects of the individual schools may be. One administrator identified this central feature.

I think the big thing is that we have an absolute infinite variety of school communities. None of them are perfect. Each has its basic flaws. Some of them are educational flaws. You go to schools and you say we don't have that right in worship life and we don't have that right in whatever. What we do see in all of them ... is a genuine attempt by the people there to put Christ in the centre, and then work through the issues that arise out of that. (Administrator 5)

Derived from the Christ-centred nature of the school, is the nature of community and the caring which is apparent within this community. This is clearly described by an administrator who highlights the sense of community and its derivation from Christian beliefs.

What I hear where ever I go is this sense of community and that students are cared for as individuals. ... When you ask a parent why they want to enrol, what was it that attracted them, they will talk about the care that her students have got. That's what parents would say to me. The thing that characterises the school is this incredible care. It reminds me of the early church, "See how they love one another?" Now that's what I hear people say. ... For me it comes back to the Gospel. That Christ cared for me so much that he'd die for me. That's the inspiration for us to show care and love beyond that which is expected. (Administrator 6)

The dimension of *Caring, Christ-centred Community* has the following characteristics which are discussed below: *forgiveness acceptance, growing as individuals, family orientation, and pastoral care.*

### **Forgiveness acceptance**

The Christ-centred nature of the community takes its focus from the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lutheran Confessions in the Formula of Concord state that the content of the gospel is

... that the Son of God, Christ our Lord, himself assumed and bore the curse of the law and expiated and paid for all our sins, that through him alone we re-enter the good graces of God, obtain forgiveness of sins through faith, are freed from death and all the punishments of sin, and are saved eternally. For everything which comforts and which offers the mercy and grace of God to transgressors of the law strictly speaking is, and is called, the Gospel, a good and joyful message that God wills not to punish sins but to forgive them for Christ's sake. (Tappert, 1959, p. 561)

The data suggest it is this gospel orientation of Lutheran schools which should be expressed as the adoption of an attitude of acceptance of all people on the basis that all have been forgiven by God. Further as God has forgiven, so his people should forgive others. Thus the overwhelming attitude expressed by the interviewees was one where people be accepted for the people who they are, and further that an attitude of forgiveness be extended to them no matter what may have transpired. This attitude was described by one interviewee when describing the characteristics of Queensland Lutheran schools.

A [Lutheran] school [is one] that sees the forgiveness of Jesus Christ as fundamental to our relationship with God and with each other. A school which attempts to invite students to a relationship with God. That side of it. And also a school which tries to nurture that relationship. I like the word nurture, to help that relationship to develop and grow. ... I am aware of schools that have developed a quite sharp focus on what would have seen to be specifically Lutheran. An attempt to have the area of forgiveness acceptance come through in a very real way in what the program is on about, reflecting the gospel in that sense. (Administrator 4)

This attitude of forgiving acceptance is hopefully evidenced through the daily life of members of the school community as described from one participant's experience.

I think the centrality of the Gospel in terms of being prepared to forgive kids who repeatedly probably do the wrong thing ... I think if a school is living in the gospel there is that openness of communication and there has to be an acceptance of each other. (Administrator 3)

For Christians outside of the Lutheran tradition this understanding of the Gospel can be difficult to understand, but once understood is perceived as an important aspect of the school's life. One teacher recounts their experience in regard to this doctrine.

I'd have to say this idea of Law and Gospel and this idea of forgiveness, especially in the early days, was something that I found quite different and often hard to get a handle on. You would think that some of these kids who were repeated offenders, and we are all only from the outside looking in, and you are not the Head or the person doing the discipline, and you think why on earth don't you kick them out? They've done this enough. But it comes down to, I think, the relationship between the head and this person when they are discussing the situation and why the situation keeps happening again and whether the student involved is really trying to reform but keeps sliding back etc. And that all has its roots in the Gospel and that sort of thing and that's a hard concept. (Teacher 1)

## **Growing as individuals**

The characteristic of forgiveness acceptance describes a forgiving attitude to be accorded to each person as a unique individual. Associated with this is the belief that each individual is to be valued as a unique creation of God.

Each child is a precious gift from God and that colours everything, everything that I do, everything I teach, every way I treat that child, the way I speak to the child's parents with that thought, looking at that child. No matter how atrocious they have been, they are precious and loved. (Teacher 2)

This understanding accords each individual their own value as a uniquely created and forgiven child of God. However at the same time the individual is limited by their own humanity, and needs to be recognised as a person who is not perfect and who will continue in this state of being unable to live a perfect life. Within Lutheran doctrine this is referred to as the concept of saint and sinner (Section 2.2.6). This was perceived as an important element within Queensland Lutheran schools by one participant.

Fundamental belief in the value of each individual in that community. ... I would say a fundamental belief in the sinfulness of humankind and what that means as we work that through and theologically then the concept of saint and sinner. I think that is a fundamental belief which is rapidly being lost, also in a number of church school systems. So that means taking the individual seriously as a total person. It means allowing for failure. In fact, also fundamental to that is the understanding that the Word of God creates opposition as well as acceptance, and within the school we have to allow for that and we've got to accept it as a response as otherwise we don't respect the integrity of the person. (Administrator 4)

Recognising the value of the individual involves relationship building and knowing each person well which has implications for classroom relationships. For one parent who reflected on both her children's and her own education, this was an important aspect of Queensland Lutheran schools.

I would also add that the relationships between the students and the teachers is different, somehow is different. It may be because it's a Christian based school. Every teacher knows every child, they know their little ins and outs, their good and their bad points. The child is not just a number. I can think all the way back to my Lutheran college and say exactly the same thing there. I wasn't just a number and neither were any of the other kids that went to that school. Every teacher knew every child. (Parent 1)

Having accepted people as individuals who are simultaneously saint and sinner, there is also the recognition that change and growth can and should occur within each individual. This growth can occur within all spheres of life, especially under the power of God, so that each individual can grow to maturity. This important aspect of this cultural dimension was clearly elaborated on by one interviewee.

I would believe that people can change, ... that there is an opportunity for them to grow. And I also believe very strongly in the power of the Word, Christ, and the power of words to effect change, and so communication and interaction bring about change. ... There's also the dimension which goes beyond the physical and that people have in there being something which goes beyond a substance. That's the spiritual dimension that any Christian would accept as being very real and a lot of non-Christians accept that as being very real as well. So that's in there. And then the whole business of human knowledge which is basically for me an accumulation of experience interacting with any individual at any given point in time causing change in that individual which we call growth. (Administrator 5)

This important focus on the individual is balanced by a focus on community which manifests itself in a Queensland Lutheran school as a family orientation.

### **Family orientation**

The data suggest two aspects relating to a family orientation. Firstly, in Queensland Lutheran schools both the students and their parents are part of the community, and the school is in partnerships with the parents, in fact the whole family. Thus the school is oriented toward relating to the families of its students. Secondly, the nature of the school community itself is that of a family.



One teacher describes the importance of the first aspect, being oriented toward the family, as follows:

I think because we are seeing the child as this precious gift, we are also seeing the child as a whole with their family. I would hope we are acknowledging the importance of the family and I hope we are encouraging the parents to feel that they can come to us, that we are approachable to parents, that we make parents feel that they are important, and that we want to hear from them because they know their children better than we do. And the feeling that parents get that they are important. (Teacher 2)

Queensland Lutheran schools accept a wide range of students from a broad spectrum of Christian denominations as well as students from non-Christian families. Thus the acceptance accorded to the individual as described above is also shown to these families, while still providing education under the principles of Queensland Lutheran schools.

It's my view that in terms of parents we are different from so many other schools. ... we take in a whole range of parents. ... I think we have to tell parents that you will come here for a variety of reasons and we accept that, and you see the education that we offer and you want that for your child, but please understand these are the experiences they will have. We must be very up front with that in that matter. It is a very difficult one, we must respect them and love them and for me we are here again to respond to their needs. (Administrator 6)

This partnership is seen as being important in terms of the education which the schools wish to offer to support these families.

I would hope that somehow we really can develop what is definitely there in some schools which is the concept of partnership. ... I feel that we really do need to attempt to relate to the families as much as possible, particularly given the sorts of developments which are happening within society, and at the moment I think the school may have a very supportive function that it can play. (Administrator 4)

It was hypothesised that the nature of the Christ-centred, caring community leads to a sense of the school itself being akin to a family. All people who come into the school are in effect becoming members of that family.

We walked into this one and we weren't going any further. It had an air, a difference, an atmosphere. ... We walked in and 'welcome, come and join the family, the family atmosphere, come and join our family.' That was the difference. (Parent 1)

Being a part of the school family has implications for the care which is shown to students and their families.

He [a pastor] regards all non-Lutheran parents at his school who do not have a spiritual home of their own as under his spiritual care. If they go to the Uniting Church or Anglican church, that's their home. If they do not have a spiritual home he would regard them as under his spiritual care. That means he has to get to know them. It means he would probably want to intentionally make contact with them once a year. It would probably mean that because he's around and is known to them he's in a position to respond to their needs, whether it's family, emotional, personal, what have you. ... It's about supporting communities, building up communities, making links with the church community, that people can just walk across so comfortably, it's increasing that comfort zone. (Administrator 6)

From the parents interviewed, it was apparent that they desired open communication with the school and that they recognised the importance of a closeness between school and home, and the relationships which exist.

I think as parents we trust our teachers. We've put a lot of trust in our teachers and I think that situation there, you do expect the teacher to ask you to come in to have a talk or relay something to you if a child is having difficulties or his behaviour is not right before it becomes a major problem. If you are going to keep your school and your church and your family as one that's all got to operate together. (Parent 3)

One outcome of a family orientation is the pastoral care of students as discussed in the next section.

## Pastoral Care

Pastoral care is evident in many schools. In Queensland Lutheran schools pastoral care is an aspect of school life which has a special meaning. This was illustrated by one administrator when describing the relationship between a teacher and her class.

... I think you come back to the most important part of all the teacher with their group of children, their little family as we put it here. ... She's like a mother hen with all her little chicks following and little chick you get back in line. It's her group. I think it's that family way of looking at children in the primary school. (Administrator 1)

This family orientation leads to a special relationship between teacher and student. At the base of this is the special care which is motivated by the Gospel of Christ for each individual. An administrator explained that pastoral care is not so much a program but an attitude.

Care and concern for other people, what we often refer to as pastoral care is critical. ... And I think that's something that's characteristic of Lutheran schools. That pastoral care is not a responsibility, again this is the ideal, but is a natural out-flowing of the Christian's love in response to God's love for us. It's a part of our service and as a consequence while we channel it specifically to the students we teach, and if you happen to be in a particular pastoral care structure you will channel it specifically to the particular group of students for whom you have responsibility, it will inevitably flow over to other people. (Administrator 2)

This places an additional aspect in the life of the teacher, who is not only responsible for the secular education of an individual but also through the living of their faith in Christ shows a genuine love towards their students.

Then to help them to understand what it means to be a Lutheran school, and that there are extra responsibilities in terms of living out their faith and Gospel here. And that is then contributing to pastoral care, the sense of community, and seeing that what happens in the classroom is informed by the faith, so the world view that emerges is in harmony with the world view of the Christian school. (Administrator 6)

As described above this pastoral care is viewed as a natural out pouring of Christian love. This is not restricted solely to staff, or administration or pastors within the school, but should become an important aspect of school life as illustrated by the comments of one teacher.

There was one day this year and it was the anniversary of my father's death and I was really sad and the children noticed and they said, "What's wrong? Why are you sad." And I said, "I'm sad. It's my dad's birthday and I can't give him a cuddle." ... and they said, "Well just say a prayer and ask Jesus to give him a cuddle for you." And another said, "And the angels could have a birthday party." (Teacher 2)

In saying that this pastoral care is important within the school, one area of school life where this should be apparent is discipline. The importance of the effect of pastoral care on school life, was commented on by a school council member and a parent.

I think discipline is one thing. Certainly to me, there's a perception that there's little or no discipline in a lot of state schools these days. Whereas with Lutheran schools, there's discipline and it's not the same as, and you may have a go at me for saying, air force style discipline. It's not that. It's a caring type of discipline. You can probably go to some Christian schools and get more of a military style discipline, but I think in Lutheran schools it's a more caring discipline. (School Council Member)

The Christian traits of gentleness and meekness, and those traits really do flow through the school. So therefore we have a far better base than the state school system because they don't have those fruits of the Spirit: love your brother and the parents. (Parent 2)

The first dimension of dictionary cultural knowledge, described above, is that of the Caring, Christ-centred Community. The above section has described the four associated characteristics of this dimension: forgiveness acceptance, growing as individuals, family orientation, and pastoral care. The next section outlines the second dimension of dictionary knowledge and its associated properties.

### 5.4.2 Quality Christian Education

The second dimension identified within dictionary knowledge is that of *Quality Christian Education*. This dimension of Quality Christian Education, together with the previous dimension of a Caring, Christ-centred Community, are the two pillars on which the structure of Queensland Lutheran schools are developed. An administrator expressed this dimension as follows:

I guess it's a sense of quality education. I guess I like to say that you put a sign out there that you're a school and therefore your first commitment is to deliver quality education. I guess that's another value to me as a Christian. You do it all to the glory of God. That means you do whatever you do to your best, whether you're a parent or a husband. You do it to the glory of God which means you can't cut corners. So you put a sign up there saying school. You do it to the glory of God which means there's a striving for what others would call excellence. (Administrator 6)

This is not just an expectation of those within Queensland Lutheran schools, but also of parents who enrol their students in the school.

I think the thing that distinguishes Lutheran schools is their reputation. In other words they have a reputation in the marketplace that they are quality schools, quality education based on Christian principles. (Parent 2)

The cultural dimension *Quality Christian Education* can be construed to have a variety of meanings. Therefore it was considered important to explicate this term using the interview data. Four characteristics were apparent: *informed by the Gospel*, *striving for excellence*, *holistic education*, and *learning for life*. These four characteristics are elaborated on below.

#### Informed by the Gospel

As with the associated dimension based on dictionary knowledge, this dimension has the theological understandings of the Lutheran Church of Australia as its foundations. This is

expressed as quality education being informed by the Gospel. In this context Gospel is used in its broad sense.

The word “Gospel” is not used in a single sense in Holy Scripture, ... Therefore we believe, teach, and confess that when the word “Gospel” means the entire doctrine of Christ which he proclaimed personally in his teaching ministry and which his apostles also set forth (examples of this meaning occur in Mark 1:15 and Acts 20:24), then it is correct to say or write that the Gospel is a proclamation both of repentance and of forgiveness of sins. (Tappert, 1958, p. 478)

This characteristic indicates that in Queensland Lutheran schools all curricula are influenced by, and are taught in the light of the Gospel as expressed by one teacher.

The most precious things to me would be firstly the freedom to express my faith, to share it. ... I think it's just how your faith, how Jesus is there through everything, through every lesson, through everything situation that you have and that you know he's there and the children know it too. ... the Christian attitudes are there, the caring, all that's there. (Teacher 2)

The opportunity to integrate the Gospel within the school's curriculum is also understood by an administrator as a pervasive aspect of the school which needs to be expressed by teachers in different situations.

... we try to integrate Christian teaching and belief into all areas of school life. ... The Christian basis to the life of the school, the fact in the case of teachers they need to understand that we are looking for people who, if they are Christians, need to be able to articulate their faith in ways that may not be possible or wise in a state school or secular school setting. (Administrator 2)

Education can be viewed broadly as a whole of life experience. For a parent the integration of a Gospel based education between home and school was important.

I would have to say first of all it's Bible based education. That it's actually Bible based and that's what means a lot to me. ... I guess I look at school education as part of your home education and because we try to live by Bible principles, ... I know because of the

Bible based education that that is also going to be reinforced at school. To me that's important and for the children to be able to get home and school together. (Parent 3)

For yet another participant the education being informed by the Gospel was expressed as being important within the school, especially when talking with new parents.

I talk about a variety of things which we say are important in this school: the Christian basis of the life and teaching at the school, the academic standards and demands of the school, the extra-curricula program of the school and the behaviour management, the whole area of student attitude and behaviour, what some people would call discipline, but there are two sides to the coin, and our pastoral care. (Administrator 2)

For another participant it was important that Gospel values are evident in the school's educational program.

They're the features I'd want to emphasise: education that's quality, that's to help us for our lives in service in various stations in life, and it can take place in the context of being saved. Then it is this education that these Gospel values will come through. (Administrator 6)

### **Striving for excellence**

The interview data clearly demonstrate the importance of developing and using God given gifts in four areas: students, curriculum, teachers, and resources. The prime motivation is a striving to provide the best possible education for the students of Queensland Lutheran schools.

There's a sensitivity I think to providing the education which is really of quality and I think they do. I think they provide that quality education and I think as a system the quality of the education they provide is really of a high quality. It is a strong characteristic. ... I also think a quality education looks at the individual and develops, if you want to use the term, excellence in the term of that person's capabilities. (Administrator 4)

For this education to become reality, highly professional and committed teachers are a prerequisite as alluded to by an administrator.

One I would expect that person to be functioning as a fully professional person and any thing added to that does not remove that dimension, ... Very, very much a professional teacher, a teacher concerned for the individual needs and requirements of students in the class. But then also somebody who can embody in himself or herself what it means to live as a Christian. And a term is sometimes used: incarnational teaching. I think it still is a useful one properly understood that the teacher lives that dimension. So if we are talking about forgiveness acceptance in someone that is an essential, it is something the teacher is. It isn't something the teacher does because it is required by the policy of the school. (Administrator 4)

The data also indicate a concern that the curriculum be developed to further this characteristic of striving for excellence. This is a critical aspect of the teachers professional activities.

Well if we are going to operate schools then the curriculum is critical. It has to be based on current human knowledge and understanding. It has to be formulated in such a way that it is appropriate developmentally so we have to base it on a good understanding of human development, where students are within that continuum. (Administrator 5)

In order for this to occur teachers examine methodologies and other curriculum issues in a program of professional development. For one participant this involved a study of learning styles.

We've been looking at different ways of doing some art and different learning styles. I've become very conscious even in my area of religious education of how limited we tend to be in terms of just which kids we give the greatest opportunity to succeed to. I can't speak for other areas like home economics ... I think across the curriculum that giving everyone the opportunity to do as well as they can with their unique abilities is critically important. (Chaplain)

Striving for excellence has implications for providing the best resources possible within each school to support student learning. These resources include physical, educational,



technological, and human. For one participant an important aspect of this was the provision of learning support teachers

I'm talking about what some people would call remedial teachers. They are not remedial teachers, secondary school is too late for remediation. They are people who act as a resource for other teachers. Some of them do the teaching themselves, but they provide support for students and support for teachers in the learning situations. (Administrator 2)

For another participant it was important that all resources be fully utilised, and no matter what resources be available that they be used to produce quality education and excellence.

Everything's changed and parents are demanding so much more that I feel that as a Lutheran school we need to be above, and the standards which we expect need to be above, what state schools expect, because the devil's going to breakdown as much as he can. When something's working well he's going to go for it. So I think we have to try and prove ourselves that we are way up there with the best and yet we still offer the extra, the Christian life, the caring, our staff are caring and they care about the family and the child but education is way up there. ... With what you have, you use it to the best, and you get the best out of it. Whether you've got this equipment or that equipment you do excellence. (Teacher 2)

## **Holistic education**

The third characteristic of this cultural dimension based on dictionary knowledge is an *holistic education*. In this context holistic education is taken to be an education which recognises that to be successful, a child's education must cater to the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of each individual. This was attested to by an administrator.

I would see a fundamental belief for Lutheran schools in the value of education as a process in the full breadth of that term, and related to that a belief in the importance of wisdom as something which grows out of that entire process. So we're not aiming simply at skills or knowledge or attitudes or values. We're looking at something which integrates into a totality. Accepting the individual person and being fundamentally concerned with

that person's relationship with God and with other people. That sort of a combination.  
(Administrator 4)

The data suggest also the recognition that students are gifted differently, both in terms of what they are able to learn as well their individual learning style. The needs and learning styles of individuals need to be catered for within the education of each individual in Queensland Lutheran schools. Thus the program presented will be holistic in the sense that different children's learning approaches and differing abilities be addressed within curriculum design.

But people are gifted in different ways, and I think we need to recognise that, and help to provide the sort of support that's needed for that. And so I think that's where we've got to do a lot of work. And in leadership that would then be curriculum leadership, which would look at the whole question of content, methodology, and that sort of thing.  
(Administrator 4)

The data also include a recognition that time spent at school is not simply academic, but there are many other aspects to school life, all of which need to be catered for in the total program.

The teaching of a student has gone from the days when it was just academic. It really is an extension of life. ... So beside the academic side they are also hitting on the social side, cause they have to interact for those seven hours, there is a spiritual side, a physical side. Almost everything in the development of that childhood is coming out in the school hours and it comes back to one of the basic premises of Lutheran schools. Seven out of the twelve or fourteen hours, half the time they are awake, is spent in the school environment, and therefore as a parent we choose to go back to an environment which is predominantly Christian based, mixing with other kids who are predominantly trying to live Christian lives, rather than putting them into what is totally contrary to what your family is trying to instil with your family set of values. The quality is far more than the academic isn't it?  
(Parent 2)

Within Queensland Lutheran schools this recognition of individuals, manifests itself in the community experiencing great diversity. This diversity is valued, with individuals

being respected for the people they are and the contribution they are able to make to the community. This was commented on by two teachers.

I think that all people feel valued or valuable for their own skills, whether those skills are in a cultural area or whatever, the physical area, or academic, or other sorts of activities. That's what should be in a Lutheran School. (Administrator 3)

To recognise the value of everybody for whatever particular contribution they can make, but I also think if we are going to call ourselves a Christian school then we have to cater for all abilities, and all that sort of thing. ... To cater for a wide range of students. (Teacher 1)

All of these factors have an influence on the curriculum which needs to be designed in recognition of the holistic nature of education and the diversity within the student body.

Schools are about intellectual development. That's their first and foremost thing. Secondly they are about other kinds of development but we wouldn't need schools if we weren't looking at intellectual development. ... The educator has to be constantly reflecting on where is the child, what's appropriate for them in selecting from the vast array of human knowledge that will inform the program, the curriculum will be used as the illustrations, will be the literature that is read and studied. ... The program has infinite possibilities and then students provide infinite possibilities and the interaction is always uncertain from an intellectual viewpoint. So it's a matter for me anyway, like the artist choosing, with the good artist creating an harmonious whole for the individual. I suppose I see teaching a bit like an art in human relationships. (Administrator 5)

## **Learning for life**

The final important characteristic of the cultural dimension of Quality Christian Education is *learning for life*. This characteristic is comprised of two elements. Firstly Queensland Lutheran schools present education as an important and natural developmental stage in life where learning and being a member of a caring Christian community are important and fulfilling in and of themselves.

One, the students are working, they are engaged and this comes back to the two aspects, the education and the gospel. So the education is very much engaging students in learning and that students are engaged. Secondly, would be that the teacher is engaged in the discussions with one or two children and then you look around the walls and you see a whole range of experiences and you'll see somewhere a reference to the Christ or the cross or Christianity and it's just a natural part of a classroom. (Administrator 6)

This viewpoint was elaborated on by a parent who believes Queensland Lutheran schools develop the beginnings of the Christian life.

It is a very constant steady Christian out working day by day, year by year. There is no hypocrisy with the kids they pick up. So the kids see a steady daily on-going life working experience with Christ, rather than an a religious fervour for a period and then let's back off from that. And that is a very important thing because we are in a life time experience being a Christian. So therefore in the 7 years or 12 years they are at school, they see the teachers being constant Christians, the school system being, the consistency of it being Christian, and I reckon that's the big plus. (Parent 2)

Secondly, Queensland Lutheran schools wish to prepare their students for life in the future, whatever that may comprise. This was an important consideration for one participant.

I think you have got to look at what is education, and education is preparing a child for adulthood and being able to stand on their own two feet and that's got to start off at a very broad level. As the child progresses, it can narrow into a certain field. So they have got to be able to communicate, relate to other people, read and write, that's part of the communication, general knowledge of cultures I guess, mainly the culture they are living in. I think they need to understand that culture more than the cultures of the rest of the world, certainly initially. How to think, how to cope with different personalities, social situations, environmental situations and every day run of the mill things. How to cope with conflict and different personalities. And how to enjoy life. (School Council Member)

This second element refers to the preparation of students for their life ahead. Thus in discussing discipline in Queensland Lutheran schools one participant suggested that difficult issues are used to prepare students for the reality of life:

It's used as a development of their life rather than their rights. Their rights should be corrected and should demand action and whatever, whereas the other aspect of this is life. Welcome to it and the reality of life is that things don't always go your way. Some decisions are right, some are wrong. (Parent 2)

This section identified two dimensions of culture knowledge reflecting dictionary knowledge which are summarised in Table 5.1. Table 5.1 illustrates these two dimensions of dictionary knowledge: Caring, Christ-centred Community and Quality Christian Education including the characteristics of each of these dimensions. These two dimensions describe the cultural knowledge of what it is that is distinctive about Queensland Lutheran schools. The next section addresses recipe knowledge which describes how things should be done in Queensland Lutheran schools.

*Table 5.1*

Cultural knowledge reflecting dictionary knowledge with associated characteristics

<b>Dictionary Knowledge</b>	<b>Caring, Christ-centred Community</b>	<b>Quality Christian Education</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forgiveness acceptance</li> <li>• Growing as individuals</li> <li>• Family orientation</li> <li>• Pastoral care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informed by the Gospel</li> <li>• Striving for excellence</li> <li>• Holistic education</li> <li>• Learning for life</li> </ul>

## 5.4 RECIPE KNOWLEDGE

The previous section identified two dimensions comprising dictionary knowledge which describe what characterises a Lutheran school: Quality Christian Education within a Caring, Christ-centred Community. This section discusses cultural dimensions within recipe knowledge. Recipe, or causal-normative knowledge, is that knowledge which expresses the should of theories of action. It expresses the *shoulds* of a situation, approximating wisdom and being similar to Argyris and Schon's (1974, 1978) espoused theory (see section 3.3.2).

As has been previously discussed, the data being analysed were obtained from *key informants* - people considered to be knowledgeable concerning Lutheran education.

Within the interview discussion was idealistic and hence approaches wisdom of how things *should* be done. It represents the espoused theories of the participants and hence needs to be regarded as recipe knowledge.

Within recipe knowledge four themes became evident: *Worship as Celebration*, *Worship as Life in Vocation*, *Christian Relationships and Interactions*, and *Christian Leadership and Management*. These four recipe knowledge dimensions are the basis for discussion for the remainder of this section.

#### **5.4.1 Worship as Celebration**

The first cultural dimension comprising recipe knowledge is that of *Worship as Celebration*. The interview data attests to the importance of this cultural dimension in Queensland Lutheran schools. One administrator views worship as a distinctive feature of Queensland Lutheran schools.

I think if we're looking at things that are distinctive, I think the emphasis on worship is, because I think it carries through much more strongly than it does in some of the schools of some of the other denominations where that dimensions has for some reason or other been lost. (Administrator 4)

Worship in Queensland Lutheran schools can take a number of forms or styles, but it is characterised by the gathering of the school community around God's Word, coming into God's presence in a special way. Another administrator highlights the importance of the worship life of the school.

... the emphasis that we place on community worship is important. ... I am talking worship, just that. A very abbreviated form of daily worship in the school setting, what we would call morning devotions. I'm not talking about the full order of the service of Word and sacrament. I'm talking about just your 15 or 20 minutes of devotions whether it's in a large group or in our case in year levels, or sometimes once a week in home groups, groups of 15 to 25, a whole variety of settings, a whole variety of styles, but always based around the Word of God and coming into the presence of God to hear His Word. (Administrator 2)

The cultural dimension of worship as celebration has three characteristics which are discussed in the remainder of this section. The three characteristics are *celebrating Christ*, *celebrating community*, and *celebrating life*.

### **Celebrating Christ**

One of the stated aims of Queensland Lutheran schools is that students are brought into a relationship with Christ as Lord and Saviour (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a). While the curriculum of Queensland Lutheran schools includes Christian Studies, a special occasion in which Christ comes into the school is through worship.

And how is the gospel then implanted in the schools becomes a critical thing and that's where your daily worship's important, where the gospel physically comes into the school and through the teachers who understand the gospel and live out the gospel. It's the daily, normal part of life, living out the gospel. (Administrator 6)

The data suggest that worship is an activity which is accorded special prominence. Time is set aside for it both on a weekly and daily basis to gather around God's Word to give praise to God, to worship Christ as Lord and Saviour for His death and resurrection for our sake, and the forgiveness which is given to us. This is a special activity of the school which can be distinguished from all other activities.

I would hope that somewhere in all of that, the student in the school has an opportunity to experience what I would call awe or respect. That dimension of worship that we are doing something here which is different from the norm. ... So worship is integral to the whole program and is not simply restricted to specific times or places. (Administrator 4)

The importance of worship is underlined by the resources which are available for worship. Attached churches and chapels built within the school to accommodate the school community are physical examples of this. Staffing also reflects this emphasis with parish pastors and chaplains given responsibility for school worship programs which focus on Christ as Lord and Saviour.

I think it's very important a chaplain, and there's a lot of debate about this in the church, chaplains first and foremost are pastors and they must remain pastors. So they have a ministry of Word and Sacrament and how you interpret that is one of the dilemmas, but that means that they do have a preaching ministry within the school. (Administrator 2)

It is within worship of Christ that the school community is drawn together and the very foundation of the community, that of Christ, is celebrated. Importantly, this is not an event which occurs in isolation but is a function of the community which also celebrates its own presence.

### **Celebrating Community**

The data suggest that worship of God not only celebrates Christ, but also the community which he has created within the school. As Christ is the centre, so the community which he creates is recognised for its goodness and purpose.

Also for me a fundamental issue, belief in the importance of the means of grace, Word and Sacrament, as both constituting the community and helping the community to grow. (Administrator 4)

The above quotation illustrates that worship is the central unifying activity within the community. It is in worship where all members of the community gather together around God's Word as equals.

Or maybe if there is a public event it would be gathering in worship where everybody from principal to the year one is on a knee in prayer. That's very symbolic and its symbolic because it's the amount of time we give to it too. (Administrator 6)

Not only does worship celebrate Christ as the centre of the school but worship also celebrates that as Christ is in relationship with each member of the community, so members of the community can be in relationship with each other. This relationship is only authentic under the power of Christ.



I see a classroom, a school, a church, as a community. Communities are made up of people who are all different and yet have some common bonds. And one of the common bonds for the Christian community is always their worship. ... There's just the simple one person to another, troubled prayer sharing individual to individual. Prayer in a group, praying for others, speaking to God, learning that conversation with God is very real. ... Speaking to God together in community through worship activities and interestingly enough understanding that God comes to us through worship activities. That in fact we gather so that God might love and serve us. Into that we move with understandings that we are in relation to God and God is in relation to us. The words provide an opportunity for us to act our way into our feelings so that we can then in a host of settings feel our way into our actions. And the ritual of worship is important in developing a sense of community and community that includes God. Without corporate public worship the community does not include God. It's only when you have corporate public worship that God enters the community and speaks to his people. (Administrator 5)

The worship of Christ and the celebration of his grace and the community which he provides means that life itself may be celebrated as a gift from God.

### **Celebrating Life**

As stated above, in worship God is coming into the school community. Worship however is a bi-directional activity with each individual able to respond to God's love and forgiveness.

I would hope to see some sort of understanding that worship is a whole of life idea. That really worship is a response to what God has done whether that is in the formal praying and singing and reading and listening of a devotional activity, or more formal worship activity of Word and Sacrament. Or whether that is the response then of me as a person trying to live that out somehow in a day by day existence. I think the nexus of those: the activity which perhaps is formally thought of as worship, and then the life as worship, need somehow to be brought together. (Administrator 4)

This notion of worship as celebration of life is described by another participant who emphasises that individuals may respond to God in a variety of ways, which should include the whole community.

Really it seems to me that the entire spectrum of God's interaction with his people is that he keeps coming to us in worship and we are constantly responding to that. It seems to me that one of the sad things is that the response all became very verbal, the spoken and sung word. If you go back to the Old Testament era the response really involved the whole being. The response wasn't only verbal in the middle ages but it seemed to be that in the liturgy. But then we have all of those stone masons building those cathedrals, and artisans weaving tapestries and creating stained glass, and it really does involve more. I think now we're involved in an age of specialisation far in excess of what it was, and so often the issue is we'll let the specialist do it because they do it better. ... So there's that vast need to involve the entire community: teachers, students, cleaning ladies, groundsmen, it doesn't matter who, in the worship life of the community because the community is made up of an array of people. Having the groundsman read Scripture would have a very powerful impact. (Administrator 5)

Finally, worship is an activity which occurs, as stated above in a number of settings. The response to the Good News of Jesus Christ is not limited to life within the school, but it is hoped in all aspects of life.

In classrooms we have devotions and we pray so when something is happening at the school, every afternoon we have our prayers for things which are happening within the school and things in our own class and others things outside the school. (Teacher 3)

This section has identified the cultural dimension Worship as Celebration and its associated characteristics. The following section explores the related recipe knowledge cultural dimension, Worship as Life in Vocation.

#### **5.4.2 Worship as Life in Vocation**

The second cultural dimension comprising recipe knowledge apparent in the data is that of *Worship as Life in Vocation*, suggesting that working within a Lutheran school, whether as a teacher, administrator or even student, has deeper significance than that of simply having a job or profession. This dimension has two characteristics: *called by God into vocation* and *service to God in vocation*.

## **Called by God into Vocation**

This cultural dimension of Queensland Lutheran schools proposes that staff are led by God into serving him in their respective vocations. The data suggest that this attaches an important significance to their working in a Queensland Lutheran school in that there is the belief that God has prepared them and led them into their respective positions where they may freely serve him by serving others.

This ties in with my understanding of Lutheran vocation. Education is on the kingdom of the left which is to prepare us for our life in vocation which is service, and because Christ has put me in a right relationship with him through Christ, that's a gift. I'm free to give my life in service of others. (Administrator 6)

The vocation into which people may be called includes teaching.

The idea of Christian service, perhaps I should say the ideal of Christian service. I was talking at the Headmaster's assembly just a few minutes ago about teaching as vocation. ... And talking about that whole idea of Christian vocation, calling to service. For some people it's service to God, to some it's service to the church, to some it's service to the students. When you get down to the baseline, people use different words but very often they mean similar things. ... So that area of a sense of vocation, that area of commitment seeing the career of teaching as being [a vocation]. (Administrator 2)

This calling by God has also been important within the Lutheran Church of Australia for their pastors including those attached to and within schools.

My understanding of clergy is that they are called by God within themselves to serve God's people, the church, and so they approach their task with that sense of service. They are called by the church and set aside for a very specific purpose which is the ministry of Word and sacrament. (Administrator 5)

This concept of being called by God also includes students.

I would hope and here putting it in theological terms, if there is a concept of vocation as it relates to both left hand and right hand kingdoms but with both and keeping everything in

balance, then one would expect that students would understand that their life as a student is a vocation as a student. (Administrator 4)

### **Service to God in Vocation**

The data suggest that once a person is called by God into vocation, the individual will express this call through an attitude of service. For one administrator who had also attended a Lutheran college, the idea of service to God was an important part of her education.

I speak as a student at a Lutheran college, very much an expectation that you are serving the church with your life and it is not just like a job - I guess that idea of service and giving to the church. You think being brought up with that day in and day out, is very different to being a professional teacher coming to work in a school. (Administrator 3)

Since becoming a teacher this has remained an important in teaching in Queensland Lutheran schools for this administrator.

I think the other critical thing is the whole thing of service. That there has been a focus of what Lutheran schools are to be about. As people come in from different areas there's a tension there where you have a group of people who have grown up with the concept of service being automatic and this is what you do, and people coming in to the schools where that service aspect hasn't been such an insight ... (Or the fact you are called to this profession.. [Teacher 1]). And I think Lutheran schools do operate, even though they are having a lot of people from a lot of different places, there is still that core of service as an ethos in the school and that's for students and staff. (Administrator 3)

This ideal of service is one which a parent perceives is communicated to students from the beginning of school where they are encouraged to commit themselves and their lives to God.

I think that communication with God, from Grade 1 on they are encouraged to pray, to thank the Lord for their food, to commit the day to the Lord. It's that communication with the Lord, with home and school and everything that you would pray that they would

develop a relationship with the Lord which is what our ultimate aim is. That they would develop a relationship with the Lord and give their life to the Lord to salvation. (Parent 3)

This is communicated to students by teachers, not only by what they say, but also by the way in which they themselves serve their students in their teaching.

It's more than providing the underpinning philosophy and the anchors of God's word and the Lutheran Confessions. It means also, and this is the hard part, it needs for the teachers to know it and to apply it in their lessons and in their normal teaching and to live it. And that's always the hard part for a Christian. (Administrator 1)

For pastors this service to God takes on a very significant form as they serve the school community in the vocation to which they have been called.

We should respect them, [pastors and chaplains] and use them primarily to help us establish and maintain our formal worship life. That should be their fundamental function in the school and we should work with them to develop, I would call it a pluriform of ministries, ministries students have to one another, the teachers have to students. We should explore with them and ask them to lead us into God's word and into the Sacraments so that we can in fact develop those ministries together. To me the staff of the Lutheran school includes the Pastor whoever he is, but that pastor has a very specialist function and besides the special function in terms of Word and Sacrament, the role will totally depend on the individual's talents. (Administrator 5)

This recipe knowledge cultural dimension, Worship as Life in Vocation, is described by two characteristics: called by God into vocation, and service to God in vocation. This dimension focuses on an individual's attitude to working in a Queensland Lutheran school. The next cultural dimension addresses relationships within Lutheran schools.

### **5.4.3 Christian Relationships and Interactions**

The third recipe knowledge cultural is that of *Christian Relationships and Interactions*. The data suggest this dimension has three characteristics: *flawed by sin*, *informed by Christ*, and *forgiveness support*.

## Flawed by sin

The characteristic *flawed by sin* suggests that in a Queensland Lutheran schools it is recognised that no one from the principal to the youngest student is perfect. As well as recognising this, it is simultaneously understood that all members of the school community should strive toward the ideal of Lutheran education.

We are human and sinful but it is the way we look at it or deal with it that is Christian because the idea of the Lutheran school is really an ideal. It's not the reality but it's in striving for that ideal that we all have the same commonality. (Teacher 3)

This characteristic recognises that while striving for the ideal of Queensland Lutheran schools is important, this ideal will not be achieved because all interactions and relationships are flawed by sin.

They acknowledge that that's life, that's part of our human frailty, flawedness, sinfulness, whatever you like. That's just not, I was shocked. That's what will happen. We are flawed individuals and we will put people off. ... I was told about one principal as some one who will stuff up, but will quickly say I stuffed that up didn't I. Instead of what many of us do, try to bluff it through, and that to me is a Lutheran response. The Lutheran response would be to acknowledge 'I stuffed that up' and we get into trouble when we try to tough it out. Brinkmanship if you like. So it's a matter of confronting what upsets us, what we believe is wrong, acknowledging our wrongs. ... We're flawed individuals and so that will lead to conflicts and messy ways in which conflicts are dealt with. (Administrator 6)

This can lead to a number of responses. The data suggest that in a Queensland Lutheran schools the response is an acknowledgment of fault, and that the only perfect model is Christ.

So to me the critical elements then becomes the model which is a flawed model of the teacher lacking perfection. And I believe it's very important that early on, as early as when children start school they have to learn and to know that adults are not perfect, that adults aren't even ideals and we have to get them to transfer their understanding of the ideal away from our own personalities toward Christ who is the centre of things. That's not

easy and our egos really get in the way sometimes. There's always this problem. We're working pretty hard at our faith in some ways as teachers and then we do something stupid. We lose our temper and .. At that point in time is a critical lesson in transmitting that which is of the spiritual dimension. It's called an apology. When we are guilty we need to acknowledge that, not only before God, but also before students. (Administrator 5)

However this is only one aspect of relationships. The acceptance of our sinfulness through the recognition of God's Law needs to be balanced by application of the Gospel.

### **Informed by Christ**

As stated above relationship and interactions are flawed by sin, but in Queensland Lutheran schools relationships and interactions are also informed by Christ. This is clearly described by one participant.

Human interaction is informed by two realities. The first reality is sin. Human interaction is informed by sin, by failure, imperfection, people letting one another down, people not being truthful, all of that. But human interaction in a Christian community is informed by Christ who speaks a word of love and therefore forgiveness. In order for all this to hang together it seems to me that all relationships have to be replications in a way of God's relationship to us, or our relationship to God, perhaps both. A recognition that everyone there has the potential to make big mistakes and does fulfil that potential and has the potential to reflect Christ and does fulfil that potential. So we have what St Paul says, "At the same time saint and sinner." (Administrator 5)

The participants expressed that Christ comes into relationships bringing His love and forgiveness to restore these relationships. This leads to a recognition by individuals of another individual's strengths and weaknesses and hence a change in the attitude to the other person.

In the interaction between two people in a Christian community there is always the potential for God's word of love to be spoken within the relationship. There is also the potential for the word of evil to be spoken in that relationship and both are going to happen. So then what holds it together finally is forgiveness, God's forgiveness. First, the

forgiveness of one another and a sense that this is life and it only gets better in heaven. A sense of that. And then of course the relationship of people on the team where there's forgiveness acceptance of one another's weaknesses and celebration of one another's strengths. ... Then there's the team of people working together, interacting, fouling up, forgiving, fouling up, forgiving, and that just keeps going. Celebrating together God's love, celebrating together commonality, common interest, common purpose, whether it's the staff, staff and students, the entire school community, whatever it might be, so the relationships are always sinful informed by forgiveness. (Administrator 5)

This forgiveness in Christ is an important element in relationships through the school both formally and informally which is reflected in a school's policies.

... in terms of your discipline too, written into the policy, written into all your policies is your Christian ethos and that is very strongly written into our discipline policy: that children are renewed and forgiven and start over and so when we discipline children we have that, like the confession and the absolution. (Teacher 3)

### **Forgiveness support**

The third characteristic within this cultural dimension of Christian Relationships and Interactions is that of forgiveness support. The previous two characteristics of this cultural dimension lead individuals to recognise within themselves their own inability to sustain an authentic relationship and the need for all relationships to be informed by Christ. A chaplain described this as a type of vulnerability.

A word I like to use is vulnerability and its just another facet of what these people have been talking about. Now you don't have to be Christian and you don't have to be Lutheran to be prepared to be vulnerable with others, not at all. But I think Christians and especially Lutherans, if they have an acute sense of the Gospel, can afford better than anybody else to be vulnerable with others. They don't have to have any pretences to maintain. They don't have to maintain images and be in control and in charge and right and all that sort of stuff and that's certainly something that I've found particularly in people in administration positions in this school, a willingness to be vulnerable. Yes I probably stuffed it, I'm sorry. Or I might not be right on this but this is the way it has to



be now, but let me know later if you think it can be done better in the future or whatever.  
(Chaplain)

As well as accepting oneself as vulnerable, this also leads to accepting others in their vulnerability and imperfection. Then people are supported in their weakness by other people serving and help them. This was described by an administrator.

I suppose that the word coming to my mind is acceptance at all levels by all people. Now once you get beyond that, that may mean learning to live with people you're not altogether comfortable with and recognising that is where God has placed you for the time being and that's where he wants you to work it through. To acceptance in the sense of being able to forgive and also to receive the forgiveness. Reception of forgiveness isn't always the easiest side of that combination and then related to that is an awareness of the other person, the possibility of being a way of building up the other people in the community, identifying the gifts, allowing them to develop those gifts, exploring those gifts even if it means stepping back to allow that person to do something and being supportive even when they collapse in a heap. But I think that whole level of inter-personal relations is key and fundamental in what a Lutheran school is because I think speaking humanly, it is the only way of helping somebody to realise that there is a relationship available with God. (Administrator 4)

According to the interview data, this view is one which should permeate through the whole community with each member of the community supporting others through the use of their talents.

I guess if there is one thing which I hold, and I feel I'm starting to say a lot is relationships and service to others and a bit of passion for others. That for me is the Body of Christ isn't it. We are all in this together and its just enabling each member of the body to contribute their gifts and I guess that's where Stephen Covey has taught me. The synergy, to value differences, which we don't do so well. (Administrator 6)

Support is to be provided to all members of the community, led by the principal. This is often an important example for the whole community.

The main area we are looking at is the support role where teachers can feel that the principal of the school is approachable. He (sic) is sufficiently aware of what's going on within the classroom situation. He is sensitive to that to at least attempt to hear the issues from the teacher's perspective even though he or she may not be in a position to do much about it. But at least to be seen to be working as a colleague with the teacher and not simply someone who is standing over against him/her. ... I think again that that's something, if it's able to develop right through the school has tremendous impact on the whole ethos of the school. Just a sort of situation where a head will step in, where a teacher is having a bit of difficulty, whether it's personal or whether it's professional, ok step out of the class room, take five minutes. I'll do something while you get yourself together and to be aware enough to know that that's happening. (Administrator 4)

It is support such as this which is the tangible expression of the cultural dimension of Christian Relationships and Interactions.

#### **5.4.4 Christian Leadership and Management**

The final cultural dimension of Queensland Lutheran schools reflecting recipe knowledge is that of *Christian Leadership and Management*. The data suggest this dimension is comprised of two characteristics: *shared, collaborative leadership* and *stewardship management*.

##### **Shared Collaborative Leadership**

The data suggest that leadership in Queensland Lutheran schools should be distributed throughout the school. Leadership should be collaborative with the school administration supporting and encouraging staff in their opportunities for leadership within the school.

There's no doubt in my mind that leaders in our schools should be bringing out the leadership of others. It has to be more collaborative, but then the principal has to have the vision of what the school is about and, that's really her job isn't it: articulating that vision, living out that vision in your rituals and your symbolic events. (Administrator 6)

Leadership is available to members of the school communities in their respective areas of expertise.

There are people given responsibility, sometimes they have to say do this on the authority line because that's what has to be done. At other times they will listen to people in the group and let someone else take the lead: the teacher who's brilliant in curriculum, much better than the principal might ever be has to be the leader when we are discussing curriculum. The groundsman who understands all the grasses has to be the leader when we talk about planting the oval. We have to accept that the lead moves around and that's a relationship which keeps the authority relationship alive and vibrant. (Administrator 5)

Shared leadership necessitates an openness of communication between all participants. While this is not always achieved, importantly a commitment is needed to evaluate and adjust this process.

I was just going to say that there's probably a commitment from all the people in admin to involve people in real decision making as much as possible. An acknowledgment that at times it's not done very well. You choose the wrong things and so I would say that the school's still very much at a learning point of how to do that sort of process well. The good thing is there is very open communication both ways so if there's a feeling that there is a placating happening then we certainly know that there's that feeling. ... And I think what's been the strength here is that the leadership has always been a fairly open one where people are free to say something and then people adjust to evaluate what's there and adjust. (Administrator 3)

Leadership is not restricted solely to staff with opportunities for leadership by students also available as illustrated by the following example.

There's strong leadership out there and it's exercised in a variety of ways. For example, we set up structures for students to enable them to develop leadership skills on a continuum through from Year 8 to Year 12. It is not carried out nearly as effectively or as consistently as I would like to see happen but certainly by the time we formalise it very much more as they get into Years 11 and 12 every Year 12 student has a leadership responsibility, we have a system of prefects and a system of seniors. So there's a growth there through the student body. Among teachers there are opportunities for those things as

well. Some of them take it up and do a fine job. We have for example year level coordinators, we have heads of departments, we have masters and mistresses in charge of various sports: there's a variety of structures. (Administrator 2)

As well as shared collaborative leadership, management issues are also important within Queensland Lutheran schools. These are described in the following section.

### **Stewardship Management**

The data indicated that management is an important aspect of Queensland Lutheran schools. As recipients of finance from both the Queensland and Australian Governments, and also from parents, there are responsibilities and accountabilities which Queensland Lutheran schools are to maintain. This is a function of the school which is undertaken carefully.

This is where we have the flip side of the Lutheran school. It is education. There are the legal responsibilities, state responsibilities, accountabilities, and to see that things have to happen like now and you have to be able to exercise that in a spirit of love and respect for the other person. It's not a Christian community in terms of being like a Church. There are just so many legal obligations here for the protection of people here and our understanding of the kingdom of the left means we follow through with those things. (Administrator 6)

The concept of stewardship management was enunciated clearly by one participant.

I'm convinced at the most fundamental level that anything that we have, any organisation, any building, any church or whatever is a gift from God no matter how its developed. So there's this responsibility to be good stewards of the gift. We [the congregation] have a school but we need it governed, we need oversight and governance. We'll use volunteers. So there is a stewardship delegation to that. They have a responsibility and they answer for it. They in turn say we are all volunteers. We can't be there day by day so there's a principal and the principal can't be in the classroom once the school gets beyond 20 so then there are other teachers. And sometimes the school grows and the programs grow and the interactions grow and there are specialists who go beyond that. There are teacher aides and secretaries, there are groundspeople and cleaners, and its all stewardship. So that's going on. There's this whole host of people whom are delegated some

responsibility, and they are stewards, and they are accountable for their stewardship.  
(Administrator 5)

While accepting responsibility for their various positions, these duties are fulfilled from a sense of service as described by a principal.

I know that I'm basically responsible for all that happens within the school. It's impossible for one person to know everything that's going on control it and I don't think you should. I think you have to have trust in people. Let them report to you sure. But I think that I am really the servant of the staff who are doing the real work, the teachers and the teachers aides. I think I am really the person to organise things and to come in when things fall in a heap and perhaps help out. (Administrator 1)

Within management situations the notion of power is usually of importance. Within Queensland Lutheran schools it is suggested that power comes from God and that the ultimate use of power is to empower other individuals.

The final thing I need to say here is that all power belongs to God. God empowers us and his example is to give it away. Christ who was God gave it away to become a human being to dwell among us to die so that we might live. If God can give away all of his power which he does and we have it, we have to give it away. So power as such in communities within a Lutheran school is something people give away. They don't hold it. They don't use it. They share it. (Administrator 5)

The four recipe knowledge cultural dimensions and their associated characteristics are summarised in Table 5.2.

*Table 5.2*

Cultural dimensions reflecting recipe knowledge

<b>Recipe</b>	<b>Worship as Celebration</b>	<b>Worship as Life as Vocation</b>
<b>Knowledge</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrating Christ</li> <li>• Celebrating community</li> <li>• Celebrating life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Called by God into vocation</li> <li>• Service to God in vocation</li> </ul>

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**Christian Relationships &  
Interactions**

- Flawed by sin
- Informed by Christ
- Support forgiveness

**Christian Leadership &  
Management**

- Shared collaborative leadership
  - Stewardship management
- 

## 5.5 DIRECTORY KNOWLEDGE

Directory or causal-analytical knowledge is that knowledge which is descriptive and refers to the *how* of things, events and their processes. Thus this cultural knowledge refers to *how* the ideals of Lutheran education are achieved (or not as the case may be) in Queensland Lutheran schools. In order that these ideals are achieved directory knowledge should closely reflect recipe knowledge.

As directory knowledge reflects the *how* of things, events, and their processes, it is not appropriate to identify cultural dimensions reflecting this kind of cultural knowledge from interview data. Rather appropriate methods to identify this knowledge are research methods such participant observation or an ethnographic study (Section 3.4). Thus in this analysis no cultural dimensions reflecting directory knowledge was proposed.

## 5.6 THE CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF QUEENSLAND LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

This chapter tentatively suggests seven cultural dimensions in regard to Queensland Lutheran schools for axiomatic knowledge (one dimension), dictionary knowledge (two dimensions), and recipe knowledge (four dimensions). The dictionary knowledge dimensions: Caring, Christ-centred Community, and Quality Christian Education, and the recipe knowledge dimensions: Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership and Management are each described by several characteristics. The dimensions of culture for Queensland Lutheran schools identified in this chapter are summarised in Table 5.3. Of these dimensions of culture, the six dimensions comprising dictionary knowledge and recipe knowledge dimensions were used as the framework for the development of the questionnaire described in Chapter 6. The rationale for not including the axiomatic cultural dimension is presented in Section 6.3.1.



Table 5.3

The cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools

The presuppositions and foundations for Queensland Lutheran schools are grounded in the theological understandings of the LCA	
The culture of Queensland Lutheran schools is characterised by	
<b>Caring, Christ-centred Community</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forgiveness acceptance</li> <li>• Growing as individuals</li> <li>• Family orientation</li> <li>• Pastoral care</li> </ul>	<b>Quality Christian Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informed by the Gospel</li> <li>• Striving for excellence</li> <li>• Holistic education</li> <li>• Learning for life</li> </ul>
The culture of Queensland Lutheran schools is realised through	
<b>Worship as Celebration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrating Christ</li> <li>• Celebrating community</li> <li>• Celebrating life</li> </ul>	<b>Worship as Life in Vocation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Called by God into vocation</li> <li>• Service to God in vocation</li> </ul>
<b>Christian Relationships &amp; Interactions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flawed by sin</li> <li>• Informed by Christ</li> <li>• Forgiveness support</li> </ul>	<b>Christian Leadership &amp; Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open collaborative leadership</li> <li>• Stewardship management</li> </ul>

## 5.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has presented an analysis of the interview data collected from key informants in Queensland Lutheran schools. The data were analysed using the techniques of inductive analysis with the different kinds of cultural knowledge (Sackmann, 1991) providing the framework for the analysis. Seven cultural dimensions were identified from these data.

One cultural dimension was identified for axiomatic knowledge. This dimension states that the presuppositions and foundations for Queensland Lutheran schools are grounded in the theological understandings of the LCA. This dimension provides the basis for the other six dimensions.



Two cultural dimensions describe dictionary knowledge for Queensland Lutheran schools. The first of these, Caring, Christ-centred Community, is described by the characteristics: forgiveness acceptance, growing as individuals, family orientation, and pastoral care. The second dictionary knowledge cultural dimension was that of Quality Christian Education. This dimension has the properties of informed by the Gospel, striving for excellence, holistic education, and learning for life.

Four recipe knowledge dimensions were identified from the interview data. Worship as Celebration, described as celebrating Christ, celebrating community, and celebrating life, and Worship as Life in Vocation, with properties of called by God into vocation, and Service to God in Vocation are two complementary worship dimensions. The third dimension was Christian Relationships and Interactions, which is described as flawed by sin, informed by Christ, and forgiveness support. The final recipe knowledge dimension was Christian Leadership and Management which has the properties open collaborative leadership, and stewardship management.

No cultural dimensions were identified for directory knowledge. This type of cultural knowledge could not be identified from interview data.

The cultural knowledge dimensions comprising dictionary knowledge and recipe knowledge and their descriptive properties provide the basis the development of the research instrument which is described in the next chapter. This instrument will be used to survey the wider population of Queensland Lutheran schools.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF INSTRUMENT**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter documents the development and validation of the instrument to be known as the *Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory* and to be used to assess dimensions of school culture in Queensland Lutheran schools. These dimensions of school culture were identified in the first stage of the research (Chapter 5) and, together with the characteristics for each dimension, form the basis for the development of a context specific instrument.

Four different approaches to instrument development are outlined by Fraser (1986): intuitive-rational, intuitive-theoretical, factor analytic, and empirical group discriminative. The intuitive-rational approach to instrument development, which relies on the researcher's intuitive understandings of the dimensions being assessed, was adopted for the development of the instrument scales for assessing the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. This approach relies on the subjective understandings of the researcher and other experts of the dimensions being assessed.

The remainder of this chapter falls into two main sections. Section 6.2 discusses the instrument development criteria adopted for this study and the instrument development and validation procedures. Section 6.3 reports on the application of the instrument and development procedures in the generation of the instrument. It also reports refinement decisions which were made to ensure the instrument conformed to psychometric principles.

## **6.2 INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT CRITERIA AND INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION PROCEDURE**

This section discusses the instrument development criteria and the instrument development and validation procedure. The distinction is made between instrument development criteria, and instrument development and validation procedure (Dorman, 1994). Instrument development criteria establish the standards of judgement, rules or principles which are used to guide the development of the instrument. However these criteria do not indicate specific decisions taken during the development of the instrument. An instrument development and validation procedure was established to allow for specific decisions and their subsequent justifications to be described.

### **6.2.1 Instrument Development Criteria Adopted for This Study**

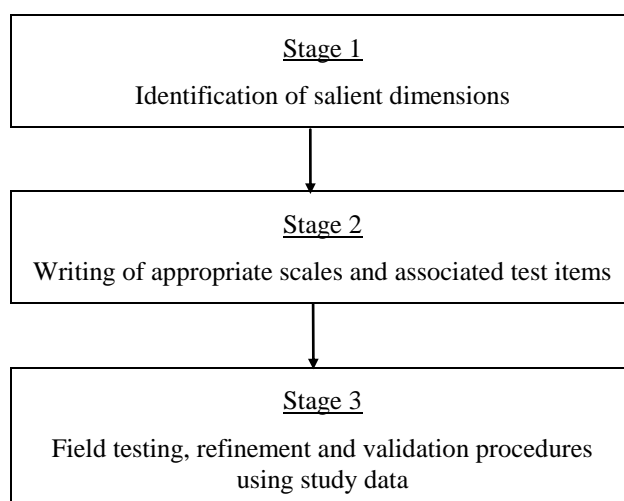
Three instrument development criteria were adopted for this study:

- Consistency with cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran Schools. The instrument was to be consistent with the dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools as described in Section 5.6. These dimensions were identified from the perceptions of 16 “key informants” in Queensland Lutheran schools.
- Salience to stakeholders. In order for the instrument to tap salient dimensions, it was considered important for school administrators and teachers to be involved in the development process. Clearly, this criterion would enhance the instrument's ability to focus on the realities of Queensland Lutheran schooling and accordingly contribute to future research possibilities.
- Economy. The instrument was designed to be administered to teachers, senior staff, school council members, pastors and chaplains, and parents and friends executive members all of whom experience time pressures. For this reason it was considered important that the final instrument be economical in terms of the time needed for administration and scoring.

### **6.2.2 Instrument Development and Validation Procedure**

To provide a framework for the development and validation of the instrument to assess dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools, a three stage procedure was implemented. This section describes and justifies this three stage procedure which is shown in Figure 6.1.

The purpose of Stage 1 was to identify salient cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools. The identification of the dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools is reported in Chapter 5 of this thesis. The suitability of these dimensions for inclusion in the instrument is discussed in section 6.3.1.



*Figure 6.1* The three stage instrument development and validation procedure

The purpose of Stage 2 was to examine the six dimensions of culture identified in Stage 1 and to develop appropriate scales which would tap these distinctive dimensions of contemporary Queensland Lutheran schools. The characteristics of the six dimensions of culture were used as a basis for this. Items were developed in conformity to principles of psychometric research (Gardner, 1975). Both the dimension of culture and the scale descriptions were submitted to three groups for examination: five practising administrators of the Lutheran school system at both state and national level, three Faculty of Education academics from Australian Catholic University who have experience in scale development, especially in the fields of school culture and environment, and two academics who have recognised expertise in making judgements on scale development in survey questionnaires.

Whereas the first group above checked principally, but not exclusively, the Lutheran education aspects of the study, the other two groups focused on the quality of scales and items in terms of face validity, scale allocation, and item faults and ambiguities. It was expected that better validity would be obtained from advice from this range of people. Following modifications suggested by the groups described above, the instrument was administered to a sample of respondents from Queensland Lutheran schools (Stage 3). This sample, described fully in section 4.3.4, comprised teachers, senior staff, school council members, pastors and chaplains, and parents and friends executive members. Because of the limited size of the total population available for the research and the possibility of conducting a trial which may invalidate further study, all validation and

refinement decisions were based on data collected from this administration of the instrument. Item-scale correlations, scale-scale correlations, internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity indices were calculated. Factor analyses were conducted on the data sets. Based on these statistics and analyses, a final version of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory for use in the main study was developed. Data from the main study provided information about each scale's structure, internal consistency, discriminant validity, and ability to differentiate between different settings.

The development process described above and illustrated in Figure 6.1 is consistent with the intuitive-rational scale development procedure suggested by Fraser (1977) and Murphy and Fraser (1978) which involves the identification of salient dimensions, writing of test items, field testing, and item analysis.

### **6.3 DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF THE INSTRUMENT**

This final stage of the development procedure for the Lutheran School Culture Inventory had three components. The following sections report firstly, validation data from the initial version of the instrument; secondly, the refinement decisions; and, thirdly, validation data for the final form of the instrument.

#### **6.3.1 Identification of Salient Dimensions**

The first stage of the development process was the identification of salient dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools which form the basis for the construction of the instrument. Chapter 5 described the identification of the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools. Within this process, seven dimensions of culture were identified reflecting three of Sackmann's (1991) kinds of cultural knowledge. From these seven dimensions the decision was made to develop the questionnaire to investigate six of these dimensions reflecting dictionary and recipe knowledge. The axiomatic knowledge dimension, which stated that the presuppositions and foundations for Queensland Lutheran schools are grounded in the theological understandings of the Lutheran Church of Australia (Section 5.3), was not included in the questionnaire for three reasons. Firstly,

the questionnaire was designed to seek participants' perceptions of the existing culture, not the rationale for the existence of that culture. Secondly, inclusion of this item would have resulted in a questionnaire which was excessively long and which therefore did not meet the third design criterion. Thirdly, research into this type of cultural knowledge is best conducted using alternative data collection methods to questionnaire surveys (Schein, 1985, 1992; Collins, 1989). Table 6.1 shows the six dimensions which formed the basis for the instrument together with item descriptors for each dimension. These dimensions and the descriptors for each dimension provided the conceptual basis for the writing of scales and associated test items.

*Table 6.1*

The six dimensions of culture for Queensland Lutheran schools on which scale development was based

The culture of Queensland Lutheran schools is characterised by a	
<b>Caring, Christ-centred Community</b>	<b>Quality Christian Education</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forgiveness Acceptance</li> <li>• Growing as Individuals</li> <li>• Family Orientation</li> <li>• Pastoral Care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informed by the Gospel</li> <li>• Striving for Excellence</li> <li>• Holistic Education</li> <li>• Learning for Life</li> </ul>
The culture of Queensland Lutheran schools is realised through	
<b>Worship as Celebration</b>	<b>Worship as Life in Vocation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrating Christ</li> <li>• Celebrating Community</li> <li>• Celebrating Life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Called by God into Vocation</li> <li>• Service to God in Vocation</li> </ul>
<b>Christian Relationships &amp; Interactions</b>	<b>Christian Leadership &amp; Management</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flawed by Sin</li> <li>• Informed by Christ</li> <li>• Forgiveness Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Collaborative Leadership</li> <li>• Stewardship Management</li> </ul>

### 6.3.2 Writing of Scales and Associated Test Items

Following identification of salient dimensions with associated descriptors, six scales with their associated items were constructed. It was decided to adopt the scale names directly from the salient dimensions as presented in Table 6.1. A description for each scale was written using descriptors identified in the first stage of the development process (Table 6.2). Individual items were written for each scale on the basis of the scale description. At this time the decision was reached to write 12 items for each scale for the following reasons. As these scales were being developed by the researcher, 12 items for each scale allowed for refinement of the instrument during the validation phase. This was balanced by consideration of economy, the third development criteria, in restricting the overall size of the instrument to 72 items.

Scales and items were written in light of the research principles of symbolic interactionism adopted for this study (Section 4.3.2). In the development of scales and items for each scale, concepts identified from the interviews were operationalised (Principle 7). An important consideration in the writing of items was viewing *the world from the subjects' point of view* (Principle 2) and the use of *subjects' symbols and definitions* (Principle 3). This *insider knowledge* was gained through interaction during interviews as described in section 4.4.3, as well as the researcher's knowledge from being a principal in a Lutheran primary school. Items were constructed in conformity with normal considerations of length, clarity, simplicity, and relevance (Oppenheim, 1992; Schumacher & McMillan, 1993). Scales and items were scrutinised by the three groups of people mentioned earlier in this chapter (Section 6.2.2) and revised in light of feedback provided. Table 6.2 provides descriptive information for the six scales developed. Complete sets of items for these six scales are presented in Appendix 6. The final six-scale instrument consisted of 72 items with responses recorded on a five-point Lickert scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree or Not Sure, Disagree, Strongly Disagree). Appendix 7 shows the instrument, scale allocations, and scoring procedures.



Table 6.2

Descriptive information for the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory

Scale Name	Scale Description	Sample Items	Cultural Knowledge Area using Sackmann's (1991) perspective
Caring, Christ-centred Community	Extent to which it is perceived that the school community accepts members with forgiveness, allows students to grow as individuals, has a family orientation and practises pastoral care.	People are accepted with forgiveness at this school. (+) This school gives extra help to students whose families are experiencing problems. (+)	Dictionary Knowledge
Quality Christian Education	Extent to which it is perceived that Lutheran schools provide a quality Christian education where holistic learning for life and striving for excellence are valued.	At this school it is important for all students to perform to their potential. (+) Students at this school are well prepared for their future lives.(+)	Dictionary Knowledge
Worship as Celebration	Extent to which it is perceived that Christ, life and the community are celebrated in worship.	During worship times staff and students celebrate how God has freely forgiven us all. (+) The importance of relationships is often emphasised in worship.(+)	Recipe Knowledge
Worship as Life in Vocation	Extent to which it is perceived that staff feel called to their positions by God so that they may serve Him in their vocation.	Staff's commitment to this school flows from their belief in God.(+) This school teaches its students to serve God by helping others.(+)	Recipe Knowledge
Christian Relationships and Interactions	Extent to which it is perceived that imperfect relationships are informed by Christ to give forgiveness support.	A teacher who makes a mistake with a student will admit it. (+) At this school people try to act out Christ's love in their relationships. (+)	Recipe Knowledge
Christian Leadership and Management	Extent to which leadership is perceived to be open, collaborative and shared, and management is perceived to be a stewardship delegation.	The senior staff of this school encourage people to try new ideas. (+) Staff member are trusted to fulfil their duties properly. (+)	Recipe Knowledge

### 6.3.3 Validation Data - Initial Form of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory

The validation of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory involved 384 individuals from 21 schools. Details concerning the questionnaire sample are presented in Appendix 7. The results of factor and item analyses, and checks on internal reliability and discriminant validity using this sample, are reported below.

The first step in the refinement and validation of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory involved a series of exploratory factor analyses, the purpose of which was to examine the internal structure of the set of 72 items. Principal components analysis with varimax rotation was used to generate orthogonal factors. Two solutions were considered: a 16 factor solution (eigenvalues greater than one) and a six factor solution based on the six *a priori* scales. These analyses indicated that 27% of variance was accounted for by one factor. A six factor solution accounted for 48% of variance while a sixteen factor solution accounted for 65% of variance. The important outcome of this factor analysis indicated a large percentage of variance accounted for by one major factor, with much of the remainder of the variance accounted for by a large number of other factors.

Table 6.3 shows the factor loadings of the six sets of 12 items (reflecting the six *a priori* scales) for the a six factor solution. This six factor solution proved to be unsatisfactory for the following reasons. While the set of items from the Worship as Life in Vocation scale showed most items loading to the one factor, results for other scale items showed that the sets of items were not associated with a single factor. The set of items for the Worship as Celebration scale had seven items load to one factor, while the twelve items for the scale Christian Leadership and Management were associated with two distinct factors. The 12 items for the scale Christian Relationships and Interactions displayed loadings for five of the items, which however loaded with the same factor as four of the items from the Christian Leadership and Management scale. The 12 items in each of the scales Caring, Christ-centred Community and Quality Christian Education showed no strong association with any factor.

Table 6.3

Exploratory factor analysis results for six-factor varimax rotation for the original version of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory (N = 384 individuals) (Factor loadings lower than 0.40 have been omitted.)

Scale	Item Number	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
Caring Christ - Centred Community	1						
	7						
	13		.45				
	19						
	25		.43				
	31				.74		
	37						
	43				.74		
	49			.46			
	55						
Quality Christian Education	61		.45				
	67	.40	.40				
	2				.45		
	8						
	14		.45				
	20						
	26						.57
	32				.58		
	38						.52
	44						
Worship as Celebration	50						
	56		.46				
	62	.42	.49				
	68		.58				
	3		.59				
	9		.63				
	15		.56				
	21		.58				
	27						
	33		.47				
Life in Vocation	39		.52				
	45				.62		
	51						
	57						
	63	.48	.52				
	69				.44		
	4	.72					
	10	.80					
	16	.43	.51				
	22	.67					
Relationships and Interactions	28	.65					
	34				.69		
	40	.78					
	46	.59					.41
	52	.80					
	58	.69					
	64	.61					
	70	.49					
	5		.51				
	11					.60	
Christian Leadership and Management	17					.50	
	23					.42	
	29	.16	.45				
	35				.65		
	41				.77		
	47	.52					
	53					.43	
	59			.49		.44	
	65						
	71				-.41		
Christian Leadership and Management	6			.50			
	12			.63			
	18			-.73			
	24			.63			
	30			.59			
	36			.71			
	42						.63
	48					.52	
	54					.56	
	60					-.61	
	66					.56	
	72			.52			

Table 6.4 lists Cronbach's alpha coefficient as an index of internal consistency for each scale with the individual as the unit of analysis. Also listed are the mean correlation of each scale with the other five scales as an index of discriminant validity (the extent to which a given scale measures a dimension not measured by other scales of the instrument). While the internal consistency results were satisfactory, the mean correlations were felt to be unacceptably high. Also the loadings of items to scales, as stated above, were clearly unacceptable.

*Table 6.4*

Internal consistency (alpha reliability) and discriminant validity (mean correlation with other scales) for the trial of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory (N = 384 individuals)

Scale	Alpha Reliability	Mean Correlation
Caring Christ-centred Community	0.69	0.69
Quality Christian Education	0.79	0.67
Worship as Celebration	0.83	0.64
Worship as Life in Vocation	0.92	0.64
Christian Relationships and Interactions	0.86	0.71
Christian Leadership and Management	0.91	0.61

The 16 factor solution based on eigenvalues greater than one was also calculated (Table 6.5). The 12 items in the scale Worship as Life in Vocation loaded strongly to one factor. In this solution six of the items in the scale Quality Christian Education loaded with one factor. While the items in the scale Christian Leadership indicated some grouping of items, the other scales showed no association to any one factor. Results in this solution for the 12 items in the scale Worship as Life in Celebration were worse than for the six factor solution. These results indicated that the *a priori scales* may in fact be composed of more than one factor which explained the poor results of these initial analyses.

Table 6.5

Exploratory factor analysis results for 16-factor varimax rotation for the original version of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory (N = 384 individuals) (Factor loadings lower than 0.40 have been omitted.)

[illegible]

### 6.3.4 Refinement Procedures

On the basis of these data analyses reported in the previous section, it was necessary to refine the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory to improve its psychometric qualities prior to its use in the main study. The analyses above suggested that the *a priori* scales contained more than one factor. To establish whether this was in fact the situation, factor analyses were conducted on each *a priori* scale. The results of these analyses are listed in Table 6.6

Table 6.6

Number of factors and percentage of variance in the six *a priori* scales (N=384 individuals)

Scale	Number of Factors (Eigenvalues > 1)	Percentage of Variance of Factors (Eigenvalues >1)		
		1st Factor	2nd Factor	3rd Factor
Caring Christ-centred Community	2	32.4	9.9	
Quality Christian Education	3	32.6	11.8	9.3
Worship as Celebration	2	38.9	9.5	
Worship as Life in Vocation	1	54.3		
Christian Relationships and Interactions	2	39.7	8.8	
Christian Leadership and Management	1	51.2		

These results indicated that four of the *a priori* scales had more than one factor. In each case however there was one dominant factor. It was decided at this point to attempt to retain the six *a priori* scales for theoretical reasons and remove items from each scale so that only one factor (eigenvalue > 1) would account for most of the variance in each scale. Identification of items to be removed was based on both psychometric grounds as well as consideration of the content of the items. As items were removed from each scale, factor analyses were conducted to determine whether a six factor solution could be obtained. Because it was necessary to reduce one scale to 5 items to achieve the psychometric properties desired, it was decided to employ 5 items in each scale to maintain clarity of

construction and comparability across scales. To achieve the final solution one item, number 65 in the initial form of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory was transferred from the scale Christian Relationships and Interactions to the scale Caring, Christ-centred Community reflecting its correlation with this scale. The final version of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory consisted of 30 items. Due to the items removed, the descriptions of the scales were modified to reflect these changes. The descriptors and sample items for the final form of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory are displayed in Table 6.7.

One scale name was changed as a consequence of the modification of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory. The scale Christian Leadership and Management was changed to simply Christian Leadership as all items referring to management were deleted. Apart from the description of the scale Christian Relationships and Interactions all other scale descriptions were altered slightly to reflect the content of the items remaining in each scale. This resulted in these scales having simpler scale descriptors. Sample items listed were also changed as necessary. All items from each scale are listed in Appendix 8.

### **6.3.5 Validation Data - Final Form of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory**

#### **Factor Analyses**

Factor and scale analyses were conducted on this refined version of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory. Principal components analysis provided strong support for the six-scale structure (Table 6.8). Using a varimax rotation, six factors were extracted which accounted for 61.1% of variance. Table 6.8 shows that all 30 items had factor loadings of at least 0.4 with their *a priori* scales. All items had loadings of less than 0.4 with other scales in the *a priori* scale structure. Item loadings ranged from 0.48 to 0.84. Table 6.7 indicates the results of factor analyses conducted on each individual scale. All scales extracted only one factor with an eigenvalue greater than one which accounted for more than 49% of the variance in each scale. The amount of variance accounted for by this factor ranged from 49.5% to 71.4%. The amount of variance for each culture scale was: Caring Christ-centred Community – 53.6%, Quality Christian Education – 53.8%,

Table 6.7

Descriptive information for the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory (Final Version)

Scale Name	Scale Description	Sample Items <sup>a</sup>	Cultural Knowledge Area using Sackmann's (1991) perspective
Caring, Christ-centred community	Extent to which it is perceived that the school community is centred on the gospel of Christ, showing care for its members.	Christ is at the centre of the school community. (+) Christian support is evident at this school. (+)	Dictionary Knowledge
Quality Christian Education	Extent to which it is perceived that Lutheran schools provide a quality Christian education.	At this school it is important for all students to achieve to their potential. (+) Students at this school are well prepared for their future lives.(+)	Dictionary Knowledge
Worship as Celebration	Extent to which it is perceived that Christ and the community are celebrated in worship.	Christ is celebrated by holding worship activities at this school. (+) Worship helps staff and students realise that the school is a special community.(+)	Recipe Knowledge
Worship as Life in Vocation	Extent to which it is perceived that staff serve others because of their belief in God.	Staff's commitment to this school flows from their belief in God.(+) Teachers view their work as part of the mission of the church.(+)	Recipe Knowledge
Christian Relationships and Interactions	Extent to which it is perceived that imperfect relationships are informed by Christ to give forgiveness support.	A teacher who makes a mistake with a student will admit it. (+) Staff at this school will forgive other students or staff who have done something to hurt them. (+)	Recipe Knowledge
Christian Leadership	Extent to which leadership is perceived to be open and collaborative.	At this school, important decisions are made by the senior staff without collaboration. (-) Decision making at this school is collaborative. (+)	Recipe Knowledge

<sup>a</sup> Items annotated (+) are scored Strongly Disagree 1, Disagree 2, Not Sure 3, Agree 4, Strongly Agree 5.  
Items annotated (-) are scored Strongly Disagree 5, Disagree 4, Not Sure 3, Agree 2, Strongly Agree 1.



Table 6.8

Factor Analysis Results for six-factor varimax rotation for the final form of the Lutheran School Culture Inventory ( $N = 384$  individuals)

Scale	Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
Caring Christ- centred Community	25	.55					
	43	.50					
	61	.59					
	65	.52					
	67	.68					
Quality Christian Education	14		.66				
	26		.67				
	38		.71				
	44		.70				
	56		.48				
Worship as Celebration	3			.66			
	15			.59			
	21			.65			
	33			.53			
	39			.65			
Worship as Life in Vocation	22				.69		
	40				.80		
	52				.82		
	58				.75		
	64				.68		
Christian Relationships and Interactions	11					.58	
	17					.57	
	23					.62	
	35					.69	
	41					.53	
Christian Leadership	12						.74
	18						.84
	24						.82
	36						.74
	72						.67

Factor loadings lower than 0.40 have been omitted.

Worship as Celebration – 53.0%, Worship as Life in Vocation – 71.4%, Christian Relationships and Interactions – 49.5%, and Christian Leadership – 69.6%. These analyses support the unidimensional structure of each scale in the final form of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory.

## Internal Consistency of Scales

Estimates of the internal consistency of the six scales were calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. As school means were used as units of analysis in testing hypotheses in the main study, it was considered important to report internal consistency for school means in addition to reliabilities for individuals. Table 6.9 shows the alpha coefficients for each scale using both the individual and the school mean as the unit of statistical analysis. The alpha reliability of the complete instrument was 0.93. These values suggest that each scale of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory has acceptable internal consistency for either the individual or the school mean as the unit of analysis. As expected, the reliabilities are larger for the analyses involving school means than for the analyses for individuals.

*Table 6.9*

Internal consistency (alpha reliability) and discriminant validity (mean correlation with other scales) for the final form of the Lutheran School Culture Inventory for two units of analysis (N = 384 individuals; 21 school means)

Scale	Alpha Reliability		Mean Correlation with Other Scales	
	Individuals	School Means	Individuals	School Means
Caring Christ-centred Community	0.79	0.92	0.57	0.66
Quality Christian Education	0.78	0.84	0.49	0.55
Worship as Celebration	0.75	0.82	0.50	0.59
Worship as Life in Vocation	0.90	0.96	0.51	0.61
Christian Relationships and Interactions	0.73	0.86	0.53	0.68
Christian Leadership	0.89	0.96	0.49	0.61

### **Discriminant Validity of Scales**

Table 6.9 also reports data on discriminant validity using the mean correlation of a scale with the other five scales as a convenient index. These data indicate mean correlations varying from 0.49 to 0.57 for individuals and 0.55 to 0.68 for school means. The higher correlations for analysis using school means was expected. While these mean correlations results seem high, this result was not unexpected for the following reasons. Firstly, the concept of school culture is a complex, multi-faceted concept as illustrated by the large number of definitions suggested in the literature (Chapter 3). The conceptual framework for this study (Section 3.6) defined the structural component of culture of being composed of cognitions which are integrated into a cognitive map. As the cognitions are integrated, it follows that each dimension of culture will be correlated to an appreciable degree with other dimensions. This is evidenced in the six scales developed within this study, which although theoretically distinct, do overlap. The conceptual distinctiveness of each scale is important enough to warrant their retention. Secondly, discriminant validity data in other studies of school culture are similar to those found in the present study (Cavanagh & Dellar, 1997; Daniel, 1990).

The final stage in testing the internal reliability of the six scales involved calculation of reliability coefficients for each scale within each school. The mean scores of Cronbach's alpha and their standard deviations for the 21 schools are reported in Table 6.10. The mean alpha reliabilities varied between 0.61 to 0.85 with standard deviations between 0.09 to 0.28. These lower alpha reliabilities are as expected given the smaller sample, and are quite reasonable.

The result for the Christian Relationships and Interactions scale with a mean score of alpha reliability of 0.61 and a standard deviation of 0.28 was of concern. The alpha reliability for two of the schools was considered to be extreme for this scale. If these results are considered outliers and not included the mean alpha reliability was 0.69 with a standard deviation of 0.13. Overall, the results for the internal reliability for each scale were considered to be satisfactory in this final version of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory.

*Table 6.10*

Mean alpha reliability score and standard deviation for the six scales of the final form of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory. (N = 21 schools)

Scale	Mean Alpha Reliability	Standard Deviation of Alpha Reliability
CCC	0.70	0.16
QCE	0.70	0.15
WAC	0.70	0.16
WLV	0.85	0.09
CRI	0.61	0.28
CL	0.80	0.17

Note: Five items per scale

### **Ability of Scales to Differentiate between Schools**

The last procedure in this validation of the final version of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory was to establish whether the instrument differentiates between schools. To accomplish this, a one-way ANOVA with the individual as the unit of analysis and school membership as the main effect was performed for each scale. The results for these analyses are displayed in Table 6.11 and indicate that three of the scales differentiated significantly between schools at  $p < .001$ , one at  $p < .01$ , and two at  $p < .05$ . The results for those scales with a lower significance may well be that they show little variation across settings, a plausible result in its own right. The  $\eta^2$  statistic, which is a ratio of between to total sums of squares (Cohen & Cohen, 1975), and indicates the proportion of variance explained by school membership, ranged from 10% for Quality Christian Education and Christian Relationships and Interaction to 20% for Christian Leadership. It is important to note that these results are based on a sample of teachers, senior staff, school council members, pastors and chaplains and parents and friends executive members. A one-way ANOVA with teachers only as the unit of analysis and school membership as the main effect resulted in  $\eta^2$  for each scale respectively of 20%, 18%, 26%, 29%, 12% and 25%.

*Table 6.11*

ANOVA results for schools membership differences in individual perceptions of school culture  
(N = 384 individuals in 21 schools)

Scale	MS Between	MS Within	df	F	Eta <sup>2</sup>
CCC	13.4	5.7	19, 333	2.4**	0.12
QCE	12.1	6.3	19, 332	1.9 <sup>#</sup>	0.10
WAC	23.8	5.7	19, 331	4.2*	0.19
WLTV	38.8	9.6	19, 332	4.0*	0.19
CRI	10.6	5.8	19, 332	1.8 <sup>#</sup>	0.10
CL	56.7	13.4	19, 330	4.2*	0.20

\*p<.001 \*\*p<.01 <sup>#</sup>p<.05

Overall, the validation data are satisfactory for the final version of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory. This 30 item instrument assesses the six scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Quality Christian Education, Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership. Given the sound structural characteristics of the instrument, it was reasonable to test hypotheses concerning school culture, the results of which are reported in Chapter 7 of this thesis.

## 6.4 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter has detailed the specific steps involved in the development and validation of an instrument to assess school culture in Queensland Lutheran schools. Instrument development criteria for this study were introduced in Section 6.2.1. A three-stage procedure which operationalised these criteria was introduced, discussed, and justified as an appropriate framework for the development of this instrument (Section 6.2.2). This first element in this procedure involved the identification of the dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools through perceptions of “key informants” obtained from interviews and the literature of Lutheran schools. This procedure is described fully in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

The second element of the development procedure involved the writing of items for the instrument based on the dimensions identified in element one of the development procedure. Items were written for each of the six scales with a total of 72 items developed for the instrument. Items written were reviewed by experts in either Lutheran schools or psychometric research.

The third element of the development procedure consisted of the field testing of the instrument. Data collected from 384 teachers, senior staff, school council members, pastors and chaplains, and parents and friends executive members were subjected to factor and item analyses. Initial analyses indicated that the internal structure of the instrument was unsatisfactory. Using the six *a priori* scales as a basis, the instrument was refined to a final form consisting of six scales and 30 items which assesses Caring, Christ-centred Community, Quality Christian Education, Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership. Internal consistency reliability and discriminant validity data revealed the scales to be internally consistent but somewhat overlapping. One-way ANOVAs revealed that the instrument differentiated between schools with the proportion of variance explained by school membership for teachers ranging from 12% for Christian Relationships and Interactions to 29% for Worship as Life in Vocation.

The final form of the instrument, the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory, has six scales with scoring based on a Strongly Agree, Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree or Not Sure, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree scale. The instrument met the three development criteria outlined in Section 6.2.1: consistency with the dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools, salience to stakeholders, and economy.

Validation data attest to the sound structural characteristics of the instrument and provide a basis for subsequent data analyses which are reported in Chapter 7 of this thesis. The development of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory will be useful to other researchers, administrators, and teachers interested in the assessment of the culture of Lutheran schools.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **ANALYSIS OF QUESTIONNAIRE DATA**

#### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the analysis of data collected through administration of the questionnaire as reported in Chapter 5. The questionnaire was designed to assist in answering the research questions as presented below. In particular this chapter presents results from analysis of data pertinent to Research Questions 3, and 4a-4f, which are listed below. The discussion of these results is presented in the next chapter. Results relating to Research Question 1, which identified the important cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools were presented in Chapter 5 of this thesis. Results from question 2, reported in the previous chapter, described the development and validation of the research instrument used to collect the data analysed in this chapter. The research questions for which results are presented in this chapter are listed below.

3. How closely do the results of this study agree with the rhetoric of a distinctive culture in Queensland Lutheran Schools?
4. How do the perceptions of culture vary in Queensland Lutheran Schools?
- 4a. To what extent do the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran school vary between different types of schools (i.e. primary, secondary, P-12)?
- 4b. To what extent does the size of a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?
- 4c. To what extent does denominational background of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools? To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?
- 4d. To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran students within a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?

- 4e. To what extent do the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools vary amongst major stakeholders (i.e. senior staff, teachers, school councillors, pastors and chaplains, and parents and friends executive members)?
- 4f. To what extent does theological professional development of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?

Apart from this introductory section, there are ten further sections in this chapter. Section 7.2 briefly summaries the design and administration of the questionnaire utilised to collect the data for analysis. Data analysis techniques are also summarised in this section. Sections 7.3 to 7.9 report the findings related to each of the Research Questions 3, and 4a to 4f. Section 7.10 summarises the chapter.

## **7.2 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

Data analysed in this chapter were collected using a context-specific pen and paper questionnaire, the design and refinement of which was described in the previous chapter. The questionnaire was based on six dimensions of culture identified from interviews conducted with key stakeholders in Queensland Lutheran Schools (Chapter 5). The purpose of the questionnaire was to measure the perceptions of respondents in regard to the six dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools.

As reported in Chapter 4, the questionnaire was administered to a random sample of senior staff, teachers, school council members, parents and friends executive committee members, and pastors and chaplains in primary, secondary, and preschool to year 12 (P-12) Lutheran schools in Queensland. Specific details of the sample are recorded in Section 4.4.4. The research design of this study involved the use of the six scales of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory as dependent variables with school type, school size, denominational background of teachers, percentage of Lutheran staff, percentage of Lutheran students, position, and theological professional development as independent variables. These independent variables were justified and explained in Section 4.4.4.

Data to contribute to the answer to Research Question 3 were analysed using descriptive statistical methods. Means and standard deviations were calculated for each culture scale



and comparisons made between these results. Data to answer question 4a were analysed by utilising multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to compute the statistical significance of the six culture scales compared with the independent variable school type. In general, the significance level adopted for all inferential tests of significance was .05. Provided that the overall multivariate test was significant, univariate  $F$  tests were performed for individual scales. This approach reduced the overall Type I error rate that would have been associated with performing a series of univariate tests at the outset (Section 4.4.4). Discriminant analysis was conducted on the sample of primary and secondary teachers to describe major differences between these two groups and to identify which scales were important in distinguishing between the groups of primary and secondary teachers.

The independent variables from questions 4b to 4d: school size, percentage of Lutheran staff, and percentage of Lutheran students were analysed using regression techniques. The procedure *curvefit* was utilised to identify the curve which most closely resembled a plot of the data. Univariate  $F$  tests were performed on each of the individual scales to ascertain whether the variables school size, percentage of Lutheran students, and percentage of Lutheran teachers were statistically significant on any of the six culture scales.

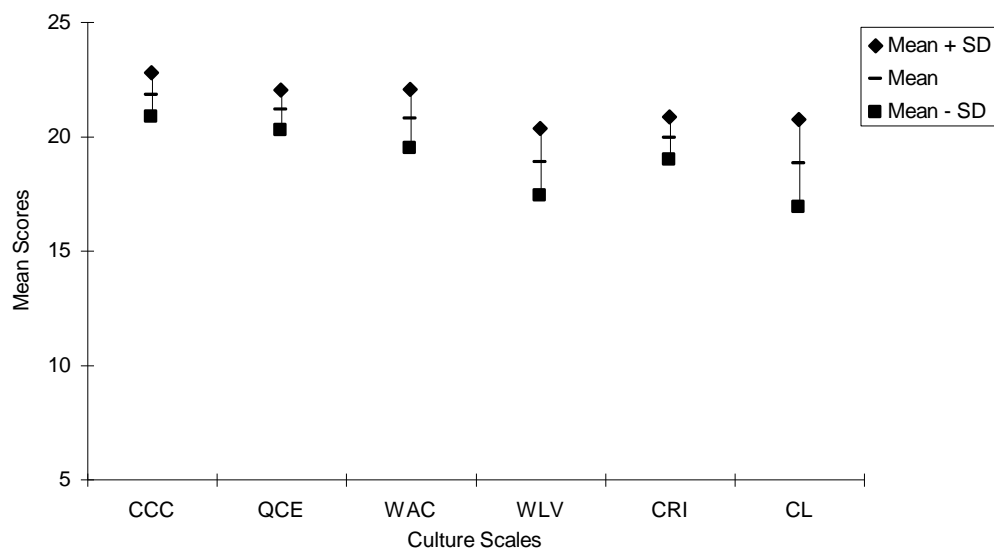
Independent variables related to Research Questions 4c, 4e, and 4f: denominational background of teachers, position, and theological professional development were analysed using a repeated measures MANOVA procedure. For these variables a school mean was calculated for the different within-subjects effects resulting in two or more school means calculated for each school. The repeated measures MANOVA calculated the statistical significance of the six culture scales compared with the independent variables of denominational background of teachers, position, and theological professional development.

Where appropriate, an effect size is reported. Effect size refers to the extent to which groups in the population differ on the dependent variable (Stevens, 1992). The difference between the group means as a fraction of the full sample standard deviation was used as a convenient index (Cohen, 1977).

### 7.3 SCALE MEAN CONSENSUS AND LUTHERAN SCHOOL CULTURE

**Research Question 3** *How closely do the results of this study align with the rhetoric of a distinctive culture in Queensland Lutheran Schools?*

To investigate this question, scale means and standard deviations were calculated for the six culture scales. The scale mean ( $M$ ) and standard deviation ( $SD$ ) for each scale were: Caring, Christ-centred Community  $M=21.79$ ,  $SD=0.97$ ; Quality, Christ-centred Education  $M=21.13$ ,  $SD=0.88$ ; Worship as Celebration  $M=20.74$ ,  $SD=1.28$ ; Worship as Life in Vocation  $M=18.84$ ,  $SD=1.47$ ; Christian Relationships and Interactions  $M=19.90$ ,  $SD=0.94$ ; and Christian Leadership  $M=18.79$ ,  $SD=1.92$ . These results are presented in a graphical format in Figure 7.1. It needs to be noted that 68.72% of cases occur one standard deviation each side of the scale mean indicating the spread of the responses.



*Figure 7.1* Scale mean scores and standard deviations for the six scales of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory

CCC- Caring, Christ-centred Community; QCE - Quality Christian Education; WAC - Worship as Celebration; WLV - Worship as Life in Vocation; CRI - Christian Relationships and Interactions; CL - Christian Leadership

It was noteworthy that the scales Caring, Christ-centred Community; Quality Christian Education; and Worship as Celebration had scale means higher than 20 equating to a questionnaire response between agree and highly agree. The other three scales had scale means slightly below the score for agree. The standard deviations for the scales Caring, Christ-centred Community; Quality Christian Education; and Christian Relationships and Interactions were below 1 indicating that nearly 70% of the responses for these scales

were within 1 point of the scale and hence demonstrated strong agreement with the mean score.

Figure 7.2 presents graphical representation of the highest and lowest school means and the scale means for each scale. This graph illustrates the range of scale means for the 21 schools included in the sample. These results show that no individual school mean was below a score of 15 which indicates neither agreement nor disagreement with the scale on any of the six culture scales. The scale with the greatest variation of responses was Christian Leadership, while Quality Christian Education had least variability. These results provide the basis for the discussion of how closely the results align with the rhetoric of a distinctive culture in Queensland Lutheran schools.

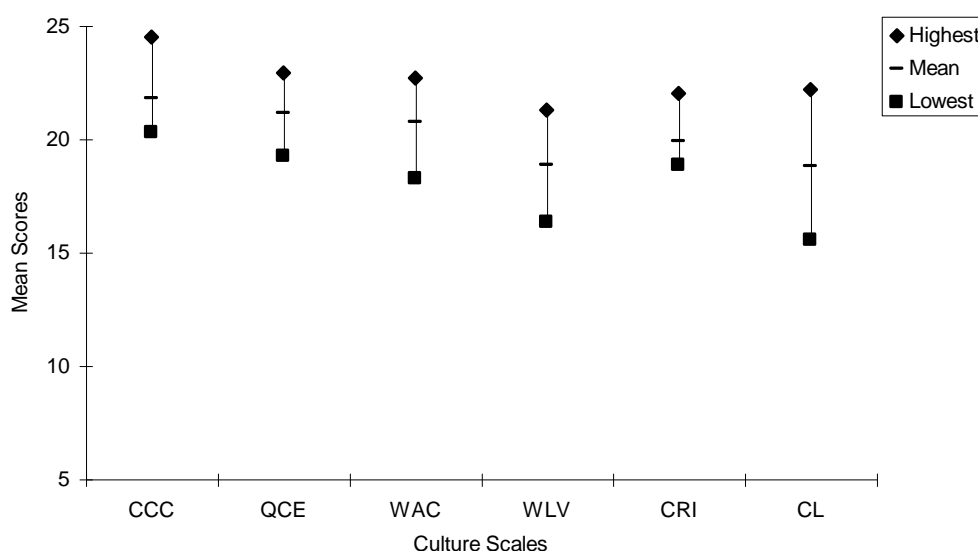


Figure 7.2 Highest, mean, and lowest school scale mean scores for the six scales of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory

## 7.4 SCHOOL TYPE

**Research Question 4a.** *To what extent do the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran school vary within different types of schools (i.e. primary, secondary, P-12)?*

To investigate this question a MANOVA was performed with the set of six culture scales constituting the set of dependent variables and school type as the independent variable. Because the MANOVA was significant,  $p < .05$ , univariate  $F$  tests were performed on each

of the six culture scales for the effect school type. These tests revealed that the three school types differed significantly,  $p < .05$ , on all culture scales with the exception of Quality Christian Education.

Univariate  $F$  tests for the effect school type indicated five significant scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community  $F(2,18) = 4.5$ ,  $p < .05$ ; Worship as Celebration  $F(2,18) = 43.02$ ,  $p < .001$ ; Worship as Life in Vocation  $F(2,18) = 5.66$ ,  $p < .05$ ; Christian Relationships and Interactions  $F(2,18) = 6.46$ ,  $p < .01$ ; and Christian Leadership  $F(2,18) = 3.78$ ,  $p < .05$ . Tukey's post-hoc procedure was used to identify which school types exhibited statistical difference on those culture scale which were statistically significant. Effect size was used as a convenient indicator of the statistical difference. The effect size was calculated from the difference of the means of the two school types being considered divided by the standard deviation between the means of the three different school types. Apart from Christian Leadership, the other four culture scales listed above were significant,  $p < .05$ , for Tukey's post-hoc procedure for the effect school type. The effect size for each pair of school types significant on the four culture scales are presented in Table 7.2 together with the results from the univariate  $F$  tests. Mean scores are presented graphically in Figure 7.3. The school types statistically different were primary schools, and either secondary or P-12 schools with effect sizes ranging from 1.24 to 1.99. These effect sizes would be considered large.

The results (Table 7.1) demonstrate primary schools had more positive perceptions of culture than both secondary and P-12 schools on all scales. Secondary schools were more positive for Caring, Christ-centred Community and Quality Christian Education than P-12 schools, with the other four scales having similar mean scores. The graph (Figure 7.3) clearly illustrates a difference between primary, and both secondary and P-12 schools on five of the six culture scales. The very large effect sizes reported in Worship as Celebration indicated greatest difference between school types for this culture scale.

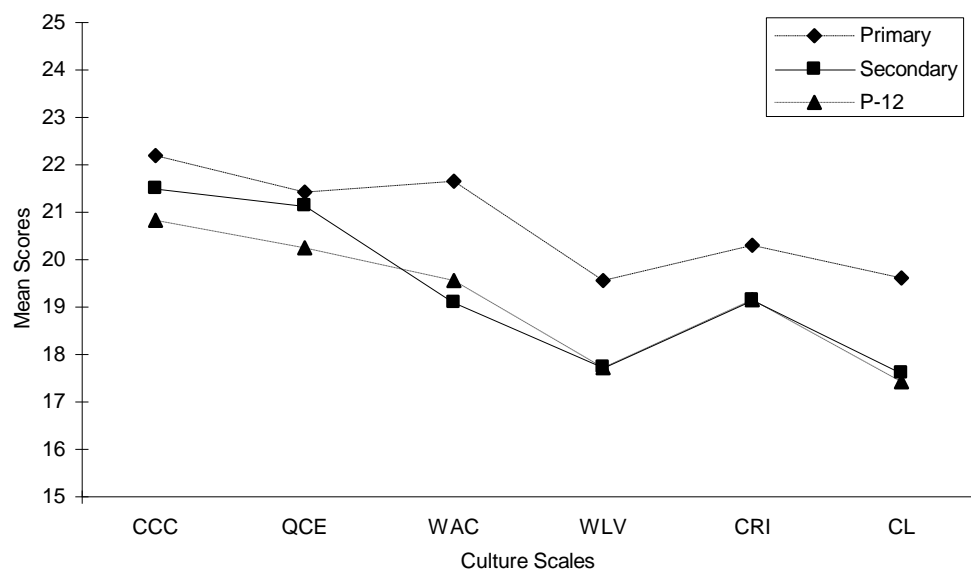


Figure 7.3 Mean scale scores for analysis of school type

Table 7.1

Individual scale ANOVA results for variable school type

Scale	ANOVA Results	School Types Significantly Different (Tukey's Procedure)*	Effect Size
CCC	$F(2,18) = 4.5, p < .05$	Primary & P-12	1.42
WAC	$F(2,18) = 43.02, p < .001$	Primary & Secondary	1.99
		Primary & P-12	1.63
WLW	$F(2,18) = 5.66, p < .05$	Primary & Secondary	1.24
		Primary & P-12	1.25
CRI	$F(2,18) = 6.46, p < .01$	Primary & Secondary	1.30
		Primary & P-12	1.31
CL	$F(2,18) = 3.78, p < .05$	None	Nil

\*Higher mean score listed first

CCC- Caring, Christ-centred Community; QCE - Quality Christian Education; WAC - Worship as Celebration; WLW - Worship as Life in Vocation; CRI - Christian Relationships and Interactions; CL - Christian Leadership

The next component of the analysis of school type investigated the difference between perceptions of primary and secondary teachers in P-12 schools. School means based on the scale scores for both primary and secondary teachers in P-12 were calculated. Because of the small sample size (8 school means for each scale), the non-parametric Wilcoxon

matched-pairs signed-ranks test was considered appropriate. The overall significance level was set at  $p < .05$ , and the Bonferroni Inequality (Stevens, 1992) was employed because six separate analyses were conducted. The conservative application of this inequality required the planned Type I error for each analysis to be set at the family-wise level divided by the number of analyses (i.e.  $.05 \div 6 \approx .008$ ). None of the Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-ranks tests was significant at this level. However an inspection of the mean scores for each scale of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory revealed a pattern consistent with the results for each scale between primary and secondary schools (Figure 7.4).

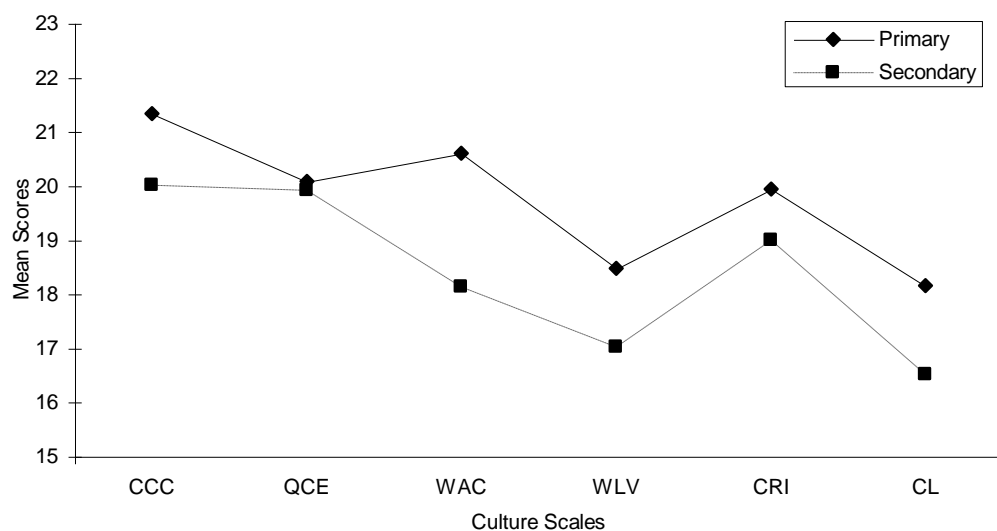


Figure 7.4 Mean scale scores for analysis of primary and secondary teachers in P-12 schools

A discriminant analysis was performed on the data to describe major differences between primary and secondary teachers, and identify which scales were important to distinguish between these teacher levels. The data set used for this analysis was that for primary and secondary teachers. The analysis contrasting the two teacher levels with the six culture scales as predictor variables yielded one canonical discriminant function which was significant with a canonical correlation,  $R_c = .87$ ;  $\chi^2_{(6, N=25)} = 28.44$ ,  $p < .001$ . As one important assumption of discriminant analysis is homogeneity of the covariance matrix, Box's  $M$  test of this assumption was conducted. This test was not statistically significant ( $M = 45.75$ ) with a corresponding  $F_{(21, 722.7)} = 1.37$ ,  $p = .12$ . Accordingly, the homogeneity assumption was met and discriminant analysis results could be meaningfully interpreted. To establish the relative separation of the two teacher levels, the canonical

discriminant function was calculated at the centroids of each of the teacher levels. Figure 7.5 illustrates clearly the very high discrimination between the two groups of teachers.

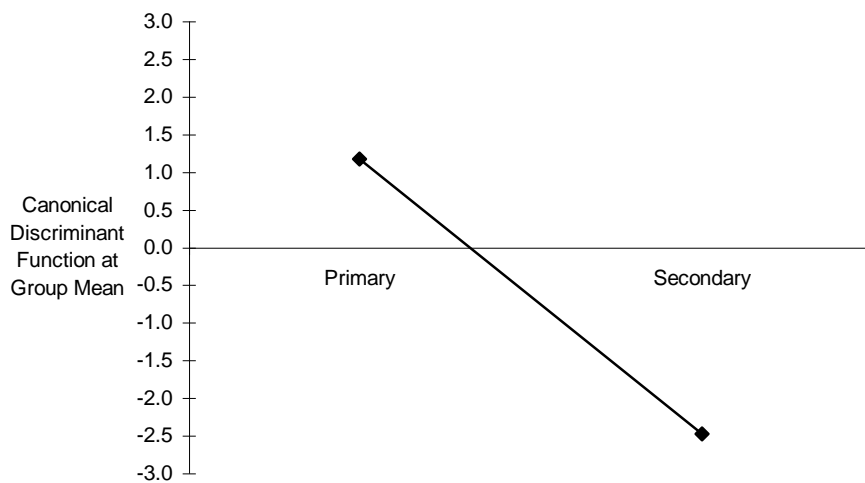


Figure 7.5 Canonical discriminant function evaluated at group means (centroid) for primary and secondary teachers (N = 25 school means)

Within-group correlations between each culture scale and the canonical discriminant function were used to establish substantive culture scales (Stevens, 1992) (Table 7.2). Table 7.2 clearly indicates Worship as Celebration to be the most potent discriminating variable, accounting for 84.8% of variance in the canonical discriminant variable. Standardised coefficients of the canonical discriminant function, used to identify redundant predictor variables, revealed Worship as Celebration was the dominant predictor variable (Table 7.2). Cohen's (1977) effect size for Worship as Celebration was 1.79 which is very large. These results were confirmed by mean scale scores reported in Table 7.3 which shows primary teachers perceptions on all six culture scales to be higher than those of their secondary colleagues.

Table 7.2

Statistics for the significant canonical discriminant function

Scale	With-in group Correlation with Discriminant Function	Standardised Discriminant Function Coefficient
CCC	.30	.36
QCE	.10	-.22
WAC	.92	1.09
WLV	.35	-.17

CRI	.37	-.14
CL	.17	.13

Table 7.3

Mean scale scores and standard deviations for six culture scales for primary and secondary teachers

Scale	Primary Teachers		Secondary Teachers	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
CCC	22.43	1.24	21.16	.93
QCE	21.28	1.41	20.85	.67
WAC	21.54	.83	18.83	.75
WLV	19.72	1.49	17.66	1.91
CRI	20.57	1.07	19.33	.37
CL	19.01	2.36	17.69	1.50

## 7.5 SIZE OF SCHOOL

**Research Question 4b.** *To what extent does the size of a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

This section presents the analysis of the variable of school size, a continuous variable. For this reason regression analysis was adopted as the most suitable statistical technique for the analysis. The first stage of the analysis involved plotting the data for each school mean against the size of school to explore the relationship between the data sets. This was repeated for each culture scale. Plots of the data illustrated that the relationship between each of the six culture scales and the independent variable school size was not a linear relationship and therefore linear regression was inappropriate.

Curvefit, a curve estimation procedure, was considered most appropriate for the analysis. This procedure transforms relationships between two variables into a linear equation and then applies the algorithm used in linear regression to this linear equation. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was also performed on each culture scale and the variable school size to test for statistical significance between each culture scale and school size. The best fit curve was determined by examination of the “Multiple R” statistic which indicates the



correlation between each culture scale and school size, “ $R^2$ ” which indicates the amount of variance explained by school size, the “ $F$ ” value, and the observed significance level (Norusis, 1991). The procedure curvefit was used to investigate the relationship between each of the six scales of culture as the dependent variable and the size of school as an independent variable. The overall significance level was set at  $p < .05$ , and the Bonferroni Inequality (Stevens, 1992) was employed because six separate analyses were conducted. The conservative application of this inequality required the planned Type I error for each analysis to be set at the family-wise level divided by the number of analyses (i.e.  $.05 \div 6 \approx .008$ ).

The results of the analysis for the five culture scales statistically different for the effect school size are presented in the Table 7.4. Graphs (Figure 7.6) utilising the curvefit equations in Table 7.4 illustrate that generally an increase in size leads to lower perceptions on each culture scale. This is most noticeable for Worship as Celebration and Worship as Life in Vocation with the effect for Quality Christian Education being the lowest. It is important to note that these results need to be considered tentatively because of the respective size of the different types of Queensland Lutheran schools as presented in Table 7.5.

*Table 7.4*

Curvefit statistics for independent variable school size

Scale	Multiple R	$R^2$	$F$	Sig.	Equation
CCC	.63	.40	12.46	.0022	$CCC = 27.17 \times \text{size}^{-0.038}$
WAC	.73	.53	21.16	.0002	$WAC = 28.23 - 1.27 \times \ln(\text{size})$
WLV	.80	.64	33.15	.0000	$WLV = 20.32 \times e^{(-0.00017 \times \text{size})}$
CRI	.61	.38	11.44	.0031	$CRI = 24.63 \times \text{size}^{-0.037}$
CL	.58	.33	9.49	.0061	$CL = 27.7 - 1.51 \times \ln(\text{size})$

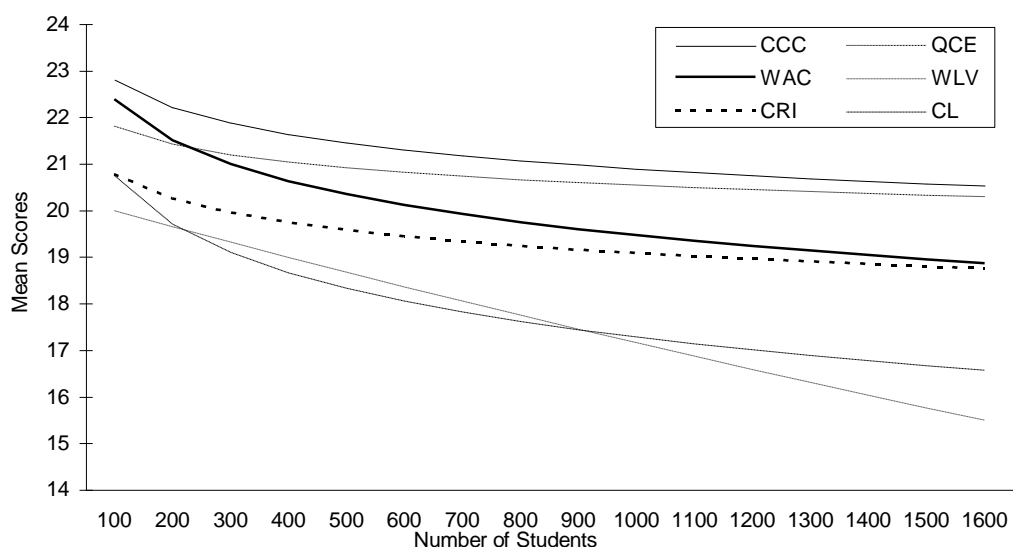


Figure 7.6 Mean scale scores for variable school size using equations from curvefit

Table 7.5

School size of Queensland Lutheran schools

Type of School	Number of Schools	Size Range
Primary School	13	110 - 480
Secondary Schools	4	600 - 830
P - 12 Schools	4	430 - 1620

Table 7.5 shows that the only type of school with a student population below 400 was a primary school, while the only school with a student population above 850 students was a P-12 school (Board for Lutheran Schools, 1997). Thus when the data on size of school are considered it is important not to conflate the effect of the type of school with the size of school. In order to explore whether the size of school is significant without interaction with the type of school, an analysis was conducted using only the results from primary schools. None of these comparisons was statistical significant. The results in Figure 7.7 suggest that the scales Christian Leadership and Worship as Life in Vocation are most affected by school size. The implications of these results will be discussed in Chapter 8.

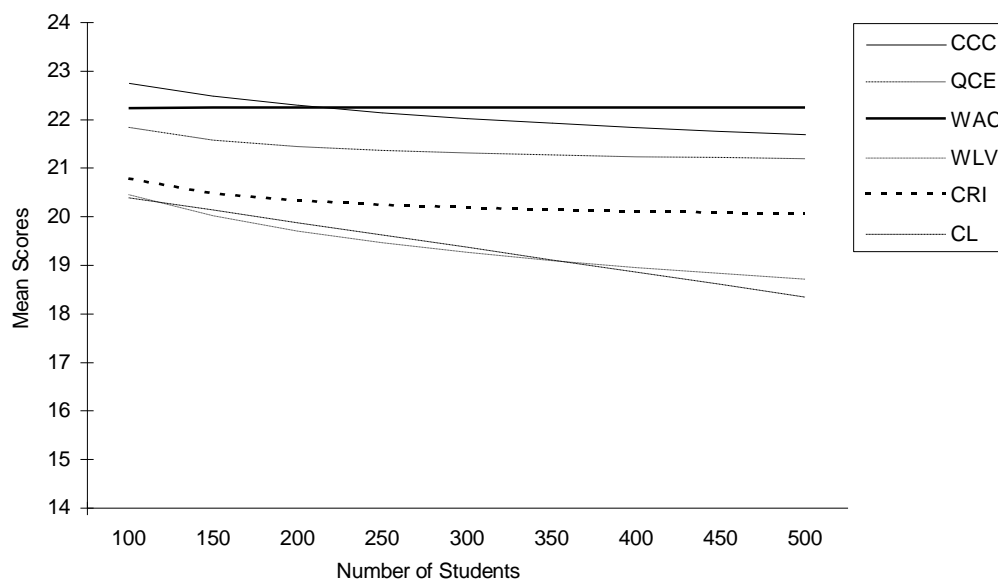


Figure 7.7 Mean scale scores for variable school size using equations from curvefit - primary schools only

## 7.6 DENOMINATIONAL BACKGROUND

**Research Question 4c.** *To what extent does denominational background of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools? To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran teachers affect perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

A repeated measures MANOVA with school type as the grouping variable and the denominational background as the within-subject effect was performed to investigate the significance of denominational background of teachers. Although respondents had the opportunity to list any denominational background, for technical reasons only two categories were used in this analysis: Lutheran and other. The MANOVA revealed that school type was significant at  $p < .01$ . Univariate  $F$ -tests were carried out on each of the six culture scales with two being significant for the effect denomination: Quality Christian Education  $F(2,13) = 6.12$ ,  $p < .05$ ; and Worship as Celebration  $F(2,15) = 23.01$ ,  $p < .001$ . Tukey's post-hoc procedure was used to identify which groups were statistically different  $p < .05$  for the effect denomination with the results summarised in Table 7.6. Given results reported earlier in this chapter, it was not surprising that the scale Worship as Celebration should be significant. The difference was evident between primary schools, and secondary

and P-12 schools, with primary schools having more positive perceptions of this scale than the other types of schools.

Table 7.6

ANOVA results for variable denomination

Scale	ANOVA Results	School Types Significantly Different (Tukey's Procedure) *	Effect Size
QCE	$F(2,13) = 6.12, p < .05$	None significant	
WAC	$F(2,15) = 23.01, p < .001$	Lutherans - Primary & Secondary	1.94
		- Primary & P-12	1.49
		Non-Lutherans	
		- Primary & Secondary	1.50
		- Primary & P-12	1.64

\* Higher mean score listed first

Analysis of Lutheran as a within-subjects effect indicated no interaction between school type and denomination. The variable denomination was not significant as a within subject effect. Table 7.7 presents mean scale scores for the different types of schools. Graphical results of culture scale means from the analysis of denomination are displayed in Figure 7.8.

Table 7.7

Mean scale scores for variable denomination

Scale	All Teachers		Primary		Secondary		P-12	
	Lutheran	Non-Lutheran	Lutheran	Non-Lutheran	Lutheran	Non-Lutheran	Lutheran	Non-Lutheran
CCC	22.14	21.13	22.53	21.44	22.19	21.46	20.80	20.10
QCE	21.16	21.00	21.55	21.31	21.66	21.48	19.39	19.85
WAC	20.72	19.81	21.76	21.06	18.69	18.52	19.40	18.27
WLV	19.49	17.70	20.15	18.38	18.50	17.23	18.33	16.83
CRI	20.13	20.25	20.46	20.92	19.78	19.60	19.40	19.40
CL	17.94	18.13	18.43	18.95	17.63	17.07	16.66	17.35

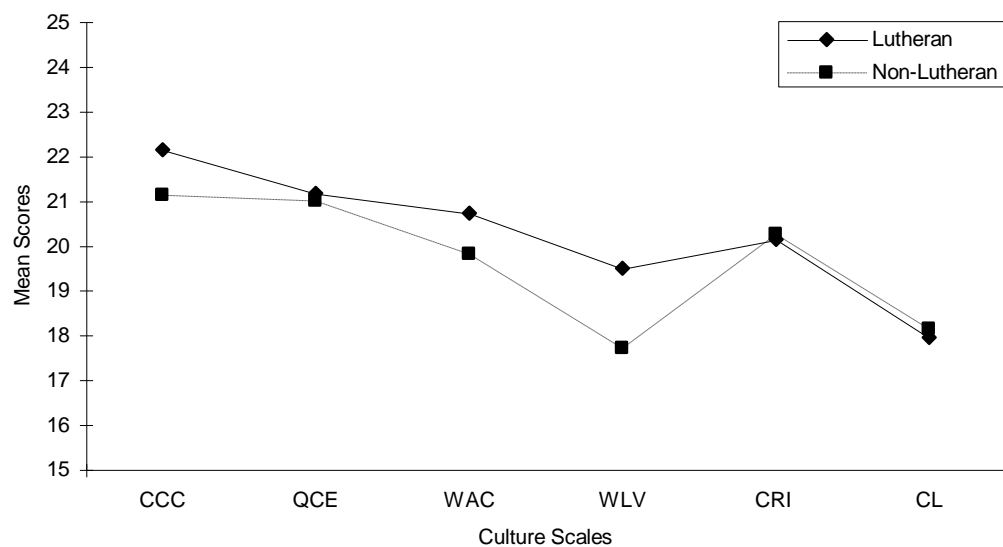


Figure 7.8 Mean scale scores comparing Lutheran with Non-Lutheran teachers

While the variable denomination was not statistically significant, it was evident that some differences do occur within this variable. Generally the three scales, Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, and Worship as Life in Vocation were perceived more highly by Lutherans than non-Lutherans. This is a significant issue to be considered in the discussion Chapter 8.

The procedure curvefit was also used to analyse the relationship between the six culture scales and the percentage of Lutheran teachers in a school. Individual regressions were conducted on each scale for this independent variable with Table 7.8 reporting the results of this analysis. Two scales: Worship as Celebration, and Worship as Life in Vocation indicated statistical difference with an increase in the percentage of Lutheran teachers. The results are graphed in Figure 7.9.

Table 7.8

Curvefit statistics for variable percentage of Lutheran teachers

Scale	Multiple R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig	Equation
WAC	.76	.57	25.68	.0001	$WAC = 17.80 \times e^{(.22 \times (\%LT))}$
WLV	.62	.38	11.57	.003	$WLV = 16.07 \times e^{(.23 \times (\%LT))}$

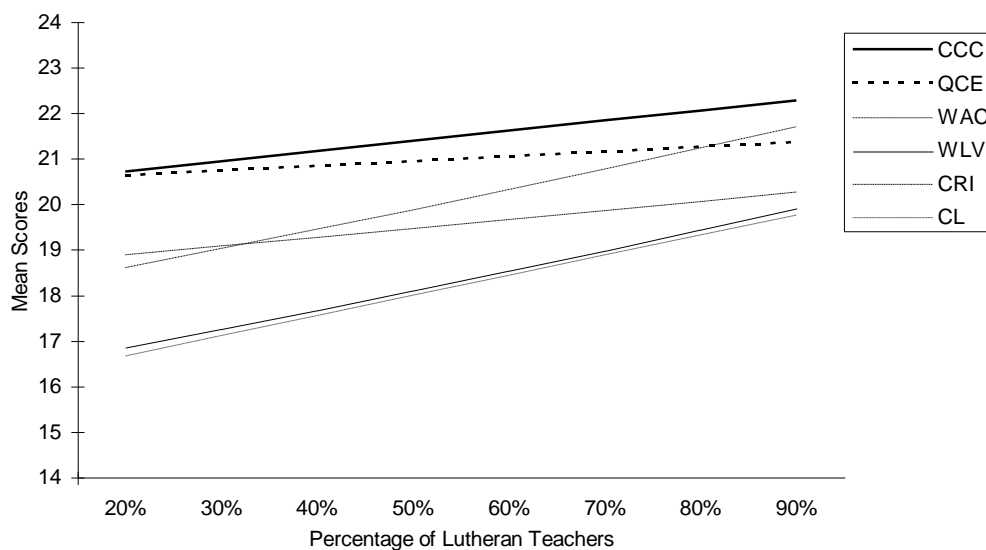


Figure 7.9 Mean scale scores for variable percentage of Lutheran teachers using equations from curvefit

Although only two of the scales showed statistical difference for the independent variable percentage of Lutheran teachers, it is noteworthy that all scales display a positive trend with an increase in the percentage of Lutheran teachers. However the possibility of interaction effects between type of school and the percentage of Lutheran teachers again needed to be examined. Table 7.9 reveals the range of the percentage of Lutheran teachers in the different types of schools (Board for Lutheran Schools, 1997). Again it is apparent that these results need to be treated tentatively due to the range of proportions of Lutheran teachers in each type of school. To aid in the investigation primary schools only were analysed with the results revealing no statistical difference for this independent variable on any culture scale. Figure 7.10 presents graphs for the results of this analysis.

Table 7.9

Percentages of Lutheran teachers in Queensland Lutheran schools

Type of School	Number of Schools	% of Lutheran Teachers
Primary School	13	55 - 96
Secondary Schools	4	24 - 55
P - 12 Schools	4	35 - 70

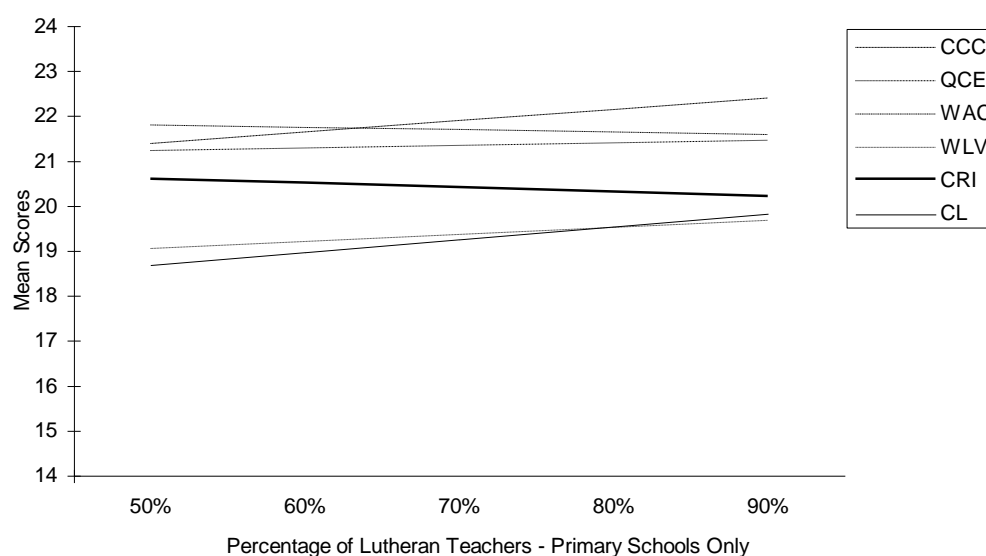


Figure 7.10 Mean scale scores for variable percentage of Lutheran teachers using equations from curvefit - primary schools only

It is noteworthy that for primary schools only, the trend was slightly negative for Christian Relationships and Interactions and Worship as Celebration. The largest effect was in the scales of Caring, Christ-centred Community and Christian Leadership exhibiting a positive trend as the percentage of Lutheran teachers increased. Overall the results tentatively suggest that an increase in the percentage of Lutheran teachers in a school leads to an increase in perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools.

## 7.7 PROPORTION OF LUTHERAN STUDENTS

**Research Question 4d.** *To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran students within a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

As this variable is also a continuous variable the same procedures were adopted as for the variable school size. As plots were again non-linear, the procedure curvefit was used to analyse data for the percentage of Lutheran students within a school. Three of the culture scales were significant for the variable percentage of Lutheran students: Caring, Christ-centred Community; Worship as Life in Vocation; and Christian Relationships and Interactions. The results for this analysis are presented in Table 7.10 with graphs using equations used from curvefit plotted in Figure 7.11.

Table 7.10

Curvefit statistics for variable percentage of Lutheran students

Scale	Multiple R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	Sig	Equation
CCC	.63	.39	12.35	.0023	CCC = 20.57 + 4.77 x (%LS)
WLV	.62	.38	11.56	.0030	WLV = 17.03 + 7.11 x (%LS)
CRI	.57	.33	9.35	.0065	CRI = 18.83 + 4.01 x (%LS)

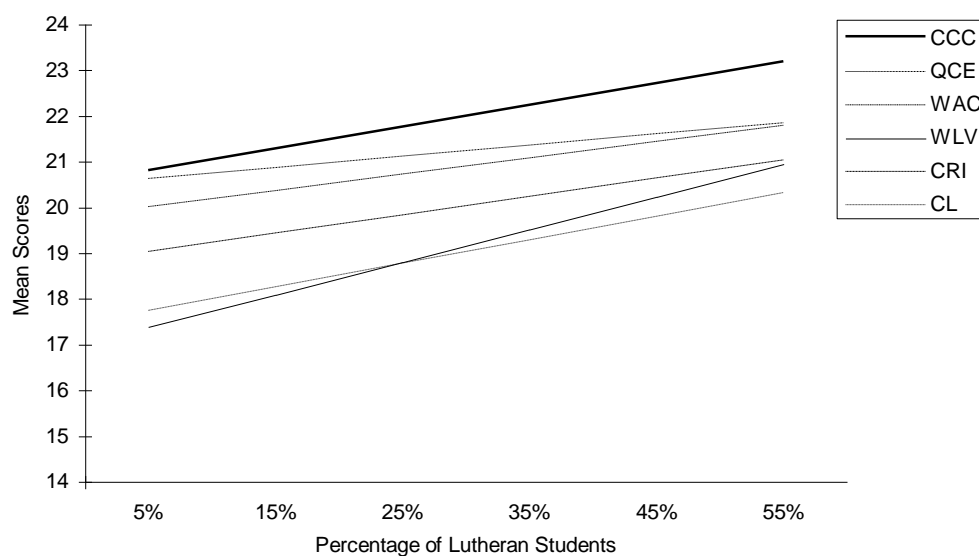


Figure 7.11 Mean scale scores for variable percentage of Lutheran students using equations from curvefit

While the independent variable percentage of Lutheran students displayed statistical difference on three of the culture scales, all culture scales revealed a positive trend with an increase in the percentage of Lutheran students. Again interaction effects between the percentage of Lutheran students with the different types of schools was investigated. Table 7.11 presents the range of the percentage of Lutheran students in the three different types of schools (Board for Lutheran Schools, 1997).

As the primary schools displayed the greatest range for the percentage of Lutheran students these data were analysed separately. These results indicated statistical significance for the percentage of Lutheran students in one culture scale: Worship as Life in Vocation. Statistical results for this culture scale were: Multiple R = 0.73, R<sup>2</sup> = 0.53,



$F = 12.36, p < .05$ . Graphs for all scales in the analysis of primary school data are presented in Figure 7.12. These results will be discussed in Chapter 8 of the thesis.

Table 7.11

Percentage of Lutheran students in Queensland Lutheran schools

Type of School	Number of Schools	Range of Percentage of Lutheran Students	Mean Percentage of Lutheran Students
Primary School	13	9 - 50	29.0
Secondary Schools	4	14 - 45	25.8
P - 12 Schools	4	9 - 17	14.3

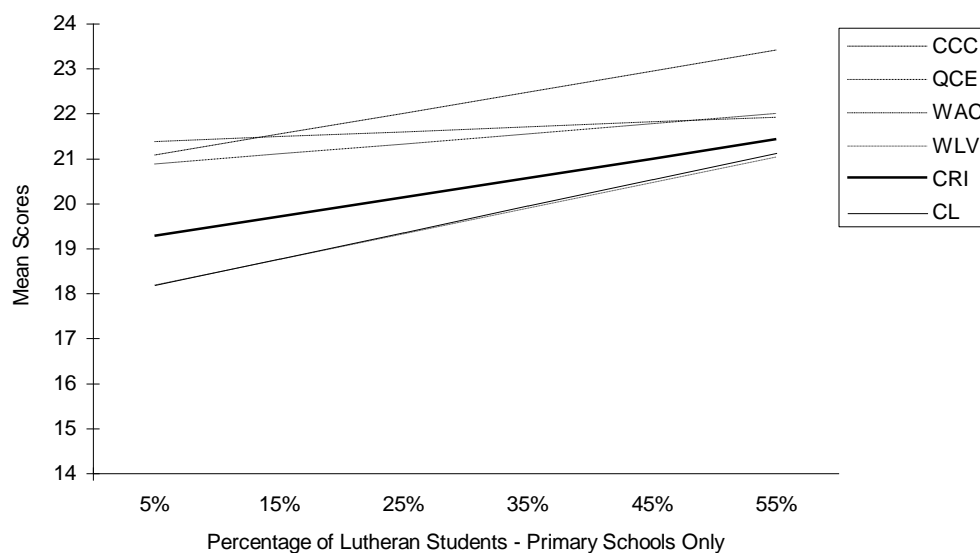


Figure 7.12 Mean scale scores for variable percentage of Lutheran Students using equations from curvefit - primary schools only

Overall the results demonstrate that for all scales, but especially Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Life in Vocation, and Christian Relationships and Interactions an increase in the percentage of Lutheran students leads to an increase in perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools.

## 7.8 POSITION

**Research Question 4e.** *To what extent do the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools vary amongst major stakeholders (i.e. senior staff, teachers, pastors, school councillors, and parents and chaplains, and friends executive members)?*

To investigate this effect a repeated measures MANOVA was used. This procedure was selected as being most appropriate as it analyses effects within each school while simultaneously measuring effects between school types. Data analysed were school means calculated on the basis on the within-subjects effect i.e. position within the school. Thus for each school a mean was obtained for senior staff, teachers, school council members, and parents and friends executive members. Due to the small response rate from pastors and chaplains these were not included in this analysis. Thus it will not be possible to discuss any differences in perceptions of culture of pastors and chaplains in Chapter 8.

The repeated measures design was one where school type was used as the between-subjects effect. Thus between-subjects results report statistical difference between primary, secondary, and P-12 schools on means calculated which account for the within-subject effects. The within-subject analysis computes the statistical difference between position within the different school types. In those cases where statistical significance was indicated, Tukey's post-hoc procedure was utilised to identify statistical significance between the different school types. Paired  $t$  tests were used to identify statistical significance between the within-subjects effect. Effect size, the difference between the respective means divided by the standard deviation, was used as a convenient measure of statistical difference in these instances.

A repeated measures MANOVA was conducted with the set of culture scales as the dependent variable with school type as the between-subjects effect and position as the within-subjects effect. As the between-subjects effect school type was significant,  $p < .01$ , univariate  $F$  tests were conducted indicating significant difference between the means for the three school types on five scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community  $F(2,15) = 14.28$ ,

$p < .001$ ; Worship as Celebration  $F(2,15) = 21.59$ ,  $p < .001$ ; Worship as Life in Vocation  $F(2,15) = 8.85$ ,  $p < .01$ ; Christian Relationships and Interactions  $F(2,15) = 9.76$ ,  $p < .01$ ; Christian Leadership  $F(2,15) = 7.53$ ,  $p < .01$ . Tukey's post-hoc procedure was used to identify which school types exhibited a significant difference  $p < .05$ . Results from these tests are reported in Table 7.12 and mean scale scores for each group are reported in Table 7.13.

The effect sizes were in the range 1.23 to 1.70 which are considered to be large. Differences in perception due to position between schools were generally between primary schools and either secondary or P-12 schools. It is noteworthy that the perceptions of culture on all culture scales were more positive for primary schools than those for secondary or P-12 schools. This corresponds with the results reported in Section 7.4.

Table 7.12

ANOVA results for variable Position

Scale	ANOVA Results	School Types Significantly Different (Tukey's Procedure) *	Effect Size
CCC	$F(2,15)=14.28$ , $p < .001$	Teachers - Primary & P-12.	1.51
		P&F Exec. – Primary & P-12	1.62
WAC	$F(2,15)=21.59$ , $p < .001$	Teachers – Primary & Secondary	1.86
		- Primary & P-12	1.60
		Senior Staff – Primary & Secondary	1.64
		School Council Members	
		- Primary & Secondary	1.49
		P&F – Primary & P-12	1.56
WLV	$F(2,15)=8.85$ , $p < .01$	Councillors – Primary & Secondary	1.42
CRI	$F(2,15)=9.76$ , $p < .01$	Teachers - Primary & Secondary	1.23
		- Primary & P-12	1.26
		P&F – Primary & P-12	1.70
CL	$F(2,15) = 7.53$ $p < .01$	Senior staff - Primary & P-12	1.41
		Councillors - Primary & Secondary	1.53
		P&F - Primary & P-12	1.46

\* Higher mean score listed first

Table 7.13

Mean scale scores for teachers, senior staff, school councillors, and parents and friends executive members

Scale	Teachers			Senior Staff			School Councillors			P&F Executive		
	Prim	Sec	P-12	Prim	Sec	P-12	Prim	Sec	P-12	Prim	Sec	P-12
CCC	22.43	21.62	20.49	23.75	22.46	21.84	22.93	20.81	22.00	21.68	21.25	18.71
QCE	21.53	21.21	19.81	22.13	21.72	21.40	21.63	20.56	22.22	21.53	20.79	18.94
WAC	21.63	18.58	19.01	22.58	19.46	20.84	21.89	19.56	20.44	21.53	19.91	18.63
WLV	19.82	17.58	17.57	21.38	18.80	18.51	19.13	16.38	18.25	19.12	17.93	15.52
CRI	20.65	19.33	19.30	21.42	20.27	19.69	20.41	18.19	18.47	20.02	18.40	16.88
CL	18.87	16.92	16.87	21.58	20.68	19.09	21.34	17.06	19.25	19.77	17.12	15.73

These results examined perceptions of different stakeholders within the three types of schools. The four groups analysed displayed similar results in that primary personnel had more positive perceptions of the six culture scales than secondary and P-12 personnel. This is consistent with results presented in Section 7.4 where the variable school type was investigated. Other salient features are that P-12 school council members had higher perceptions on five of the culture scales than their counterparts in secondary schools. For school council members the two culture scales displaying the greatest difference were Christian Relationships and Interactions and Christian Leadership. Perceptions of P&F members in P-12 schools were lower than those for P&F members in both primary and secondary schools on the six culture scales. The greatest difference between results for senior staff and teachers were the culture scales Worship as Celebration and Worship as Life in Vocation with perceptions for Quality Christian Education being similar for the three types of school.

The analysis also examined position as a within-subjects effect. The analysis revealed no interaction effects between school type and position. However the variable position was significant,  $p < .001$ , indicating significant difference between the four positions within the three types of schools. Univariate  $F$ -tests indicated that the effect position resulted in statistical difference on five scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community  $F(3,45) = 9.59$ ,  $p < .001$ ; Worship as Celebration  $F(3,45) = 3.23$ ,  $p < .05$ ; Worship as Life in Vocation

$F(3,45) = 4.41, p < .01$ ; Christian Relationships and Interactions  $F(3,45) = 9.40, p < .001$ ; and Christian Leadership  $F(3,45) = 8.52, p < .001$ .

For those culture scales which displayed statistical difference due to the effect position, paired  $t$  tests were performed on the four different scale means (viz. teachers, senior staff, school council members, and parents and friends executive members) to determine whether any statistical difference was evident between them. The overall significance level for the paired  $t$  tests was set at  $p < .05$ , and the Bonferroni Inequality (Stevens, 1992) was employed because six separate analyses were conducted. The conservative application of this inequality required the planned Type I error for each analysis to be set at the family-wise level divided by the number of analysis (i.e.  $.05 \div 6 \approx .008$ ). The results of these analyses are presented in Table 7.14 and the scale means for each position are graphed in Figure 7.13.

Table 7.14

ANOVA results for variable position within-subjects effects

Scale	ANOVA Results	Positions Significantly Different (Paired $t$ tests) *	Effect Size
CCC	$F(3,45) = 9.59, p < .001$	Senior Staff & Teachers	1.11
		Senior Staff & P&F	0.98
WAC	$F(3,45) = 3.23, p < .05$	None significant	
WLW	$F(3,45) = 4.41, p < .01$	None significant	
CRI	$F(3,45) = 9.40, p < .001$	None significant	
CL	$F(3,45) = 8.52, p < .001$	Senior Staff & Teachers	1.32
		Senior Staff & P&F	0.98

\* Higher mean score listed first

These results demonstrate that different stakeholder groups in Lutheran schools hold differing perceptions of the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools. Senior staff held the most positive perceptions of culture for all scales while parents and friends executive members had the least positive perceptions except for the scale Worship as Celebration. School council members had higher perceptions of culture than teachers on all scales except Worship as Life in Vocation; and Christian Relationships and Interactions.

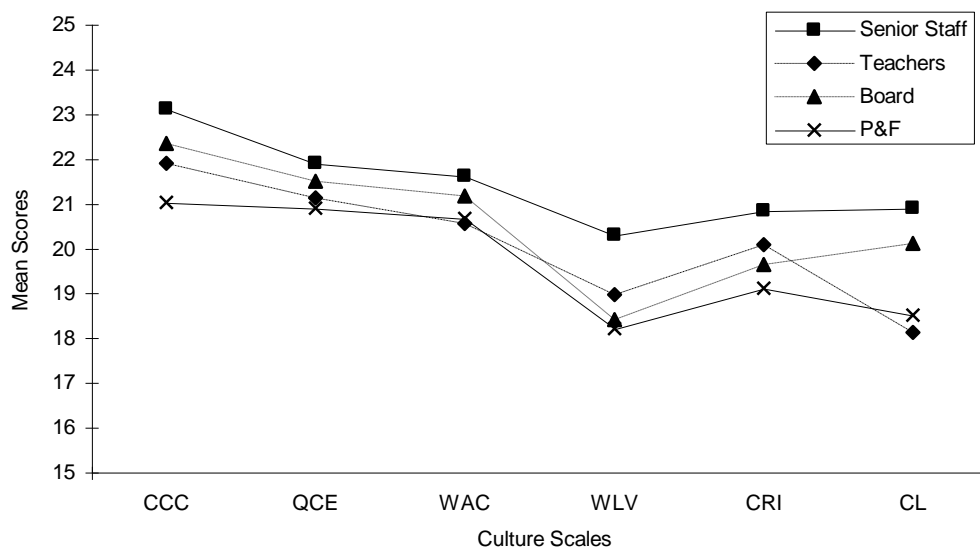


Figure 7.13 Mean scale scores for Teachers, Senior Staff, Board Members and P&F Executive Members in Queensland Lutheran schools

As part of the analysis, correlations between the four different positions were investigated. The mean scale scores were aggregated for each type of position in each school with correlations being calculated between the positions. Results for the correlations are reported in Table 7.15.

Table 7.15

Correlations between different positions

Position	Senior Staff	Teachers	Board Members	P&F Members
Senior Staff	1.00	.62*	.44**	.23
Teachers	.62*	1.00	.47**	.52*
Board Members	.44**	.47**	1.00	.42**
P&F Members	.23	.52*	.42**	1.00

\*  $p < .01$  \*\*  $p < .05$  (1-tailed significance)

These results revealed a strong correlation between cultural perceptions of senior staff and teachers. There was also moderate correlation between the perceptions of teachers and parents and friends executive members. School council members also had moderate correlation of their perceptions with senior staff, teachers and parents and friends executive members. Regression analyses indicated that all correlations were positive.

## 7.9 THEOLOGICAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Research Question 4f.** *To what extent does theological professional development affect the perceptions of teachers in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

Three aspects of theological professional development were analysed in this section. The first of these compared those teachers who have completed the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education at Luther Seminary with those who have not. The second analysis focussed on teachers who have completed the Theological Orientation Program for Staff (TOPS). Those teachers who had completed the Graduate Diploma were included in the group which had completed the TOPS course. The third variable investigated was between teachers who teach Christian Studies and those who do not, as an indicator of on-going professional development.

### 7.9.1 Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education

A repeated measures MANOVA with school type as the between-subjects effect and completion of the graduate diploma as the within-subjects effect was conducted to investigate this effect. The analysis revealed no significant statistical difference for either the between-subjects effects, or the within-subject effects. Mean scale scores for each of the six culture scales are presented in Table 7.16 with the results graphed in Figure 7.14.

Figure 7.14 displays the results for the whole sample which reveals that those teachers who have completed the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education had lower scale mean scores than those who have not completed the diploma. Data from Table 7.16 illustrate that the differences between the two groups are larger when primary teachers only are included in the sample. Interestingly, data from Table 7.16 also show that for secondary and P-12 teachers the trend is reversed. For these two groups the teachers who have completed the Graduate Diploma in Theology had more positive perceptions of the six culture scales than their colleagues who have not completed the award. Generally teachers from secondary schools had more positive perceptions of the six culture scales

than teachers in P-12 schools for both those who have completed the Graduate Diploma and those who have not completed the award.

Table 7.16

Mean scores for variable Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education

Scale	All Teachers		Primary Teachers		Secondary Teachers		P-12 Teachers	
	With Grad Dip	No Grad Dip	With Grad Dip	No Grad Dip	With Grad Dip	No Grad Dip	With Grad Dip	No Grad Dip
CCC	21.35	22.25	21.18	23.12	22.75	21.49	21.11	20.43
QCE	20.65	21.58	20.67	22.3	21.59	21.17	20.14	19.87
WAC	20.64	20.89	20.51	22.54	21.92	18.50	20.37	18.48
WLW	19.20	19.24	19.21	20.51	20.42	17.40	18.54	17.29
CRI	19.76	20.50	19.75	21.13	19.59	19.30	19.87	19.28
CL	17.53	18.75	16.90	19.93	19.92	16.68	18.06	17.28

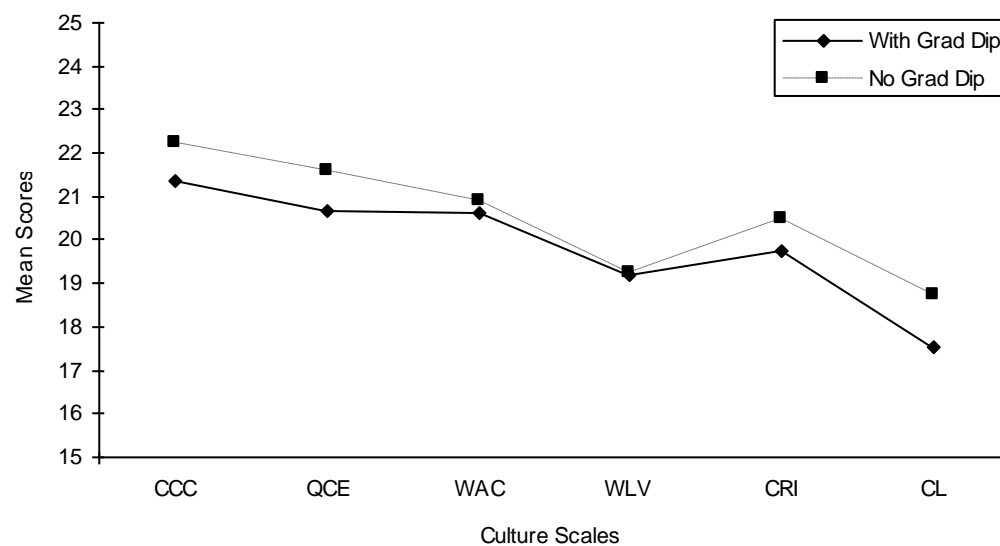


Figure 7.14 Mean scale scores for teachers for variable Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education



### 7.9.2 Theological Orientation Program for Staff (TOPS)

A repeated measures MANOVA with school type as a grouping variable and TOPS as the within-subjects effect was performed to investigate this effect. As school type was significant,  $p < .01$ , univariate  $F$  tests were performed on each scale with four results indicating significant difference due to TOPS: Caring, Christ-centred Community  $F(2,14) = 9.87$ ,  $p < .01$ ; Worship as Celebration  $F(2,14) = 17.75$ ,  $p < .001$ ; Worship as Life in Vocation  $F(2,14) = 4.83$ ,  $p < .05$ ; and Christian Relationships and Interactions  $F(2,14) = 6.64$ ,  $p < .01$ . Results from Tukey's post-hoc procedure conducted to identify which groups displayed statistical difference  $p < .05$  for the effect TOPS are summarised in Table 7.17. The analysis of the within-subjects effect with TOPS as the variable revealed no interaction with school type. The variable TOPS was not significant on any of the culture scales. Mean scale scores for results for the variable TOPS are presented in Table 7.18.

Table 7.17

ANOVA results for variable TOPS

Scale	ANOVA Results	School Types Significantly Different (Tukey's Procedure) *	Effect Size
CCC	$F(2,14) = 9.87$ $p < .01$	Not completed Tops	
		- Primary & P-12	2.11
		- Secondary & P-12	1.33
WAC	$F(2,14) = 17.75$ $p < .001$	Completed TOPS	
		- Primary & Secondary	1.49
		Not completed TOPS	
		- Primary & Secondary	1.50
WLW	$F(2,14) = 4.83$ $p < .05$	- Primary & P-12	1.55
		Completed TOPS	
		- Primary & Secondary	1.31
CRI	$F(2,14) = 6.64$ $p < .01$	Not completed TOPS	
		- Primary & P-12	1.33

\* Higher mean score listed first

*Table 7.18*

Mean scale scores for teachers for the variable TOPS

Scale	Whole Sample		Primary		Secondary		P-12	
	With TOPS	Without TOPS	With TOPS	Without TOPS	With TOPS	Without TOPS	With TOPS	Without TOPS
CCC	21.45	22.26	21.69	23.51	21.47	21.83	20.69	18.97
QCE	20.80	21.63	20.97	22.44	21.13	21.21	19.95	19.61
WAC	20.00	21.16	20.99	22.41	18.11	19.34	18.93	19.23
WLV	18.86	18.94	19.65	20.08	17.37	18.01	17.98	16.70
CRI	19.90	20.58	20.19	21.61	19.42	19.39	19.51	18.66
CL	17.37	19.04	17.67	20.54	16.82	17.35	17.04	16.63

Graphed results in Figure 7.15 revealed that teachers who have not completed TOPS held more positive perceptions of culture for all scales except for Christian Relationships and Interactions. These results are similar to the results for primary teachers with the exception that primary teachers who have not completed TOPS had more positive perceptions of culture than those in the whole sample. Differences between secondary teachers on this variable are small. Interestingly, the trend is reversed for P-12 teachers with those teachers who have completed TOPS having more positive perceptions of culture on all scales except Worship as Celebration. Greatest differences for the P-12 teachers was evident on the culture scales Caring, Christ-centred Community; and Worship as Life in Vocation. Overall the results indicated that TOPS has little or no positive effects on the perceptions of teachers on the six cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools.

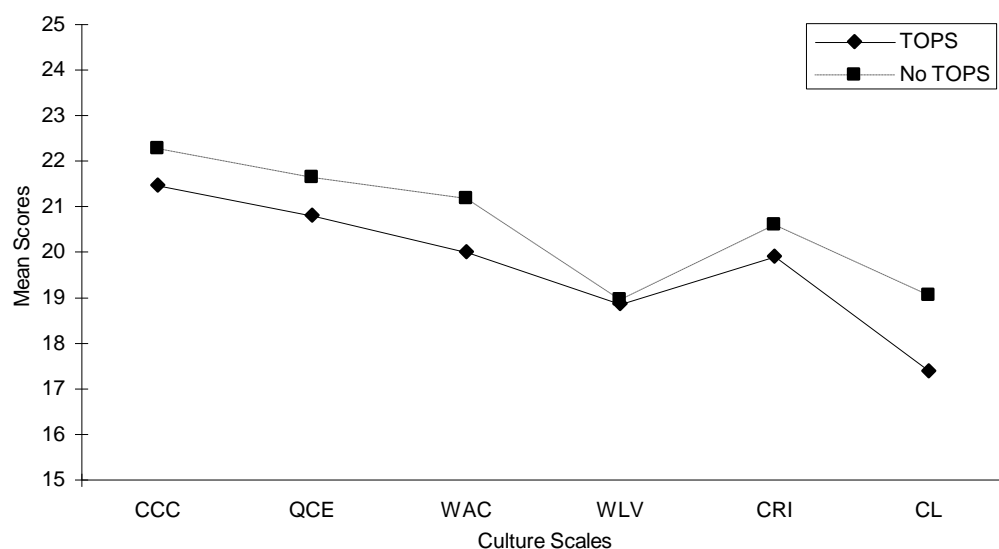


Figure 7.15 Mean scale scores for teachers for variable Theological Orientation Program for Staff

### 7.9.3 Christian Studies Teaching

This analysis investigated any effects between those teachers who teach Christian Studies and those who do not. A repeated measures MANOVA with school level as a grouping variable and Christian Studies as the within subject effect was performed. As school level was significant at  $p < .05$ , univariate  $F$ -Tests were performed with Christian Studies significant for four culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community  $F(2,11) = 6.31$ ,  $p < .05$ ; Quality Christian Education  $F(2,11) = 5.64$ ,  $p < .05$ ; Worship as Celebration  $F(2,11) = 14.10$ ,  $p < .001$ ; and Christian Relationships and Interactions  $F(2,11) = 6.68$ ,  $p < .05$ . Tukey's post-hoc procedure was used to identify which groups displayed significant difference for the effect of Christian Studies. The results are summarised in Table 7.19.

These results demonstrated that differences across schools occurred largely between teachers who do not teach Christian Studies in both primary schools, and secondary and P-12 schools. The only scale where this was not evident was for Worship as Celebration where the differences between primary schools, and secondary and P-12 schools also included teachers of Christian Studies. It is noteworthy that the scale Worship as Life in Vocation was not significant in this analysis. Analysis for teaching Christian Studies as the within-subjects effects displayed no interaction effects between school type and teaching Christian Studies. Teaching Christian Studies was not statistically significant on

any of the six culture scale. Results for the analysis of the variable Christian Studies are presented in Table 7.20 and Figure 7.16.

Table 7.19

ANOVA results for variable teaches Christian Studies

Scale	ANOVA Results	School Types Significantly Different (Tukey's Procedure) *	Effect Size
CCC	$F(2,11) = 6.31, p < .05$	Not Christian Studies - Primary & P-12	1.61
QCE	$F(2,11) = 5.64, p < .05$	Not Christian Studies - Primary & P-12	1.61
WAC	$F(2,11) = 14.10, p < .001$	ChristSt	
		- Primary & Secondary	1.60
		- Primary & P-12	1.16
		Not Christian Studies	
		- Primary & Secondary	1.40
		- Primary & P-12	1.46
CRI	$F(2,11) = 6.68, p < .05$	Not Christian Studies	
		- Primary & Secondary	1.28
		- Primary & P-12	1.41

\* Higher mean score listed first

Table 7.20

Mean scale scores for variable teaches Christian Studies

Scale	All Teachers		Primary		Secondary		P-12	
	Teach Christian Studies	Do not Teach Christian Studies	Teach Christian Studies	Do not Teach Christian Studies	Teach Christian Studies	Do not Teach Christian Studies	Teach Christian Studies	Do not Teach Christian Studies
CCC	22.11	21.56	22.42	22.33	21.88	21.51	21.26	20.05
QCE	21.06	21.25	21.34	22.00	21.04	21.33	20.17	19.66
WAC	20.99	20.00	21.71	21.58	19.25	18.47	19.93	18.35
WLTV	19.41	18.05	20.07	18.75	17.83	17.49	18.46	17.22
CRI	20.22	20.25	20.64	21.38	18.71	19.23	20.01	19.01
CL	18.66	17.71	18.92	19.14	18.17	16.73	18.21	16.19

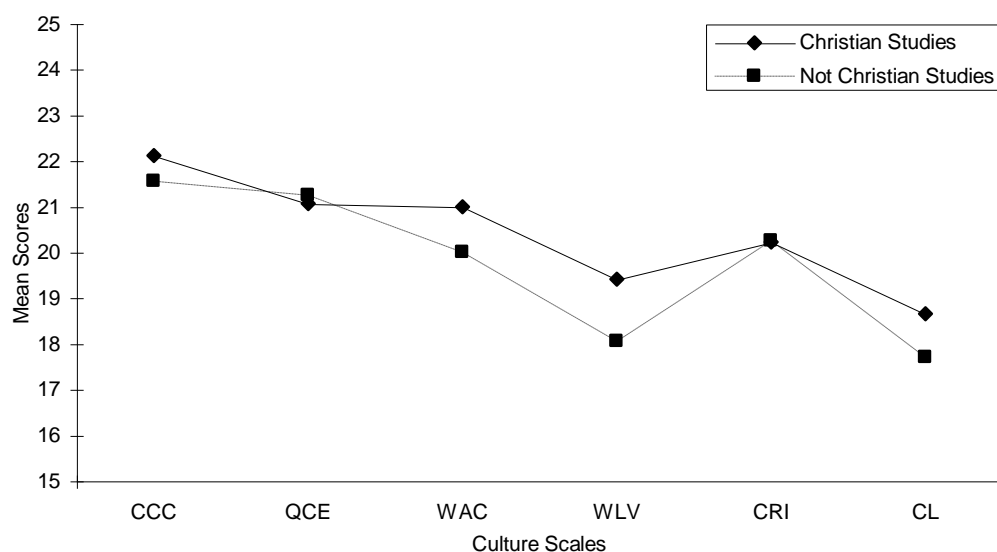


Figure 7.16 Mean scale scores for variable teaches Christian Studies

These results indicate that generally those teachers who teach Christian Studies had more positive perceptions of the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools than those who do not. The scales where this is most evident were Worship as Celebration and Worship as Life in Vocation. This effect was least apparent with primary and secondary teachers but far more evident for teachers in P-12 schools, highlighting the difference between these types of schools.

## 7.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter reported analyses of the questionnaire data collected in this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. In this final section, the key findings reported in this chapter are summarised. Discussion of these findings is presented in Chapter 8 of this thesis.

Section 7.3 reported that all six culture scales had scale mean scores equating to agree or above on the five point Lickert scale. Caring, Christ-centred Community; Quality Christian Education; and Worship as Celebration had the highest scale means, with all scales having small standard deviations.

The following sections of this chapter reported results from the analysis of the independent variables with the six school culture scales for which eight key findings are apparent. First, the variable school type differed significantly on four culture scales:

Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, and Christian Relationships and Interactions with primary schools having more positive perceptions of culture than both secondary and P-12 schools. Effect sizes for these differences were large to very large. Little difference was evident between scale mean scores for secondary and P-12 schools for any culture scale. The major discriminating factor between primary and secondary teachers were perceptions of Worship as Celebration. The effect size for this difference was very large.

Second, analysis of school size revealed this variable to be significant on five culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community; Worship as Celebration; Worship as Life in Vocation; Christian Relationships and Interactions; and Christian Leadership. As the size of the school increased the perceptions of culture reduced. Graphed results suggested that generally as the size increased, so the rate of change of the lessening of perceptions of culture reduced. These data were treated tentatively because of the possibility of conflation of variables due to the size of the different types of Queensland Lutheran schools.

Third, comparisons between Lutheran and non-Lutheran teachers revealed statistical difference between primary teacher, and secondary and P-12 teachers on the scale Worship as Celebration. Effect sizes were large to very large with primary teachers having higher perceptions on this culture scale. Scale means for primary teachers were higher for all scales than those for secondary teachers.

Fourth, analysis revealed that an increase in the percentage of Lutheran teachers resulted in an increase in scale mean scores for two culture scales: Worship as Celebration and Worship as Life in Vocation. This trend was apparent for all culture scales. Once more these particular results need to be viewed cautiously because of the different staffing arrangements in primary and secondary schools.

Fifth, analysis of the variable percentage of Lutheran students revealed statistical difference as the percentage of Lutheran students increased on three culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community; Worship as Life in Vocation; and Christian Relationships and Interactions. Perceptions of these culture scales increased with an

increase in the percentage of Lutheran students. Again these results were treated tentatively due to the demographic characteristics of Queensland Lutheran schools. Further, it was important to recognise the possible confounding effects of this variable with the variable school type.

Sixth, analyses involving the variable position suggested several interesting points. The repeated measures MANOVA proved school type to be statistically significant for position as the within-subjects effect on five culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community; Worship as Celebration; Worship as Life in Vocation; Christian Relationships and Interactions; and Christian Leadership. Statistical differences with large to very large effect sizes were evident between primary schools (with higher scale means), and secondary or P-12 schools. Within-subjects analyses were statistically significant on the same five culture scales with major differences between senior staff, and teachers and parents and friends executive members. Generally scale mean scores for each culture scale were most positive for senior staff, followed by school council members, teachers, and parents and friends executive members.

A seventh key finding was that theological professional development has negligible effect on perceptions of culture. While the variable of the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education was not statistically different on any culture scale for the analyses conducted, the variable Theological Orientation Program for Staff was statistically significant for between-subjects effects for four culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community; Worship as Celebration; Worship as Life in Vocation; and Christian Relationships and Interactions. Teachers from primary schools again held higher perceptions of culture than their colleagues in secondary and P-12 schools. Teaching Christian Studies was also significantly different between primary schools, and secondary and P-12 schools for four culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community; Quality Christian Education; Worship as Celebration; and Christian Relationships and Interactions.

This chapter has presented the major findings of the analysis of questionnaire data. The next chapter discusses these results in the light of the rhetoric of Lutheran schools (Chapter 2) and research and literature analysed in Chapter 3.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **DISCUSSION OF RESULTS**

#### **8.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter analyses and discusses the results reported in Chapter 7. The purpose of the chapter is to interpret the research findings and assess their educational importance and relevance to Queensland Lutheran schools. The research questions are used to organise the discussion. The first two research questions refer to conceptual issues and are discussed in Sections 8.2 and 8.3. These questions were essential to the feasibility of the research.

Section 8.4 presents discussion in relation to Research Question 3 which assesses agreement of the results of this research with the rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools. Section 8.5 discusses results for Research Questions 4a to 4f. It needs to be understood that although a statistical analysis may provide an assessment of statistically significant differences in a population based on a sample, the relative educational importance also needs to be assessed by the researcher (Dorman, 1994). The independent variables considered in these sections are: school type, school size, denominational background of teachers, percentage of Lutheran teachers, percentage of Lutheran students, position, and theological professional development of teachers. The chapter summary (Section 8.6) provides a basis for the conclusionary nature of Chapter 9.

The Literature Review (Chapter 3) highlighted the nature of the culture concept as a multifaceted and inter-related construct. This study identified seven dimensions of culture, six of which were operationalised through a survey questionnaire (Chapters 5 and 6). The questionnaire used in this study was developed to measure perceptions of these six cultural dimensions using principles of psychometric research (Fraser, 1986; Gardner, 1975). This required that each scale be theoretically distinct. However, results from the validation of the instrument (Section 6.3.3) indicated that while the scales exhibited high



internal consistency, the six scales did display high mean correlations which demonstrates the scales overlap to some extent. Discussion of the results also requires consideration of a number of independent variables: school type, school size, denominational background of teachers, percentage of Lutheran teachers and students, different positions within the school, and professional development of teachers. As stated above, this chapter uses the research questions as the organisational framework for the chapter. However, the nature of the culture concept, together with the inter-relationships of the variables under analysis, results in some sections of the discussion requiring consideration of similar factors and issues.

## **8.2 WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE IN LUTHERAN SCHOOLS IN QUEENSLAND?**

The identification of important dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools was the first stage of the research design. Dimensions of culture were identified from analysis of interview data of key informants from the Queensland Lutheran school system (Section 4.4.3 and Sections 5.2 to 5.6). Data were organised through the conceptual framework for this analysis derived from the different kinds of cultural knowledge as advanced by Sackmann (1991): dictionary knowledge, directory knowledge, recipe knowledge, and axiomatic knowledge (Section 3.3.2).

Six of the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools identified in this research were: Caring, Christ-centred Community (dictionary knowledge); Quality Christian Education (dictionary knowledge); Worship as Celebration (recipe knowledge); Worship as Life in Vocation (recipe knowledge); Christian Relationships and Interactions (recipe knowledge); and Christian Management and Leadership (recipe knowledge). Each of these six dimensions is described by a number of associated characteristics (Table 8.1). These cultural dimensions and their associated properties formed the basis for the development of the questionnaire (Section 6.3). A further cultural dimension relating to axiomatic knowledge was also identified from the analysis of interview data. No dimension representing directory knowledge was identified from the interview data (Section 5.6). The dimension Christian Leadership and Management was later modified to

Christian Leadership during the development of the research survey instrument (Section 6.3).

These dimensions of culture for Queensland Lutheran schools are discussed in the remainder of this section from three perspectives. Firstly, these cultural dimensions are analyzed to determine whether they are derived from the theological understandings of the Lutheran Church of Australia. Secondly, the cultural dimensions are compared with analogous research in Australia. Thirdly, these cultural dimensions are discussed in light of research in Catholic schools in the United States, and England and Wales.

*Table 8.1*

The Cultural Dimensions of Queensland Lutheran Schools

Types of Cultural Knowledge		
Axiomatic Knowledge	Dictionary Knowledge	Recipe Knowledge
The presuppositions and foundations for Queensland Lutheran schools are grounded in the theological understandings of the LCA	Caring, Christ-centred Community	Worship as Celebration
	<i>Forgiveness Acceptance</i>	<i>Celebrating Christ</i>
	<i>Growing as Individuals</i>	<i>Celebrating Community</i>
	<i>Family Orientation</i>	<i>Celebrating Life</i>
	<i>Pastoral Care</i>	
	Quality Christian Education	Worship as Life in Vocation
	<i>Informed by the Gospel</i>	<i>Called by God into Vocation</i>
	<i>Striving for Excellence</i>	<i>Service to God in Vocation</i>
	<i>Holistic Education</i>	
	<i>Learning for Life</i>	
		Christian Relationships & Interactions
		<i>Flawed by Sin</i>
		<i>Informed by Christ</i>
		<i>Forgiveness Support</i>

***The cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools and the theology of the Lutheran Church of Australia***

The literature review presented the view that dimensions of culture be derived from theoretical or theological considerations (Groome, 1996) (Section 3.5.1). This section discusses the results of the present research in relation to this proposition. While these culture dimensions were identified from empirical data, the “key informants” were selected as people who were expert within Queensland Lutheran schools, and as such brought an informed view of Lutheran schools in the light of the theory and theology of Lutheran education.

Within Sackmann’s (1985, 1991) conception of different kinds of cultural knowledge is axiomatic knowledge. This knowledge refers to underlying reasons and explanations of the definitive causes for an event (Sackmann, 1991). This research described axiomatic knowledge in Queensland Lutheran schools as being derived from Lutheran theology. Thus, the other cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools should reflect the theology of the Lutheran Church of Australia. This intent is examined further by analyzing the other six dimensions of culture identified in this study.

The dimensions of culture for Queensland Lutheran schools are consistent with important emphases of the Lutheran Church of Australia as presented in Chapter 2 of this thesis. Queensland Lutheran schools, as schools of the church, aspire to have a focus on Christ as the centre of the school (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a). The focus on Christ at the centre of school and the pervading influence of Christ on the six dimensions of culture is evident through the characteristics of the six culture dimensions (Section 5.7 and Table 5.3). Thus characteristics such as: informed by the Gospel, celebrating Christ, called by God into service, and informed by Christ, illustrate this emphasis on Christ through the

six culture dimensions. This aligns with the statement *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a) which states:

The Lutheran Church of Australia, through its congregations and districts, owns and operates kindergartens, primary schools, and secondary schools in order to make available to its members and to others in the community a formal education in which the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities in the school. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a)

The dictionary knowledge culture dimension Quality Christian Education displays consistency with the rhetoric of the Lutheran Church of Australia and Queensland Lutheran schools in the provision of quality Christian education (Section 2.4.4). The culture dimension of Quality Christian Education is described as: being informed by the Gospel, striving for excellence, holistic education, and learning for life (Section 5.3.2). That the Lutheran Church of Australia seeks for Queensland Lutheran schools to provide an education such as this is clearly stated in the statement *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools*:

- 1.3 Specifically through its schools the Lutheran Church of Australia offers a program of Christian education which
  - serves students, parents, the church, the community, and the government, by providing a quality education for the whole person;
  - strives for excellence in the development and creative use by all students of their God-given gifts.

and

- 2.1 The Lutheran school is committed to serving its students by providing a quality program of education which meets the requirements of the state, responds to the needs of its students and develops their God-given abilities as fully as possible within the resource limits of the community. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a, pp. 1, 2)

It is evident that the dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools reflect the theology of the Lutheran Church of Australia. The results of the current study are consistent with the emphasis of the Lutheran Church of Australia and Queensland

Lutheran schools on the importance of worship within the school (Sections 2.4.3 and 2.4.5). Two cultural dimensions address the issue of worship. The first of these, Worship as Celebration, was described by the characteristics: celebrating Christ, celebrating community, and celebrating life. This cultural dimension and its characteristics are natural outcomes from the document, *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a) which devotes Section 3 specifically to worship within the school.

- 3.1 The Lutheran Church of Australia confesses that worship of God is central to the life of the people of God in mission to the world of the school. Within the school such worship may be:

public worship of the faithful, involving the ministry of word and sacraments. This worship is open to all and will be organised to meet the needs of the school and the wider community,  
school or class devotional exercises which are part of the regular program of the whole school and which in different ways involve all students and staff. (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a)

The second worship dimension, Worship as Life in Vocation, was described by the characteristics called by God into vocation, and service to God in vocation. This dimension also reflects important beliefs stated by the Lutheran Church of Australia and Queensland Lutheran schools in the documents *The Lutheran Church of Australia and its schools* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a) and *The teacher in the Lutheran school* (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1992). This dimension highlights the importance placed on service within Lutheran schools (Section 2.4.3) and the priority attached to the role of the teacher in ministry on behalf of the church.

The dimensions of culture Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership are practical outcomes from the theology of the Lutheran Church of Australia in expressing in pragmatic terms the nature of the relationships between people in ministry within the church. These relationships are shaped by the centrality of Christ within these two dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. They also reflect

distinctive Lutheran theological principles such as the Law/Gospel principle (Section 2.2.6) and the Two Kingdoms principle (Section 2.2.7).

Groome (1996) proposes that the distinctive features of Catholic schools be derived from the theological and philosophical understandings of the Catholic church. In a similar manner, the dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools have emerged from the theological and philosophical understandings of the Lutheran Church of Australia. The dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools reflect the distinctive understandings of Lutheran theology. McBrien, (cited in Groome, 1996), states that while the Catholic church shares various characteristics with other Christian churches, it is only the Catholic church where all of these “characteristics are present in the precise configuration in which they are found within Catholicism” (p. 57). In an analogous way, while various characteristics are shared with other Church based schools, the cultural dimensions identified in this study will be configured in this way in Queensland Lutheran schools.

### ***The cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools and culture research in Australia***

The results of the current study were also consistent with analogous research reported in *Project Catholic School* (Queensland Catholic Education Commission, 1978) and restated as the *Cultural Characteristics of the Catholic school* (Spry & Sultmann (Eds.), 1991), and research conducted by Flynn, (1993) on the culture of Australian Catholic high schools (Sections 3.2.2 and 3.5.1). The Queensland Lutheran schools cultural dimension **Caring, Christ-centred Community** is similar to *Community of Faith*, the cultural characteristic highlighted in *Project Catholic School*. Both dimensions reflect the anthropology of their faith basis (*cf* Groome, 1998). Thus while the Lutheran dimension reflects the more negative anthropology of the Protestant tradition in the characteristic “forgiveness acceptance”, the Catholic descriptor refers to “religious and moral values which are to take preference over other values and permeate all areas of learning and school life ...” (Spry & Sultmann (Eds.), 1991, p. 16).

Concern for the individual evident in the results for this study is consistent with the cultural characteristics of Catholic schools (1991) through the *Developmental Goals* which state in part that the schools “foster the total formation of the child” (Spry & Sultmann (Eds.), 1991, p. 18). Emphasis on the family is evident within both of these studies, the cultural characteristics of Catholic schools devoting one cultural dimension, *Parental Involvement* to this aspect. This dimension states in part “The decisive role of *parents* in education and the desirability of a relationships between home and school will also be emphasised in the Catholic school” (Spry & Sultmann (Eds.), 1991, p. 16). Pastoral care, as an expression of Caring, Christ-centred Community is also consistent with the cultural characteristics of Catholic schools particularly through the *Relationships* dimension where the Catholic schools “enable students, teachers and parents to feel personal support and care” (Spry & Sultmann (Eds.), 1991, p. 18).

The results of this study of Queensland Lutheran schools for the Lutheran cultural dimension **Quality Christian Education** are also consistent with the cultural characteristics of Catholic schools (Spry & Sultmann (Eds.), 1991). An emphasis on striving for excellence in the provision of an education, informed by the Gospel, which is holistic, and prepares students for life, is consistent with the cultural characteristics of Catholic schools dimension *Developmental Goals* which addresses the total formation of the child in a broad curriculum relevant to the community, fosters a sense of social responsibility, and integrates Gospel values (Spry & Sultmann (Eds.), 1991).

Highlighted by this research is the importance of worship in Queensland Lutheran schools. Results of this study for the cultural dimension **Worship as Celebration** are consistent with the cultural characteristics of Catholic schools in the dimension *Religious Atmosphere* which states in part “The faith community will strengthen and express itself in worship and prayer” (Spry & Sultmann (Eds.), 1991, p. 16). The cultural characteristic *Community of Faith* also expresses the Catholic schools emphasis on a community of faith which permeates the schools. Some features from the Lutheran cultural dimension **Worship as Life in Vocation** are also evident in the characteristic *Religious Atmosphere* which emphasises the importance of the presence of committed Catholic staff within the Catholic school.

Results reported for the final two Lutheran dimensions **Christian Relationships and Interactions** and **Christian Leadership and Management** are also consistent with the cultural characteristics of Catholic schools (Spry & Sultmann (Eds.), 1991): in particular the characteristics, *Relationships* and *Organisation and administration*. Both the Queensland Lutheran schools culture dimension **Christian Relationships and Interactions** and the Catholic *Relationships* characteristic reflect their respective theological traditions and anthropology in recognising the importance of relationships within the school. Similarly, the Lutheran dimension **Christian Leadership and Management** and the Catholic cultural characteristic *Organisation and Management* reflect sound practices based on the beliefs derived from their respective theologies and current theory and practice of leadership and management. Both traditions importantly reflect Christian service as an important element of leadership.

Flynn's (1993) research in Australian Catholic high schools adopted four dimensions of culture as proposed by Millikan (1987):

The Core Beliefs and Values of Catholic Schools: their Creation Story or Soul  
Expressive Symbols of Catholic Schools: their Models  
Processes and Traditions of Catholic Schools: their Stories and Myths  
Outcomes and Patterns of Relationships of Catholic Schools: their Rituals and Way of Life. (Flynn, 1993, p. 40)

As dimensions adapted from a general theoretical basis, these dimensions of themselves do not correlate with those identified within this current study. However the results reported in this thesis are consistent with elements within each of the four dimensions of culture in Flynn's (1993) study. Included within the Lutheran cultural dimension Caring, Christ-centred Community are expressions of Christian community similar to those identified as being present within a Catholic school: a recognition of the religious nature of people which needs to develop along side other dimensions of humanity, an emphasis on faith in Christ and the Gospel values of the Catholic schools, and the patterns of discipline based on discipleship as conveyed by the relationship between Jesus and his disciples.



As with the cultural dimension, Quality Christian Education, Flynn's (1993) research placed importance on education through development of the whole person. Thus within Australian Catholic high schools the formal and informal curricula seek to develop the "physical, intellectual, social, emotional, aesthetic, vocational, moral and religious nature of students" (p. 42).

The Lutheran emphasis on worship is also apparent in the cultural dimensions proposed by Flynn (1993). With worship and liturgy, the Catholic school community is able to celebrate its faith in Christ and build up "the spirit of Christ which exists in the school by drawing its members together in worship of God" (p. 50). This emphasis on the public celebration of God's relationship with his people is consistent with the results from this study.

Results from the current research for the cultural dimensions Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership are consistent with the emphases of Flynn (1993) on relationships within the school. These relationships are influenced by the faith and Gospel values expressed by the school. Flynn's (1993) research concluded that leadership and the relationship of principals with staff and students is an important aspect of Catholic schools.

***The cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools and Catholic schools in the United States, and England and Wales***

Results from the present research for the cultural dimension Caring, Christ-centred Community are consistent with literature and research in Catholic schools in the United States, and England and Wales. Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993) describe the school community as "a caring environment, and a social organisation deliberately structured to advance this" (p. 10). Distinctive dimensions of Catholic schools in England and Wales (Catholic Education Service, 1996) also reflect the Lutheran cultural dimension Caring, Christ-centred Community. An important emphasis within both dimensions is the uniqueness of each child as a child of God, as is the experience of life in a community

based on Gospel principles. Distinctive qualities of Catholic schools in the United States as proposed by McDermott (1986) also demonstrate consistency with the results from this study of Queensland Lutheran schools through the emphasis on community “to grow in Christ’s presence and influence in the world” (p. 23). Consistency is also evident between the results of this study for the cultural dimension Caring, Christ-centred Community and Groome’s (1996) characteristics of Catholic schools. Groome (1996) contends that Catholic schools reflect community, both as a taught ideal and as a “value realised” (p. 115). Groome’s (1996) description of community could well reflect the dimension of Caring, Christ-centred Community in a Queensland Lutheran schools.

The love commitment of the school should be realised as a profound care and ‘right relationship’ among and between teachers, administrators, and students, and towards the school’s extended community of parents, former students and the parish(es) of its local context. (Groome, 1996, p. 115)

This consistency of the present research and Catholic schools in the United States, and England and Wales extends to the cultural dimension Quality Christian Education. Research by Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993) conducted in Catholic high schools, identified one major characteristic as being “an unwavering commitment to an academic program for all students, regardless of background or life expectations, and an academic organisation designed to promote this aim” (p. 10). In England and Wales, the Catholic Education Service (1996) propose the “search of excellence as integral part of the spiritual quest” (p. 14). Stated also is the importance of students being given “every opportunity to develop their talents to the full” (p. 14). This is consistent with the distinctive qualities of United States Catholic schools (McDermott, 1986) which stress the importance of the community of learners and the importance of developing the intellectual, creative and aesthetic potential of all students. Characteristics of the cultural dimension Quality Christian Education as identified in this study are also consistent with implications for Catholic education as outlined by Groome (1996) in his discussion of the characteristic “Rationality: Faith seeking understanding”. Both of these utilise their own theological views to inform the importance of learning and education, that this learning be for the whole person and that education is a life long process. Groome (1996) summarises his view:

... Catholic education should encourage students: to attend to their own historical reality and to actively engage the knowledge and wisdom of the ages in all the sciences of learning; to try to personally understand their lives and the disciplines of scholarship; to make their own informed judgements in dialogue with others; and to reach responsible decisions that are conceptually and morally adequate, i.e., make sense, and are life-giving for self and others. (pp. 120, 121)

Groome (1996) also discusses personhood as an ontological concern arguing that Catholic education is not only concerned with knowledge, but moves beyond that to an education which address the very 'being' of the student. This knowledge and understanding of being points to a student's relationship with God, self, others and creation. These understandings are similar to those expressed within the Lutheran cultural dimension Quality Christian Education.

The importance of worship within Lutheran schools is consistent with the characteristics of Catholic schools in England and Wales (Catholic Education Service, 1996). "Collective worship, liturgies and opportunities for private prayer and reflection are all integrated into the life of the school" (p. 18). Groome (1996) also highlights the importance of worship in the Catholic school within his discussion of the ecclesial community with worship. Thus the "functions of *word, witness, worship, and welfare* ... should permeate and engage its [the school's] whole shared life and curriculum" (Groome, 1996, p. 116). These functions combine with Groome's (1996) anthropology and ontology to engage the being of the student to empower them to become "the glory of God fully alive" (p. 121), an expression of worship.

The results for the dimension Christian Relationships and Interactions are consistent with the research by Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993) which reported that Catholic high schools are characterised by an "inspirational ideology that directs institutional action toward social justice in an ecumenical and multicultural world" (p. 10). Catholic schools in England and Wales also stress the importance of relationships in their schools (Catholic Education Service, 1996), consistent with the results of this study. "Almost without exception, the quality of relationships between and among staff and pupils is high... Pupils and staff respect each other and self-respect is actively promoted" (p. 16). Leadership and

Management are perceived as important to these schools, even though weaknesses are identified. “Pupils and staff benefit from their experience of life and work in a Catholic community led by committed headteachers. Opportunities to take individual responsibility are sometimes limited in the case of both pupils and staff” (p. 18). Groome’s (1996, 1998) characteristics are also consistent with this present study in the importance placed on relationships within the school. For Groome, the individual is a person in community, and the school will “socialise its students to care about and contribute to the common good through its own ethos of ‘right relationship’”(p. 116). Thus, like the Lutheran cultural dimension Christian Relationships and Interactions, the Catholic school will encourage Christian relationship and interactions based on its own theological background.

These dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools were identified using Sackmann’s (1991) construct of different kinds of cultural knowledge. The results of this study in identifying these dimensions of culture are consistent with the contention by Sackmann (1991) that dimensions of culture be determined empirically and specifically for each cultural setting. These cultural dimensions formed the basis of the development of a context-specific research instrument which is the topic for the next section of this thesis.

### **8.3 IS IT POSSIBLE TO DEVELOP A CONTEXT-SPECIFIC, VALID, RELIABLE, AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH INSTRUMENT THAT ASSESSES THE IMPORTANT DIMENSIONS OF CULTURE IN QUEENSLAND LUTHERAN SCHOOLS?**

Chapter 6 described the development and validation procedure for the research instrument, which employed principles for the development of psychometric research instruments (Fraser, 1977; Murphy & Fraser, 1978). Chapter 7 presented results obtained from administration of this instrument. The final form of the Lutheran School Culture Inventory was a questionnaire of 30 items assigned to six scales each consisting of five items. Scale reliabilities (Cronbach’s coefficient alpha) ranged from 0.73 to 0.90 for the individual and 0.82 to 0.96 for the school mean as the units of analysis. These results indicate good internal consistency for all scales. While the results for discriminant validity were higher than anticipated (mean correlations based on individuals ranged from 0.49 to

0.57, and for school means from 0.55 to 0.68) this is not uncommon in psychometric instruments developed to measure school culture (Section 6.3.3). It must also be noted that the factor analysis revealed item factor loadings between 0.48 to 0.84 for their own factor, while all loadings to other factors were below 0.40. Thus the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory has psychometric properties well within accepted limits.

Within the development phase of the instrument, it was necessary to ensure each scale was uni-dimensional with the definitions of some of the scales subsequently narrowed. This process assisted in optimising the internal reliability of the scales while minimising discriminant validity. As this context-specific instrument was not based on any previously developed questionnaire, this limitation is acceptable. However administration of the questionnaire in different contexts and subsequent refinement are a useful research direction.

These results are consistent with research where context-specific instruments were developed to study school culture and classroom and school environments (Dorman, 1994; Jones, 1996). In those studies as well as the current one, the development process utilised principles for the development of psychometric instruments that result in instruments with high internal reliability and validity. This process has been validated as appropriate for studies investigating school culture and environments.

#### **8.4 HOW CLOSELY DO THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY AGREE WITH THE RHETORIC OF A DISTINCTIVE CULTURE IN QUEENSLAND LUTHERAN SCHOOLS?**

The rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools (e.g. Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a) is that the schools possess a distinctive culture. Implied by this statement is the view that Lutheran schools have developed a culture based on the theological teachings of the church and one where these theological understandings have a practical expression through the schools of the church. Section 8.2 listed the dimensions of culture important to Queensland Lutheran schools developed from Lutheran literature and key stakeholders (see summary in Table 8.1). Section 8.2 has established that these dimensions are consistent with the literature of the Lutheran Church of Australia.

These dimensions implicitly require the support of stakeholders in Queensland Lutheran schools if the rhetoric of the church and schools is supported. Results presented in Section 7.3 indicate that the data from this study of Queensland Lutheran schools agree with the rhetoric of the schools. The mean scores for all six scales were between 18.79 and 21.79 giving a response which aligns with agree on the five-point Lickert scale of the questionnaire. The standard deviations for the six scales which ranged between 0.88 and 1.92 indicated a small spread of results. Scales scores for Caring, Christ-centred Community ( $M=21.79$ ,  $SD = 0.97$ ) and Quality Christian Education ( $M=21.13$ ,  $SD = 0.88$ ) indicate strong support for these two dictionary knowledge scales. On the five point Lickert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree, strongly agree), this scale score is above the agree response. The small standard deviations indicate little divergence from the respective means and thus strong agreement of these two scales with the rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools.

While lower than dictionary knowledge scales, scores for recipe knowledge scales indicate agreement with the rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools: Worship as Celebration ( $M=20.74$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ); Worship as Life in Vocation ( $M=18.84$ ,  $SD = 1.47$ ); Christian Relationships and Interactions ( $M=19.90$ ,  $SD = 0.94$ ); and Christian Leadership ( $M=18.79$ ,  $SD = 1.92$ ). The larger standard deviations indicate lower overall agreement with the rhetoric of the schools.

This study shows that, in general, these six dimensions of culture are considered important in Lutheran schools in Queensland. Overall, there is consistency between the results of this study with the rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1992; Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a). The next section of the thesis discusses the extent of this agreement between and within Queensland Lutheran schools by considering the independent variables investigated in this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools: school type, school size, denominational background of teachers, percentage of Lutheran teachers within a school, percentage of Lutheran students with a school, position, and theological professional development as outlined in Section 4.3.4 of this thesis.



## **8.5 HOW DO THE PERCEPTIONS OF CULTURE VARY BETWEEN DIFFERENT GROUPS IN QUEENSLAND LUTHERAN SCHOOLS?**

Section 8.4 has reported that the results of this study agree with the rhetoric of Queensland Lutheran schools as expressed in Chapter 2. This major section explores this agreement in more depth by considering different variables important to Queensland Lutheran schools. The discussion is based on the results reported in Sections 7.4 to 7.10. Research questions 4a to 4f provide the structure for this discussion.

### **8.5.1 To what extent do the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran school vary between different types of schools (i.e. primary, secondary, P-12)?**

This section analyses and discusses perceptions of culture within the three types of schools common in the Queensland Lutheran school system: primary schools, secondary schools, and Preschool to Year 12 (P-12) schools. Results from the administration of the survey questionnaire pertaining to the variable school type, reported in Section 7.4, detail two main findings. First, perceptions of culture are more positive in Lutheran primary schools, than secondary and P-12 schools for Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership. Second, in P-12 schools, the primary and secondary sections report results corresponding to the primary and secondary school results. This second result indicates clearly that the responses of primary and secondary teachers in P-12 schools correspond to those of their counterparts in separate primary and secondary schools. Thus, this discussion can be focussed on the differences in perceptions of culture, and implications of, the different perceptions between primary and secondary schools.

The discussion of these results will be structured by two major themes. The first theme, *School as Community*, utilises the concept of community as a unifying theme to discuss the results pertaining to the cultural dimensions Caring, Christ-centred Community, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership. The second theme, *Worship in Primary and Secondary Schools*, focuses on the cultural dimensions Worship as Celebration, and Worship as Life in Vocation. Within this section the differing



perceptions of these two cultural dimensions are discussed in light of different structures and emphases in primary and secondary schools.

### *School as Community*

The first educationally important result for the variable school type is that teachers in primary schools have more positive perceptions of the following dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools: Caring, Christian, Community (Section 5.4.1); Christian Relationships and Interactions (Section 5.5.3), and Christian Leadership (Section 5.5.4). Together these three culture dimensions indicate the sense of community and types of relationships evident within a school.

Results of this study of Queensland Lutheran schools for the variable school type confirm research reported by Ahola-Sidaway (1988) which focussed on student transition from elementary school to secondary school in Canadian Catholic schools (Section 3.5.2). This research brought to the fore the concept of community and relative differences in relationships in the primary and secondary Canadian Catholic schools studied. The sociological concepts *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* (Sergiovanni, 1994; Tonnies, 1955) (Section 3.5.2) were used to analyse the differences in community evident in Ahola-Sidaway's (1988) study. These two concepts are defined:

*gesellschaft* - an association of people that is based primarily on the members' rational pursuit of their own self-interests.

*gemeinschaft* - an association of people that is based primarily on shared purposes, personal loyalties, and common sentiments. (Conway (1994) cited in Johnson (1990), p. 3)

The results of the current study for the culture dimensions Caring, Christ-centred Community, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership, all of which display more positive perceptions of a sense of community and the nature of relationships in primary schools than secondary schools, are consistent with research reported by Ahola-Sidaway (1988). This research suggested that primary schools display *gemeinschaft* characteristics in that interpersonal relationships within the primary school

between students and staff are more intimate and maintain a sense of balance, whereas secondary schools tend to display *gesellschaft* characteristics because experiences are transient and interpersonal relationships are often impersonal and lack balance. The results of this study are also consistent with Ahola-Sidaway's (1988) contention that community in primary schools displays more *gemeinschaft* tendencies in that primary schools value integration as opposed to secondary schools, where specialisation is valued with reintegration of people sought through bureaucratic means leading to a more *gesellschaft* association. Primary school activities are largely conducted within a student's home classroom with the same group of students. Secondary schools instead reflect specialisation, transitory encounters and more impersonality as teachers move within a small number of subject areas from one group of students to another. These organisational differences between primary and secondary education also account for the more positive perceptions of Worship as Celebration and Worship as Life in Vocation in primary schools than high schools which are discussed in the next section.

Support for the contention that differences in community are related to the structures for primary and secondary schools and the issues which arise from these structures is evident from the current study. This is consistent with research conducted by Lieberman and Miller (1992) which reported differences between primary and secondary teachers' perceptions of school life. While issues for primary teachers included the balance between the personal (being familiar, liking, caring, sharing warmth) and the professional, and, grouping for differences while maintaining community, secondary teachers revealed a more formal and bureaucratic organisation. Furthermore secondary teachers related primarily to one or two subjects and teachers within their own faculties.

Not surprisingly, the results from the survey questionnaire confirm the findings from the qualitative part of the study, revealing insights as to reasons for the differences in perceptions between primary and secondary schools. Comparisons of interview data from primary and secondary teachers reveal primary teachers relating to the children as individuals within a community and integrating Christian beliefs into all aspects of school life. This integration of the Christian ethos with discipline, which displays the Lutheran emphasis on forgiveness is evident from the comments of one primary teacher.

Written into your school policy is your Christian ethos and that is very strongly written into our discipline policy that all children are renewed and forgiven. When we discipline children we have that, absolution and confession. (Primary Teacher)

The secondary teacher group also placed an emphasis on the Christian ethos of the school and the importance of including the students in activities within the school. However, the greater complexity of the high school was evident as staff grappled with issues within the school. Tensions were evident which indicated this complexity together with the more formal organisation of the high school. First, the busyness of the school and expectations of staff was an issue. One teacher proposed that a solution to some issues was an organisational solution: to change the structure of the school.

I think there are situations where we are all working extremely hard and extremely long hours and to overcome that problem there needs to be more structural changes made. (Secondary teacher)

Second, a tension arose from the staffing policy of the school (Section 2.4.7), concerning the employment of both Christian and non-Christian teachers within the school. While the interview data clearly revealed that Christian teachers are important to the maintenance of school ethos, the necessity to maintain a high level of professional practice within the school was also important. Unfortunately the interview data also indicated that it was not always possible to employ highly competent Christian teachers in all situations. This necessitated that a choice be made between a less qualified Christian teacher who was prepared to actively support and contribute to the culture of the school, and a more qualified teacher who, while not holding views contrary to the school, could not actively support the culture of the school. This situation was a matter of some concern to the secondary teachers interviewed because of the possible impact on the Christian aspects of the culture of the school. In turn, this impact may detract from the sense of Christian community within the school.

Leadership within a school has a strong influence on the sense of community developed within a school (Sergiovanni, 1993, 1996). The scale Christian Leadership (Section 5.5.4) was perceived more positively in primary schools than secondary schools. This scale

includes a descriptor which relates to collaboration between staff and the senior staff of the school. The results from both interview data and the questionnaire are consistent with research conducted by Lieberman and Miller (1992). The results from both data sets indicate a closer relationship between primary senior staff and teachers than their secondary counterparts. A primary principal described the role of the primary principal as one of servant leadership thus: “I should be as Principal the servant of others. A principal is many roles: one of them is arranger, organiser, one who gets things ready to happen for other people” (Primary Principal). Secondary schools on the other hand have more levels of senior staff, e.g. year level coordinators, heads of departments, deputy principals, some of whom form the school cabinet. This can lead to a perception of separation between teachers and senior staff, even though the opportunity is given for input by teachers. A secondary teacher described perceptions of the leadership consulting staff within the school questioning the motives behind this consultation.

Sometimes I think it is just to placate and that the decision is made and we can say what we like. It’s like saying we’ll give you little people a go at saying what you think of what is really of little consequence. But then at other times I think there is a definite “I really want to know that what you say is important to us.” (Secondary Teacher)

The context of Queensland Lutheran schools offers important insights into the results of this study. While the above section has outlined different organisational structures within primary and secondary schools other issues are pertinent to the effects on community and relationships within schools. School size is a variable which impacts on the nature of community in Queensland Lutheran schools to be discussed in Section 8.5.2. Another issue is the denominational background of teachers and the percentage of Lutheran teachers within a school. These issues will be discussed in Sections 8.5.3 and 8.5.4.

### ***Worship in Primary and Secondary Schools***

Results from administration of the research instrument indicate that primary schools have perceived Worship as Celebration (Section 5.5.1), and Worship as Life in Vocation (Section 5.5.2) more positively than secondary schools. Responses from both school types

indicated that perceptions of Worship as Celebration were more positive than those for Worship as Life in Vocation.

The results reported in this study are consistent with analogous studies in Catholic schools in the United States in both primary and high schools. Research conducted by Helm (1990) reports the emphasis placed on development of the faith community in primary schools. Davis (1990) also reports that pastors, principals, teachers, and parents of primary schools rated highly the efforts to nurture the faith of students and assist them to mature in their faith. Convey (1992) reports unpublished survey results which indicate a high emphasis on the faith community within the school and the development of a Christian community. Research in Catholic secondary schools also reports high emphasis on faith development. Benson et al (1986) and Yeager et al (1985) report compelling results for the priority given to faith development in Catholic high schools. In fact, the emphasis placed on faith development was equal to that for academic and social development (Benson & Guerra, 1985).

The organisational arrangements reported by Ahola-Sidaway (1988) and discussed in the previous discussion on the school as community, contribute to the different perceptions of primary and secondary teachers for the cultural dimensions Worship as Celebration and Worship as Life in Vocation. Anecdotal data from Lutheran teachers suggest that Queensland Lutheran primary schools adhere to the traditional arrangement of one class of students taught by one teacher for the majority of the time. As such it is easier to integrate worship and devotional activities into the natural flow of the school day. This integration is described by a primary teacher.

In classrooms we have devotions and we pray when something happens at the school. Every afternoon we have our prayers for things which are happening within the school and things in our class and other things outside the school. (Primary Teacher)

On the other hand, secondary schools are organised around subject choices, with students in home or pastoral care groups for a small portion of the day. Worship is still an important activity within the secondary school, but it is structured and organised around the other important activities of the school. While discussing the importance of worship

within the secondary school, a secondary administrator recognises some difficulties associated with worship in that setting.

I'm talking about just your fifteen or twenty minutes of devotions whether it's in a large group, or in our case in year levels or sometimes once a week in home groups, groups of fifteen to twenty - a whole variety of settings, a whole variety of styles, but always based around the Word of God and coming into the presence of God to hear His Word. ... That's one of the difficulties about school worship. Because it's regular, because it's in a limited time frame and there is not a lot of variety you can engender, it tends to become routine. It loses its meaning. (Secondary administrator)

Within primary schools, the teacher teaches the majority of subjects including devotional activities and Christian Studies, and is responsible for discipline and the Christian life of the child within the class. In contrast, the student in a secondary school interacts with a number of teachers throughout the day: the home class teacher, responsible for class devotional activities and pastoral care, and different subject teachers. Minor discipline is the responsibility for each of these teachers, with more serious infractions referred to a Year Level Coordinator or Dean of Students.

These arrangements impact on teachers. In a primary school setting the class teacher is able to integrate worship, the teaching of Christian Studies and discipline into the day in a flexible manner for the best effect for the students of the class. As the teacher interacts with the one group of children, they are better known and understood. In the secondary school situation, the timetable dictates activities with the teacher interacting with more students. Curriculum and assessment pressures compete with student concerns. It is not surprising, therefore, that cultural perceptions are more positive in primary schools than in secondary schools.

Section 2.4.4 described patterns of worship in Queensland Lutheran schools. It is contended that these patterns of worship contribute to the more positive perceptions of Worship as Celebration held by primary teachers. Staff within primary schools participate more frequently in devotional exercises, with the whole school (or large section of a school) often also worshipping together more frequently. When this involvement is

supported by a staff Bible study, it is not surprising that primary teachers have a more positive perception of the scale Worship as Celebration. This may be contrasted to the situation in a secondary school where a teacher may have no outward involvement in the Worship (or even Christian) program of the school except for a weekly year level chapel service.

Worship as Life in Vocation (Section 5.5.2) refers to how school personnel view their role within the school as workers for the church. Two factors may explain the result of this study where primary teachers display more positive perceptions than secondary teachers. First, as stated in the previous paragraph, primary staff are more actively involved in the school's devotional and worship life. Given that the percentage of Lutheran staff is generally higher in primary schools than in secondary and P-12 schools and that a greater percentage of staff teach Christian Studies, it is not surprising that the views of primary staff agree more with the rhetoric of Lutheran schools.

Second, the majority of staffing positions in primary schools are class teachers who are responsible for teaching Christian Studies. The staffing policy of the Lutheran Church of Australia requires that for teachers of Christian Studies preference be given to competent teachers who are active communicant Lutherans (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b). If this is not possible, preference is extended to people who are active Christians from other denominations willing to uphold the Lutheran teaching of the school. For primary class teachers the emphasis on the teaching of Christian studies places emphasis on theological considerations and hence the Christian background and practices of teachers. This contrasts with positions in secondary schools where emphasis may be placed on the educational background of teachers to support the necessary subject specialisation in the senior years. Thus it is important for secondary teachers to hold qualifications necessary for subject specialisation, as well as the appropriate theological background and professional development to enhance the culture of the school. Historically, there has been a shortage of trained Lutheran teachers in secondary schools, and it is understandable that staff in Queensland Lutheran secondary schools have less positive perceptions of Worship as Life in Vocation than primary teachers.

The results of the five culture dimensions which were statistically significant for the variable school type: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership are consistent with research conducted by Shaw and Reyes (1992) which reported higher levels of normative orientation and organisational commitment in primary teachers than secondary teachers. Research by Edwards et al (1996) which reported higher teacher efficacy for primary teachers and correlations between efficacy and school culture is also consistent with the present research conclusions.

These results are important for Queensland Lutheran schools which place great value on the culture of their schools. Recommendations derived from the results discussed in this section, are presented in Chapter 9. School type is an important variable within this study. Another variable which interacts with school type is school size which is the focus of the discussion in the next section.

### **8.5.2 To what extent does the size of a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?**

School size is an issue which affects all schools. Many factors impinge on this issue such as: finance and marketing the school, breadth of curriculum opportunities, educational achievement, and pastoral care impacting on the culture of the school. Within Queensland Lutheran schools, the last twenty years has seen a pattern of growth as primary schools have increased from one stream (200 students) to double stream (400 students) often with a pre-school attached. There has also been the development of P-12 schools with the associated increase in the total size of the school (Section 2.3.3).

The results from this study reported in Section 7.5 suggest that an increase in school size negatively affects perceptions of culture. The results show that, when all schools are considered, an increase in size has a negative effect on culture dimensions, with the independent variable school size being statistically significant for all culture scales except Quality Christian Education. When primary schools only were analysed this same trend was apparent although the variable school size was not statistically significant for any of



the six culture scales. The educational significance of these results is that larger schools have less positive perceptions of the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools than smaller schools.

The literature and research on school size (Section 3.5.3) suggest that an increase in school size leads to a lowering in effects for students and teachers (Fowler, 1992; Fowler & Walberg, 1991; Oxley, 1994; Raywid, 1996a, 1996b; Rivera, 1994; Royal & Rossi, 1997; Yatvin, 1994; Yeager et. al., 1985). Much research on school size has investigated the relationship between student outcomes or achievements, and size of school. It is evident that a positive relationship exists between school culture and student achievement (Bamonte, 1992; Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989; Hargreaves, 1995; Purkey & Smith, 1985). While little research on school size report effects on the culture of schools, it is hypothesised that a correlation exists between student outcomes and achievement, and school culture. Thus studies which report positive student achievement effects are assumed to correlate to a positive view of school culture.

Results of this study of Queensland Lutheran schools are consistent with the extensive study of school size effects conducted by Fowler and Walberg (1991), and Fowler (1992) in United States' high schools. These studies report that increased school size has negative effect on student outcomes and an adverse effect on school climate. Fowler and Walberg (1991) further report that small schools are friendlier, "capable of involving staff and student psychologically in their educational purpose" (p. 200). They contend that small schools offer curricula as comprehensive as large schools. Fowler (1992, p. 15) also suggests that "manning", (when few students are available for many activities and marginal students are able to participate) enhances concern for persons and the community of the school.

Similarly, the results of this study are consistent with research in primary schools in the United States. Fowler (1992) concludes from reviews of research into school size in primary schools between 1967 and 1991 that student outcomes are in a negative relationship with school size. Plecki (1991) reports from her study of Californian primary schools that student achievement is in a negative relationship with an increase in school

size. Analysis established a linear relationship between school size and student outcomes for suburban and other non-urban schools, a result consistent with this study of Queensland Lutheran schools. Howley's (1996b) research, conducted across both primary and secondary schools is also consistent with the results of this study, reporting a negative relationship between school size and student achievement.

The result for the effect of school size on the cultural dimension Quality Christian Education was noteworthy as it is the only dimension for which school size was not statistically significant. It is important to note that teacher perceptions for this dimension do decrease with a change in school size, but not to the same extent as the other five cultural dimensions. One reason for the lower effect of school size on this cultural dimension may be that an increase in the size of a school is often motivated by an improvement in the breadth and the depth of the curriculum offered by the school (Monk, 1990). Thus for this cultural dimension the negative effects of the larger size are balanced by the positive effects of a wider curriculum. Howley (1994, 1996b) reported research which concluded that an increase in school size has less effect on students from higher socioeconomic status societies. This lessening effect may also influence the smaller variation for this cultural dimension.

### ***Community and School Size***

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Bryk (1996) and Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993) who concluded that small school size provides a significant advantage in facilitating greater sense of community through personalism and social intimacy. By contrast larger schools develop more formal methods of communication and greater specialisation. This impacts upon the community of staff as well as students and parents. Yeager et al (1985) conclude from their research that Catholic schools with smaller enrolment have higher sense of community which emphasises the religious nature of the school. Research reported by Royal and Rossi (1996) and Royal, DeAngelis, and Rossi (1997) conducted using data from Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS) found that teachers in small schools had higher perceptions of the sense of community in their schools. Specific areas reported are Goals, Beliefs, and Expectations; Governance

Procedures; and Collegiality and Cooperation. These research results are consistent with those of the current study.

Thus the cultural dimensions Caring, Christ-centred Community, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership which all relate to the relationships between staff and students will be perceived less positively as the size of the school increase and relationships within the school become more transient and less personal. Conversely, in smaller schools, especially those which can be described as *undermanned settings* (Sergiovanni, 1996, *cf* “manning” Fowler, 1992), each person is valued and needed as an important member of the community. Therefore the sense of community is generated through the necessity of developing good working relationships as a greater imperative. Within Queensland Lutheran schools the values and beliefs underpinning the formation and maintenance of relationships are expressed in the scale Christian Relationships and Interactions. It is not therefore surprising that for the effect of school size a similar trend be evident for both Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Caring, Christ-centred Community.

Similarly the effects of leadership are important to the development of community within schools. The literature (Royal & Rossi, 1996; Sergiovanni, 1993, 1996) suggests that smaller schools display more *gemeinschaft* characteristics and as a school grows in size this changes to a more *gesellschaft* orientation. Sergiovanni (1993) contends that leadership to build community be based upon two sources of authority embedded in shared ideas: moral authority which emerges from the joint responsibility of community, and professional authority in the form of a “commitment to virtuous practice” (p. 18). Bamonte (1984) also concludes from research conducted in New York Catholic high schools that a positive correlation exists between the leadership of the principal and a school’s religiosity. A further conclusion, consistent with the results of this study, is that small schools compared to larger schools have a higher level of religious atmosphere.

The results indicate that an increase in the size of the school has a negative impact on perceptions on the cultural dimension Worship as Celebration. When celebrating worship, the school community is celebrating its relationship with God and with each other

(Lutheran Church of Australia, 1990). Thus it can be hypothesised that more personal relationships within the school will contribute to a greater meaning of worship for the school community. This suggests that where an increase in school size has the effect of reducing the closeness and shared purposes within relationships, then perceptions of Worship as Celebration are less positive. This is an important result in this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools where worship is a central activity in the life of the school.

The results suggest that as school size increases perceptions of the cultural dimension Worship as Life in Vocation decreases. The greater sense of community in small schools suggested by Conway (1994), and the effect of undermanned settings (Sergiovanni, 1996), have an important effect on this cultural dimension. The concept of undermanned settings suggest that in a small school all members of the school community are needed to be involved to ensure that activities are conducted appropriately. This has the effect of individual members of the school community contributing to the life of the school in areas in which they may not have previously been involved. This heightens their sense of contribution to the school and hence their sense of shared service within the school.

### ***School Size and School Type***

One difficulty in the analysis of results from this study is the possible conflation of the variables school type and school size due to the particular nature of the population of Queensland Lutheran schools. Demographic information presented in Section 7.5 indicated that primary schools had an enrolment range between 110 to 480, with secondary school size varying between 600 and 830. Further P-12 schools had enrolments between 430 and 1620. Thus the primary schools were smaller than both the high schools and P-12 schools. The results of the variable school type showed secondary teachers had less positive perceptions of culture than primary teachers, while the results for the variable school size showed teachers in larger schools have less positive perceptions of culture than teachers in smaller schools. Thus further discussion is necessary in light of the possible conflation of these variables.

The first important result to consider in this discussion is that analysis of the results of primary and secondary teachers in P-12 schools reported results consistent with primary and secondary teachers in separate primary and secondary schools (Section 7.4). From this it can be concluded that the level of schooling, primary or secondary, had a powerful effect on the perceptions of teachers even within a P-12 environment. Further it can be surmised from this result that the perceptions of primary and secondary teachers were not greatly influenced by attempts to develop a P-12 environment. This issue invites further study concerning the perceptions of middle school teachers and how these relate to their primary and secondary colleagues.

The second consideration relates to the question of school size. Analysis of results of primary schools only (Section 7.5) showed generally that an increase in size of primary schools resulted in the lowering of perceptions of the dimensions of culture. Although the effects are not large, these results suggest that school size does have an impact on Queensland Lutheran primary schools. Thus any future proposal to increase the size of primary schools will invite careful consideration and study.

Because of the small number of secondary schools and P-12 schools in the Queensland Lutheran school system, a statistical analysis of results was not appropriate. However the overall trend, together with the evidence from the literature and research on this important variable, again suggest that an increase in school size results in lower perceptions of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. Any future proposal for Queensland Lutheran schools to increase school size will require careful consideration. One possible strategy to minimise the negative effects of any increase in size is the development of sub-schools, the topic of the next section.

### ***School Size and Sub-Schools***

The results for the variable school size have important implications for Queensland Lutheran schools. Literature (Fowler, 1991; Howley, 1994, 1996a, 1996b; Imsher, 1997; Swanson, 1991) present a range of views of the optimal size of a school from 300 to 400 up to 900 for a high school (Lee & Smith, 1996). Howley (1996a) suggests that the

optimum size of a school varies from place to place, with the main factor for consideration being socioeconomic status. Small schools provide achievement advantage for lower socioeconomic status with higher enrolments assisting more affluent students (Howley, 1996a).

For those schools where size is considered an issue, it is suggested that schools restructure into smaller units (Meier, 1995; Raywid, 1996a, 1996b; Sergiovanni, 1993). Given the current sizes of Queensland Lutheran schools it would seem that any school restructuring be restricted to those schools which are currently P-12 schools and operate with one or more school section or sub-school. However these sub-schools need to operate in harmony in such a way as to optimise the community of the school (Raywid, 1996a, 1996b) (Section 3.5.3).

These results are important for planning for Queensland Lutheran schools. It is clear from the results that size of school has a negative impact on five of the six cultural dimension investigated in this study. Recommendations derived from this discussion are presented in Section 9.3.1 of this thesis.

### **8.5.3 To what extent does Lutheran background of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools? To what extent does the percentage of Lutheran teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?**

The results of the analysis into the effect of Lutheran background on Lutheran school culture were presented in Section 7.6 reporting that the variable denomination was not statistically significant for any of the six culture scales. However descriptive statistical results demonstrated that teachers from a Lutheran background held more positive perceptions of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools than teachers from other denominational backgrounds on three of the six culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration and Worship as Life in Vocation. The results for the sample of primary teachers produced similar results to those for the whole sample. For secondary teachers, Lutheran teachers had more positive perceptions of culture than teachers from other denominational backgrounds on two scales: Caring, Christ-centred

Community and Worship as Life in Vocation. Teachers in P-12 schools returned results similar to the whole sample with Lutheran teachers having more positive perceptions on three culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration and Worship as Life in Vocation. Given that the variable denomination was not statistically significant these results need to be recognised as being tentative.

These results indicate that generally Lutheran teachers had more positive perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools on three culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, and Worship as Life in Vocation. This finding is consistent with research reported by Flynn (1993) (Section 3.5.4) which states that practicing Catholic teachers recorded higher religious values than non-Catholic teachers. However on other issues such as morale and attitude to the principal there was no significant difference.

The analysis of the data reported in Section 7.6 further suggested that the perceptions of culture within a school become more positive with an increase in the percentage of Lutheran teachers. When all schools were included the variable percentage of Lutheran teachers was statistically significant for four of the six culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, and Christian Relationships and Interactions with perceptions of all six culture scales being heightened as the proportion of Lutheran teachers increased. When only primary schools were considered the variable percentage of Lutheran teachers was not significant on any of the six culture scales with four scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Quality Christian Education, Worship as Life in Vocation and Christian Leadership showing an increase for an increased percentage of Lutheran teachers. The scale Worship as Celebration showed a slight decline as the percentage of Lutheran teachers increased, as did the scale Christian Relationships and Interactions but to a greater degree.

It is suggested that an increase in the percentage of Lutheran teachers leads to more positive perceptions of cultural dimensions within the school, in particular for the scale Worship as Life in Vocation. This result is consistent with the research of Coleman and Hoffer (1987) and Ramsey and Clark (1990) in regard to the concepts of functional

communities and social capital (Section 3.5.4) to be discussed in Section 8.5.5. This proposition states that one source which contributes to the functional community is the commitment of the teachers who choose to work in the school, particularly because they have a desire to minister to the faith community, and to assist students in their spiritual development. Thus an increase in the proportion of Lutheran teachers contributes to the functional community within the school, and it is plausible that this heightens the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools. The purpose of this section is to discuss these results.

### *Caring, Christ-centred Community*

Interestingly, results showed that differences were apparent between Lutheran and other teachers for Caring, Christ-centred Community but not for Christian Relationships and Interactions or Christian Leadership, different for the results from the variables school type and school size. This raised the rhetorical question as to whether there is a distinctive Lutheran understanding of community in Queensland Lutheran schools. Duignan (1998) suggests that for Catholic schools there are multiple understandings of Catholic community held by different groups and individuals. However Duignan (1998) goes on to define authentic Catholic community as “relationships based on shared mind-sets that promote and celebrate belonging, acceptance, affirmation, caring and love” (p. 47).

The scale Caring, Christ-centred Community was described in Section 6.3.2 as the “extent to which it is perceived that the school community is centred on the gospel of Christ, showing care for its members”, a definition sharing some consistency with Duignan (1998). The characteristics for this scale were: forgiveness acceptance, growing as individuals, family orientation, and pastoral care. As the cultural dimensions are prompted by Lutheran theology (Chapter 3), a view consistent with that Groome (1996) offers for Catholicism, it is pertinent to examine the roots of Lutheran theology to highlight any distinctiveness in a Lutheran understanding of community.

A number of distinctive Lutheran doctrines are important in this discussion related to a “Lutheran” community. First, a central doctrine is that of law and gospel together with the



related concept of saint and sinner (Section 2.6.6). God's law tells of people's sins and their inability to be in relationship with God or perfect relationship with others. All people are sinners. Sin impacts negatively on the relationships and communication between people. This fact, that people are sinners and that problems occur with relationships whether between pupils, or pupils and teachers, or parents and teachers, is evident and accepted as the manifestation of sin in the life of Lutheran schools. A senior administrator described this belief such:

They acknowledge that that's life. That's part of our human frailty, flawedness, sinfulness, whatever you like. That's just not, I was shocked. That will happen. We are flawed individuals and we will put people off. There will be power games.

However the presence of sin is balanced with God's grace as revealed in the gospel message where God speaks his word of forgiveness to the sinner. With sin removed by God, the sinner is thus a saint in God's eyes. Just as God has forgiven, so individuals too are able to forgive those around them and live out the gospel of Jesus Christ (Luke 17:3,4; Colossians 3: 13).

For me it comes back to the gospel, that if Christ cared for me so much that he'd die for me. That's the inspiration, the catalyst for us to show love and care beyond what is expected. (Administrator)

Within a Lutheran understanding of community, this means firstly that people are accepted, and that it is important to learn to live with all people. Second, staff, students, and parents, are given another chance, forgiveness is offered and they are treated with respect and dignity. This does not mean that behavioural expectations are lowered, or that school rules are not enforced, but rather, that while punishment may be appropriately administered, the individual is forgiven for the transgression and reconciliation will occur for the individual to be restored to the community.

I suppose that the word coming to mind is acceptance at all levels by all people. Now once you get beyond that, that may mean learning to live with people you're not altogether comfortable with and recognise that is where God has placed you for the time

being and that's where he wants you to work it through. To acceptance in the sense of being able to forgive and also to receive the forgiveness. (Administrator)

This living out of the gospel is a difficult concept for teachers outside of the Lutheran tradition to understand and to commit to practice.

I'd have to say this idea of Law and Gospel and this idea of forgiveness, especially in the early days, I think for me was something that I found quite different and often hard to get a handle on. You would think that some of those kids were repeat offenders and we are all on the outside looking in and you are not the head or person doing the discipline and you think why on earth don't you kick them out? ... And all that has its roots in the Gospel and that sort of thing and that's a hard concept. (Secondary Teacher)

The foregoing discussion relates the Lutheran principle of Law and Gospel to the dimension Caring, Christ-centred Community explaining the distinctive nature of the Lutheran understanding of this dimension. Thus the result where Lutheran teachers have more positive perceptions of this dimension is consistent with the theology of Queensland Lutheran schools.

A second area of distinctive Lutheran theology which impacts on a Caring, Christ-centred Community is the Two Kingdoms principle (Section 2.2.7). The fundamental feature of the two kingdoms principle is that it distinguishes the two ways in which God rules over human affairs. On the "left" hand God rules all of creation with the law to ensure justice and good order within the world. On the "right" hand God bestows his grace on his people with the Gospel message of love and forgiveness (Truemper, 1991).

The doctrine of the two kingdoms impacts on the cultural dimension through pastoral care in two ways. First, the left kingdom provides the authority for the school to have clear guidelines and expectations as to the behaviour of all students (and staff), and the consequences of misbehaviour, to ensure the school operates with good order to optimise its duty as a learning institution. Further this doctrine frees the school to use reason to explore the best of scholarship to research and gain understanding of issues involved in behaviour management. Thus, theories and research from psychology and sociology are

important to developing policies for the good of the students and the school (Sturm, 1984; Truemper, 1991). Second, the right kingdom speaks God's words of grace, love and forgiveness into relationship and behavioural situations which arise (Bonhoeffer, 1954). While on the one hand ensuring that consequences of actions are dealt with appropriately through actions governed by the left kingdom, a miscreant may be offered forgiveness and the opportunity to enjoy a clear conscience and reconciliation to the group within the school community (Schulz, 1989). This is a time of personal statement of faith by staff, a time of understanding as spiritual help and comfort is offered, and a time of prayer.

This Lutheran understanding which impacts on pastoral care within Queensland Lutheran schools is one which is easily misunderstood and which requires strong personal faith and commitment to use within the school. It also requires time and understanding from a staff viewpoint. Dealing with issues in conformity with the doctrine of the two kingdoms brings a different reality to bear on pastoral care, community and ultimately a person's view of the world.

There are extra responsibilities in terms of living out their faith and Gospel. And that is then contributing to pastoral care, the sense of community and seeing what happens in the classroom is informed by faith, so that the world view which emerges is in harmony with the world view of the Christian school. (Administrator)

This view is consistent with that of a senior staff member who summarised the nature of pastoral care as being an integral aspect of the school's operation and an important response to God's love for every person.

Pastoral care is not as a responsibility, again this is an ideal, but is a natural out-flowing of the Christian's love in response to God's love for us. It's a part of our service and as a consequence while we channel it specifically to the students we teach, and if you happen to be in a particular pastoral care structure you will channel it specifically to that particular group of students for whom you have responsibility, it will inevitably flow over to other people. We have, and I think all our schools have, people who are absolutely wonderful. It's one of the gifts they have to love other people and to care for other people. (Administrator)

The importance of Lutheran theology is not limited to the culture dimension Caring, Christ-centred Community. Lutheran theology also leads to distinctive understandings with the two worship culture dimensions, the results of which are discussed in the following two sections.

### ***Worship in Lutheran Schools***

Lutheran worship is an expression of Lutheran belief (Simpfendorfer, 1993), and the Lutheran school, as an agency of the church, is a worshipping community. Lutheran worship expresses Lutheran theology through the essential features of Lutheran worship: baptism, confession and absolution, preaching, prayer, and the Sacrament of the Altar (Eucharist) (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1990). While Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar are not usually a feature of Lutheran worship, the other features are common in chapel services within Lutheran schools. The seven principles of Lutheran theology (Section 2.2) are expressed in and through worship in a Lutheran school. Because of this orientation it is not unreasonable to expect that Lutheran teachers have more positive perceptions of the cultural dimension Worship as Celebration than non-Lutheran staff, unless non-Lutheran staff have been familiarised with Lutheran theology.

As Lutheran worship expresses Lutheran theology, so worship within a Lutheran school will reflect the Christocentric principle (Section 2.2.4). This principle expresses the centrality of Christ and the proclamation of the gospel. This gospel message is presented within Lutheran worship as the good news of salvation, and not as a legalist or moralist approach (Bartsch, 1998). This understanding of the Law/Gospel principle is again important in worship as in understanding of the Lutheran school community.

Worship as Life in Vocation is also a cultural dimension where Lutheran teachers had more positive perceptions than non-Lutheran teachers. It is important to note that this cultural dimension is not measuring commitment as such. It is important to differentiate between the perceptions recorded on this scale and the commitment of an individual to the school or to teaching. It is possible that a teacher could score quite low on this cultural dimension and yet be a highly committed and effective teacher.

The cultural dimension Worship as Life in Vocation is properly described by two characteristics: called by God into vocation, and service to God in vocation (Section 5.5.2). These two characteristics reflect understandings of Lutheran theology of vocation (Sections 2.2.7 and 2.4.3). First, the individual is called to forgiveness and fellowship within the Church (Janetzki, 1985). Second, the individual is called to serve God in their “station” in life through their profession. Third, this call to serve God is realised through serving others by fulfilling the tasks and duties of the individual’s profession. Janetzki (1985) maintains that this Christian service is a form of worship. Thus this cultural dimension measures perceptions of an individual’s decision to be a teacher as a response to a divine call to serve God through the ministry and profession of teaching in a Lutheran school.

The results of this study are consistent with research in both Catholic and Church of England schools. Flynn’s (1993) research in Australian Catholic schools reports practicing Catholic teachers had more positive perceptions of the religious nature of the school, including religious expectation and commitment, than other teachers. The experience of Catholic schools in England and Wales (O’Keeffe & O’Keeffe, 1996) also suggests that the presence of Catholic teachers is important in inculcating a sense of service within Catholic schools. Research conducted by Wilcox and Francis (1996) in Church of England schools in England and Wales concluded that a close relationship exists between a teacher’s personal religious commitment and their views on the school system. This religious commitment was also a strong predictor of their attitude towards the distinctiveness of church schools.

### ***Implications for Lutheran Schools***

These results presents four major challenges to Queensland Lutheran schools. First, as these dimensions are important to the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools it is incumbent on schools to enculturate existing staff in these important cultural dimensions. This is consistent with recommendations from US Catholic schools where retreats and other opportunities for teachers to worship and pray together are provided. Section 8.5.6 discusses results reported in Chapter 7 which demonstrate that currently theological

professional development is having little effect on cultural perceptions. The discussion in Section 8.5.6 elaborates on theological professional development and possible future directions.

Second, more committed Lutherans need to be attracted to teach in Lutheran schools. This aspect of Lutheran schools, once largely promoted, seems currently not to be emphasised as it once was. The diminution of Lutheran teachers is consistent with the low perception of teaching in Australia which has resulted in programs developed to promote teaching as a rewarding profession (Hunter, 1999; Senate Employment, Education and Training References Committee, 1998). It is important that the schools of the church and Lutheran congregations, in a similar vein, promote teaching in Queensland Lutheran schools (and other services within the church) as a vocation in which to serve God through service to other people.

Third, it is important that teachers preparing to teach in Queensland Lutheran schools experience an initial teacher education program which ensures they understand the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools. Currently a partnership agreement exists between Luther Seminary and Australian Catholic University, McAuley Campus, to provide such a program. This initiative requires strong support and careful monitoring from the Queensland Lutheran school system to successfully address this important issue. Fourth, new teachers to Queensland Lutheran schools need to be mentored on the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools as one aspect of their orientation into teaching. This orientation and mentoring needs to reflect characteristics and structures important for professional development (Abdal-Haqq, 1996). This issue is elaborated upon in Section 8.5.7

#### **8.5.4 To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran students within a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?**

Section 7.5.2 presented the results of the analysis of the effect of the percentage of Lutheran students on the cultural dimensions of the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory on Queensland Lutheran schools. The results for the whole sample were similar to

primary schools when analysed separately: that is statistical significant differences were evident between scale mean scores for different percentages of Lutheran students for three of the six culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Life in Vocation, and Christian Relationships and Interactions. These three scales showed an increase in cultural perceptions with an increase in the percentage of Lutheran students. The three scales for which the effect was not statistically significant displayed a similar trend, although not to the same extent.

The proportion of Lutheran students in a Lutheran school is an issue which has been recognised as important to Lutheran schools over the last three decades as evidenced by the recommendation that there be a majority of both Lutheran students and staff within a school (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1972). As described in Section 2.3.3, Queensland Lutheran schools have undergone substantial growth over the last decades. The notion that Lutheran schools have a majority of Lutheran students has been foregone with the present percentages of Lutheran students being between 9% and 50% (Board for Lutheran Schools, 1997). In other words, the issue of growth has received greater priority than the maintenance of the percentage of Lutheran students within Queensland Lutheran schools.

The results of this research are consistent with research conducted by Francis (1986a) in Catholic schools in England and Wales which suggested that the presence of non-Catholic students in a Catholic school threatened the ethos of these schools. Research by Egan (1988) also concluded that the presence of non-Catholic students and non-practicing Catholic students is a negative influence on the traditional model of the Catholic school in Wales. Egan (1988) proposed three solutions to this situation: restrict the intake of students to those who meet religious criteria, thus in fact reducing the number of schools but retaining the traditional model, rethink the traditional model of Catholic schools, or adopt a more ecumenical approach and accept students from non-Catholic backgrounds as well as non-practicing Catholic students.

In essence, Lutheran schools have adopted the second of these options. The viability of the schools has been ensured through the acceptance of enrolments of students from a wide variety of backgrounds and the schools are adapting to meet this challenge. It is

apparent from the results of this research that the culture in schools with decreasing percentages of Lutheran students is perceived differently. This needs to be recognised by Queensland Lutheran schools and policies such as the enrolment policy, Christian Studies curriculum policy, and worship and pastoral care policies reviewed in light of this result.

Other writers from a Catholic background also suggest that the distinctiveness of Catholic schools is threatened by increasing enrolments from non-Catholic students. Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993) contend that students with a strong religious orientation are more likely to exhibit constructive school behaviour. Similarly Flynn's (1993) research reported significant differences between practising Catholic students and non-Catholic students on all religious issues. The conformity of practicing Catholic students within a Catholic school with the beliefs of the school leads to a more homogeneous culture within the school. Results of this study are consistent with this assertion.

O'Keefe and O'Keefe (1996), McClelland (1996), Murray (1996) and Zipfel (1996) all report concern in regard to the percentage of non-Catholic enrolments in Catholic schools in England and Wales. While the results of the current study are consistent with these concerns, the percentages suggested for a non-Catholic enrolment within these schools is far lower than non-Lutheran enrolment in Queensland Lutheran schools. For instance, Zipfel (1996) reports that a percentage of 15% non-Catholic students is a concern for Catholic schools. Trends displayed in the current research suggest that the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools is adversely affected by a decrease in the percentage of Lutheran students, with the effect evident for percentages of Lutheran students between 8% and 50%, with an average percentage of Lutheran students being 21%.

### ***Functional Communities and Social Capital***

The two theoretical concepts, functional communities and social capital (Coleman & Hoffer, 1987), outlined in Section 3.5.4, present an insight towards explaining this phenomenon. All Lutheran schools can be considered as value communities given their basis on the principles of Lutheran theology (Section 5.3). Functional communities are value communities where values based on Lutheran theology are shared not only within



the school, but also by the parents and families of the school. Further, these values are the values of the parents who know each other and their families. It was hypothesised that in a Queensland Lutheran school where the proportion of Lutheran students is greater, it is more likely that a functional community will form leading to higher perceptions of culture within the school. This concurs with the proposition of Coleman and Hoffer (1987) that one source of the functional community is the shared values of parents who send their children to the school, not just for an academic education, but for the religious environment that the children experience. Thus, the more positive perceptions of culture resulting from an increase in the percentage of Lutheran students reflects an increase in the social capital: the relationships between teachers, students and families, within the school community.

This argument could putatively be applied to include students who are non-Lutheran practicing Christians, given that the community of the school is such that the parents and friends of the students of the school interact socially as well. The functional community is dependent on the social capital developed through the relationships of parents, teachers and students both inside and outside of the school. Thus, it could be hypothesised that as the proportion of Christian students and families within the school increases, perceptions of Lutheran school culture within the school improve. This is an important direction for future research.

### ***Nurture, Mission, or Nurture and Mission***

The results of this study have important implications for the future of Queensland Lutheran schools. Hurley (1997), Lambert (1990), and Qullinan and Ryan (1994) raise issues in regard to the ethos within Catholic schools arising from the increase in non-Catholic students within their schools. The argument is centred on whether Catholic schools be reserved almost exclusively for Catholic students with that particular ethos, or whether students from other backgrounds are enrolled in the school causing the school to have a more ecumenical character. If the latter is the case, then, it is argued, teachers have to consciously change to accommodate the greater faith diversity of students.

Within Lutheran schools the argument has been couched in different terms but bears great similarities. Discussion has related to whether Lutheran schools are to be in nurture or in mission or both (Section 2.4.2). The results of this research confirm previous research which shows that these orientations do change the ethos or culture of the school. Thus it is important for Lutheran school communities within Queensland to consider these issues to adopt an enrolment policy which reflects their conclusions and to implement policies by which the school may show Christian care whether in nurture, mission or both to all students. Whatever the case it is important that the spiritual needs of all students are catered for within the school (Bartsch, 1998).

#### **8.5.6 To what extent do the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools vary amongst major stakeholders?**

Section 7.8 reported results pertaining to this research question for the four stakeholder groups surveyed: teachers, senior staff, school council members, and parents and friends executive members (P&F). It was found that the scale means for these four groups displayed significant statistical difference on all culture scales apart from the scale Quality Christian Education. The results indicated that perceptions of culture varied between the four groupings. Senior staff had more positive perceptions of culture on all six culture scales than the other three groups. School council members had the second highest perceptions on the four scales Caring, Christ-centred Community, Quality Christian Education, Worship as Celebration and Christian Leadership. Their perceptions were as positive as teachers' perceptions on the Worship as Life in Vocation and Christian Relationships and Interactions scales. In general, the perceptions of teachers were third highest on the scales Caring, Christ-centred Community and Quality Christian Education. However teachers had the least positive perceptions for Worship as Celebration and Christian Leadership and second highest for Christian Relationships and Interactions. The final group, parents and friends executive members had the least positive perceptions on all scales except Worship as Celebration and Christian Leadership where their perceptions were more positive than perceptions of teachers.

Section 3.3.1 introduced two assumptions concerning organisational culture which were challenged by Sackmann (1991): that organisational culture is homogeneous throughout the organisation and that culture is leader generated and leader-centred. This research supports Sackmann's (1991) contention that the first of these assumptions is false. While there is an overall agreement with the dimensions of culture throughout the schools surveyed, the results of this study show that perceptions vary depending on the position within the school. Perceptions of school culture are not homogeneous, even within a particular school. The concept of cultural groupings as proposed by Sackmann (1991) explains this phenomenon. The differences in perceptions evident from the results of this study occur across schools and school types. This effect is explained by the differences in perceptions of culture due to the position of the participant. It is the expectations and perspective of the individual fulfilling their particular role within the school which imparts a framework which shapes the cognitions of that particular group. As these groupings are common across the schools of the Queensland Lutheran school system, these differing perceptions are also common across the schools of the system.

The second assumption challenged by Sackmann (1991) is that culture is leader generated and leader-centred. Given that senior staff and school council members have more positive perceptions of the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools, it is plausible that perceptions of the cultural dimensions in Queensland Lutheran schools by other stakeholders are influenced by the perceptions of senior staff. This supposition is consistent with the literature (Section 3.5.5) which suggests that the role of the leader is to create and manage the culture (Duncan, 1998; Schein, 1985). The postulated correlation suggested above is consistent with that of Bamonte (1984) who concluded that that a strong correlation exists between the leadership behaviour of the principal and the religious atmosphere of New York Catholic secondary schools. However, it can be argued that in Queensland Lutheran schools the culture is not leader-centred. It has been previously stated that the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools is derived from the theological understandings of the Lutheran Church of Australia (Section 8.2). Thus the culture of the school is focussed on the two dictionary dimensions of culture derived from the theology: Caring, Christ-centred Community and Quality Christian Education and the

role of senior staff is communicating the culture rather than generating or determining the culture.

The results of this study are consistent with the assertion that the role of the leader within the school is to “create and manage the culture” (Schein, 1983, p. 2). Writings by Duignan (1998) and McLaughlin (1998) are premised on this assertion as they discuss the authentic nature of leadership and community within Catholic schools. Thus it is apparent that one role of senior staff and school board members relates to knowing and understanding the ideals of Lutheran school culture and formulating and implementing policies to maintain the continued development of this culture.

The difference in teachers’ perceptions not being as positive as those of other groups except for parents and friends executive members may be explained by the differing roles within a school and Argyris and Schon’s (1978) concepts of espoused theories and theories-in-use. Statistically significant differences were recorded between senior staff and teachers’ scores on Caring, Christ-centred Community and Christian Leadership. While the rhetoric of the schools suggests that perceptions of staff should be similar no matter the position, this result is not apparent. Senior staff and board members, due to the nature of their positions, are often engaged in discussion of policy and values at the level of espoused theories. While it is their desire that these espoused theories are implemented, this is not always easily achieved (Fullan, 1991). Teachers may resist implementation of policies affecting the culture of the school or only “assimilate the superficial trappings of the new policy” (Fullan, 1991, p. 35). Further, teachers may espouse the values and policies of the school, but instead operate with their own “theories-in-use” (Argyris & Schon, 1978) which are impacted upon by the reality of working at the interface of teacher and student. For cultural change to occur, a person’s fundamental beliefs have to be changed (Schein, 1992). For Queensland Lutheran schools, where the culture is derived from the theology of the Lutheran Church of Australia, educational change is premised on an understanding and recognition of the theological implications of theological beliefs on the practice of teaching in Lutheran schools.

Organisational and structural differences between school councils at primary and secondary (and P-12) level may explain the results which reported differences between school council members in primary, secondary, and P-12 schools (Section 7.6.1). The results indicate statistically significant differences between primary and secondary school boards on three scales: Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, and Christian Leadership. Firstly, primary school councils have a far greater involvement in staffing whereas in secondary and P-12 schools this is the domain of the head. Secondly, primary school council members are elected from the local congregation (Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District, 1989) which is often the worshipping congregation of the staff of the school. In contrast, secondary school council members may be involved in the congregations surrounding the college which may or may not have staff members of the college within the congregation. Thus, school council members in colleges have less knowledge of staff from not being involved in the staffing policy and also from less personal contact of staff. This accounts for a possible less positive response simply due to a lack of knowledge (the middle response in the questionnaire, 3, stated if you neither agree or disagree or are not sure). Thus the result could be skewed to a lower score due to school council members responding with the neutral response rather than not answering this question.

Parents and friends executive members perceptions of culture, which were generally the least positive of the four stakeholder groups involved in this study, may be compared with research by Canavan (1995). The greatest difference in perceptions was between parents and friends executive members and senior staff on the two scales Caring, Christ-centred Community, and Christian Leadership. Canavan (1995), who investigated reasons behind parents' choice of Catholic or public schools in Sydney, suggests parents main reasons for choosing a school are school discipline, quality of teachers, value system and academic reputation with religious education ranked ninth. Thus while a general framework of values may be important to parents, their context within Christianity is less so. This is in contrast with senior staff in Queensland Lutheran schools who are responsible for integration of Lutheran understandings into the schools of the Lutheran church (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997a).

Results of the research in relation to parents and friends executive members may also be compared with the findings reported by Griffiths (1999) who researched parent expectations of a Catholic secondary school. Griffiths (1999) compared parents' perceptions in nine areas using actual and ideal scales. Results consistently showed perceptions of parents to be lower on the actual scales than the ideal scales. While Griffiths (1999) concludes that the parents support the school, this trend "indicates that parents judge the school as not having fully achieved their expectations, to a greater or lesser degree" (p. 170). This result helps to explain parents' lower perceptions of culture in this study. Nevertheless, the result is one which is concerning for Queensland Lutheran schools and is an area where further investigation is warranted to ascertain parents' overall levels of satisfaction with the schools.

#### **8.5.7 To what extent does theological professional development of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?**

The results of the analysis of the data reporting differing perceptions of teachers due to theological professional development are presented in Section 7.6.4. These results consider three different forms of professional development: completion of the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education as offered by Luther Seminary in Adelaide which is a requirement for all teachers of Christian Studies, completion of the Theological Orientation Program for Staff (TOPS) which is a requirement for all teachers in Lutheran schools unless they have completed the Graduate Diploma for Theology in Education, and thirdly those teachers who teach Christian Studies.

Analysis of the data showed no statistical significance difference between scale means for completion of the Graduate Diploma of Theology or the TOPS course for the whole sample of teachers on any of the six culture scales. However results of scale means showed higher perceptions of culture for those teachers who had not completed the Graduate Diploma and those who had not completed TOPS on four of the six culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Quality Christian Education, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership. Perceptions were also more positive on the scale Worship as Celebration for those teachers who not completed TOPS.

This effect was higher when primary teachers only were analysed with teachers who have not completed the Graduate Diploma having higher perceptions of culture in all six scales over those teachers who have completed the award. Secondary teachers showed the reverse effect with those teachers who have completed the Graduate Diploma having higher scale scores on four scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, and Christian Leadership.

Results related to TOPS for primary teachers and secondary teachers were similar to the overall sample. However, for P-12 schools those teachers who had completed TOPS had higher perceptions of cultural understandings in three of the six scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Life in Vocation and Christian Relationships and Interactions.

Although these results need to be treated tentatively, they do indicate a trend which is unexpected. Section 2.4.7 presented the view that the staffing policy of the Lutheran Church of Australia for the teachers of its schools includes theological professional development to assist teachers in understanding the theological underpinnings of Lutheran education and their application within a Lutheran school. The results above indicate that this policy is having a negligible, if not negative, impact on cultural perceptions of teachers.

The results of this study are consistent with research on some forms of professional development which can be unproductive and inefficient if the courses are not based on important principles of adult learning and professional development (Abdal-Haqq, 1996; Corcoran, 1995). Bull and Buechler (1995) summarise research and expert opinion in offering five principles of effective professional development. These principles are that effective professional development: is 1), school based, 2), uses coaching and other follow up procedures, 3), promotes collaboration among teachers and administrators, 4), is embedded in the daily lives of teachers, and 5), focuses on student learning and is evaluated in part on that basis (p. 3). These characteristics provide one basis for discussion of these results.

The results of the present research are consistent with the principle that effective professional development should be school based (Bull & Buechler, 1995; Corcoran, 1995). More positive results for the TOPS course were recorded for secondary schools and P-12 schools. The greater probability is that for these participants the course was conducted in the school whereas primary teachers would more likely have completed the course in a central location as fewer individuals within a primary school would be required to complete the course. Completing the TOPS course within the school over a number of weeks with a member of the school staff has two important possible benefits. Firstly, it is possible teachers completing the course are more likely to collaborate with each other in seeking understanding of the material, and secondly, it is more likely that the relationships between the principles being discussed and the implications for teaching and life within the school will be made evident. A skilled presenter will be able to embed these principles into the daily lives of the teachers.

As stand-alone courses, the Graduate Diploma of Theology and TOPS contain discrete units, often separated from the reality of the classroom. They do not include follow up support or coaching, an essential feature of professional development (Corcoran, 1995). The Graduate Diploma in particular is offered out of the school environment, which, while allowing for interaction with peers from other schools, is unrelated to the realities of individual schools. Nwosu (1998) differentiates between two kinds of knowledge: declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge. Declarative knowledge is basically cognitive understanding while procedural knowledge is an ability to perform a skill. The results of this research suggest that while the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education may be quite successful in transferring declarative knowledge, this knowledge is not transferred into procedural knowledge. Nwosu (1998) draws on the work of Joyce and Showers (1995) to suggest that acquisition of procedural knowledge requires a demonstration or modeling of the skill, practice under simulated conditions structured and open feedback and peer coaching. These functions are predominantly ones which, in post-graduate work, occur within the school. It seems therefore that either the courses be re-structured to include procedural knowledge in some form, or greater responsibility be taken by the school to incorporate this knowledge into the professional development program of the individual school.



The staffing policy for Queensland Lutheran schools (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b) states that teachers of Christian Studies are to complete the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education, (i.e. the course is compulsory). There is no financial incentive to complete the course. The compulsory nature of the course may mean that teachers who undertake the course are not motivated through their own desire, but simply through an imposed necessity, leading to negative perceptions not only of the course, but also of the Queensland Lutheran school system. Unless participants take on a shared meaning of the professional development being undertaken, any assimilation of knowledge is unlikely (Fullan, 1991). Resentment towards this course could also be developed as these courses are conducted during vacation periods. Further the completion of readings and assignments occurs during school term time with competing demands of school work which may result in an attitude developing due to work pressure where completion of assignments is more important than the quality of the assignment. These factors all can contribute to negative perceptions of Queensland Lutheran schools caused by undertaking the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education.

The results of this research are consistent with the contention of Marx, Blumenfeld, and Krajcik (1998) who argue that effective teacher learning is social and collaborative. The Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education is affected by the manner in which it is offered to teachers within Queensland Lutheran schools. As Luther Seminary is located in Adelaide, the course is commonly completed in distance education mode over a number of years, usually while the teacher is teaching in a Lutheran school. Enrolment figures from Luther Seminary show that the majority of teachers in Lutheran schools in Queensland complete the Graduate Diploma using the distance education mode which present a number of difficulties to the teacher undertaking the course. The social and collaborative nature of teacher learning is not supported currently through the mode of presentation of this course. Firstly, the teacher has limited contact with the lecturer and also with other teachers undertaking the course usually limited to a week of intensive seminars. Other contact between teachers and lecturers is by telephone, postal mail or e-mail, unless study groups are formed. This means there is limited opportunity for contact with lecturers and other teachers, and an associated low level of social interaction and collaboration, the effectiveness of the course could be reduced.

It is evident that the results of this research suggest that the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education is in need of restructuring to ensure that procedural knowledge (Nwosu, 1998) is incorporated into the course. Given that the method of delivery is through distance education, the course requires restructuring to reflect principles of effective distance education. An example of a course based on these principles is the Master of Education program offered in Bermuda (Bohrer, Colbert, & Zide, 1998). This course offers a two-tiered approach to coursework: those subjects dependent on a high degree of direct impersonal exchange (declarative knowledge) being presented via the computer network, with the remainder taught through “intensives” during school vacations. The on-line courses were presented in such a way as to give students choice in their approach to the on-line text, allowing them the opportunity to access the information in a manner suited to their learning style. Interaction was also organised through the Internet. Students are required to participate in an electronic discussion area leading to interaction and collaboration for the students (Bohrer, Colbert, & Zide, 1998). Other strategies which could be employed electronically are learning strategies such as pair and share, plus, minus interesting, and problem-solutions using a T-chart (Jakupcak & Fishbaugh, 1998). Alternatively, study groups could be formed within schools, geographical locations or through interest groups using electronic media (Birchak, Connor, Crawford, Kahn, Kaser, Turner & Short, 1998).

The results of this analysis suggest that further research needs to be undertaken into the effectiveness of the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education and the Theological Orientation Program for Staff as a means of transmission of cultural knowledge to teachers in Queensland Lutheran schools. An interesting research direction would be to contrast perceptions of Queensland teachers with South Australian (Adelaide) teachers.

The third variable examined in this section is the teaching of Christian Studies. While not strictly theological professional development, a teacher of Christian Studies is involved in preparation of lessons and the teaching of God’s Word on a regular basis which may result in higher perceptions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. The results for this variable were presented in Section 7.6.4. Again, as this variable was not statistically significant on any of the six culture scales the results need to be treated tentatively.

However, these results suggest that teachers of Christian Studies had more positive perceptions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. This is not a surprising result given that these teachers are not only studying the Bible and hence, the pre-suppositions of Lutheran education, but are also interacting with students in this area. It is also apparent that schools would consider carefully those teachers who do teach this important subject in Queensland Lutheran schools. It is perhaps surprising that this variable was not statistically significant on any of the six culture scales.

This section has discussed the results concerning theological professional development of teachers. The results demonstrate that these activities have generally had negligible, if not negative, influence on the perceptions of culture of Queensland Lutheran school teachers. Conventional wisdom is that these results are disappointing as the intention of these professional development activities is to assist teachers to more fully understand Lutheran theology and its importance to the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools.

## **8.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

This chapter has discussed the results of this study by drawing on school culture literature and research. In summary, this discussion has developed eight conclusions about cultural perceptions in Queensland Lutheran schools. First, six dimension of culture have been identified for Queensland Lutheran schools: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Quality Christian Education, Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership. These dimensions parallel cultural characteristics of Queensland Catholic schools. Second, these dimensions of culture are supported across Queensland Lutheran schools. Third, perceptions within the different school types of Queensland Lutheran schools vary across the three types of schools. Primary teachers have more positive perceptions of culture than secondary teachers. This is largely due to the nature and organisation of primary schools as against secondary schools. This supports previous research conducted in primary and secondary schools.

Fourth, Lutheran teachers have more positive cultural perceptions than non-Lutheran teachers in the scales Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration and

Worship as Life in Vocation. This supports research conducted in Catholic schools. Fifth, more positive perceptions were recorded for all six culture scales as the percentage of Lutheran teachers increased within a school. Similarly, a higher percentage of Lutheran students also indicated an increase in perceptions on all six culture scales. This supports the concepts of values communities and social capital.

Sixth, perceptions of culture varied amongst stakeholders in Queensland Lutheran schools with senior staff and school council members having most positive perceptions of culture. Seventh, the research demonstrated that current theological professional development has little effect on perceptions of culture indicating these programmes need reviewing to reflect current principles of professional development. Finally critical dimensions of culture for Queensland Lutheran schools were identified as being Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, and Worship as Life in Vocation.

## **CHAPTER NINE**

### **REVIEW AND SYNTHESIS**

#### **9.1 PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH**

The overall purpose of this research was to investigate the organisational culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. The Lutheran Church of Australia, the Queensland Lutheran school system, and individual Queensland Lutheran schools suggest that Lutheran schools in Queensland are characterised by a distinctive organisational culture. However, little or no empirical research has been conducted on this issue. Given that a gap exists within the research literature as to the nature or distinctiveness of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools, this study sought to redress this situation through empirical research. This overall purpose was achieved through five smaller inter-related purposes.

The first purpose was to review Lutheran school literature, not only to contextualise the study, but also to identify major themes from official documents and policies of Queensland Lutheran schools in relation to the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. These themes provided a basis for comparison of the results of the empirical research conducted in this study.

The second purpose was to identify and describe the cultural dimensions of Queensland Lutheran schools. It was hypothesised that a number of identifiable characteristics exist which adequately describe the diversity of Lutheran schools: primary, secondary, and pre-school to year 12 (P-12) schools in rural, provincial city, and urban areas. These cultural dimensions may be shared with other Christian schools, but it was hypothesised that the particular configuration and understanding of the cultural dimensions identified in this research will lead to a greater understanding of the distinctive culture of Lutheran schools in Queensland and beyond.

The third purpose was to operationalise these dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools through a research instrument. Rather than simply identify these dimensions, the research sought to determine how widely these dimensions were shared in Queensland Lutheran schools. This component of the study required the development of a context-specific survey questionnaire based on the dimensions of culture identified in the first stage of the research. It was important that this research instrument be valid, reliable, and economical in terms of the time needed for administration and scoring.

The fourth purpose was to determine how closely these dimensions were shared across Lutheran schools in Queensland. This was achieved through the administration of the context-specific research instrument to stakeholders in Queensland Lutheran schools. This enabled a comparison to be made to determine whether the rhetoric of Lutheran schools of a distinctive culture was shared by stakeholders in Queensland Lutheran schools.

Finally, this research investigated factors which may impact on the culture within different settings. Thus this research sought to identify any difference which may exist in the culture between primary, secondary, and P-12 schools. The research also investigated the effect of school size on the culture of the school. A major focus of the research involved investigating factors which may influence understandings of culture by teachers. These factors included whether the teacher has a Lutheran or other background, the effect of theological professional development, and whether teaching Christian Studies within Lutheran schools affects their understandings of culture. Associated with this was an investigation of the effect different proportions of Lutheran teachers within a Lutheran school may have on overall perceptions of culture within the schools. The effect of differing proportions of Lutheran students within Lutheran schools was another research direction. Finally, this research investigated whether different stakeholders within Queensland Lutheran schools held differing understandings of the culture of the schools.

The remainder of this chapter addresses five important areas. First, the research design for the study is summarised in Section 9.2. Second, Section 9.3 presents answers for each of the research questions which guided the study. Third, Section 9.5 presents conclusions from the research. Fourth, Section 9.5 considers the discussion of the previous chapter and identifies important implications of the study. These implications focus on three areas,

namely: Queensland Lutheran schools, methodology in culture research, and future culture research and are presented in the form of recommendations. The final section of the thesis, Section 9.6, presents a concluding statement.

## **9.2 DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH**

This study was premised on the notion that Queensland Lutheran schools are distinctive due to their unique culture. This culture was conceptualised as different kinds of cultural knowledge (Sackmann, 1985, 1991) which are transmitted to stakeholders in the school community. These different forms of cultural knowledge shape individual's perceptions of the key dimensions of culture of a Lutheran school and the activities which contribute to the formation of this distinctive culture. As schools of the Lutheran Church of Australia, the underlying presuppositions of the school are drawn from the beliefs of the church. This premise has not previously been investigated in any known empirical study. Accordingly, this study was to investigate the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. Pursuant to this goal, a series of research questions were defined (Section 1.5).

This study adopted an overall post-positivist orientation to the research. Complementing this orientation was the adoption of the principles of symbolic interactionism to inform the research data collection and analysis methods. A three stage research program based on these principles was developed to manage the study. Cultural dimensions based on different kinds of cultural knowledge were identified in Stage 1. Data were collected from "key informants" in semi-structured interviews and analysed using analytical induction to identify dimensions of culture and their associated characteristics. These dimensions of culture were the basis for the development of a context-specific instrument which was developed in Stage 2 of the research. The questionnaire was refined so as to display good psychometric properties. Stage 3 involved the administration of this instrument to teachers, senior staff, school council members, and parents and friends executive members in Queensland Lutheran schools. Schools surveyed comprised primary, secondary, and pre-school to year 12 schools. Statistical analyses (mainly multivariate analysis of variance) were performed on the data collected. Results from these analyses were discussed in the light of school culture theory, the literature and context of Lutheran schools, and previous culture research.

### 9.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS ANSWERED

**Research Question 1.** *What are the important dimensions of culture in Lutheran schools in Queensland?*

The first stage of the research design focussed on identifying the important dimensions of culture for Queensland Lutheran schools through interviews of key informants from within the Queensland Lutheran school system. These data led to seven dimensions of culture being identified within the framework of different kinds of cultural knowledge (Sackmann, 1991).

The first cultural dimension identified comprised axiomatic knowledge. Axiomatic knowledge suggests the underlying principles on which the other dimensions are based. This cultural dimension states that:

The presuppositions and foundations for Queensland Lutheran schools are grounded in the theological understandings of the Lutheran Church of Australia.

Two cultural dimensions were identified as dictionary knowledge, which describes the nature of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. Each of two dictionary knowledge dimensions has four characteristics. The first dictionary knowledge cultural dimension identified was Caring, Christ-centred Community. This dimension was described by the characteristics: Forgiveness Acceptance, Growing as Individuals, Family Orientation, and Pastoral Care.

The second dictionary knowledge cultural dimension identified was Quality Christian Education. This dimension was described as: Informed by the Gospel, Striving for Excellence, Holistic Education, and Learning for Life.

Four recipe knowledge dimensions with their associated characteristics were identified. The first recipe knowledge cultural dimension identified was Worship as Celebration.



This dimension was described as: Celebrating Christ, Celebrating Community, and Celebrating Life.

The second recipe knowledge cultural dimension identified was Worship as Life in Vocation. This dimension was described as: Called by God into Vocation, and Service to God in Vocation.

The third recipe cultural dimension identified was Christian Relationships & Interactions. This dimension was described as: Flawed by Sin, Informed by Christ, and Forgiveness Support.

The fourth recipe knowledge cultural dimension identified was Christian Leadership & Management. This dimension was described as: Open Collaborative Leadership, and Stewardship Management.

No cultural dimensions were identified for directory knowledge. Any such cultural dimensions would need to be investigated using research methods outside of the scope of this research.

These seven cultural dimensions represent the important dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools in response to the first research question.

**Research Question 2.** *Is it possible to develop a context specific, valid, reliable, and economic research instrument that assesses the important dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

Apart from the axiomatic dimension of culture, the six other dimensions of culture described in the preceding section (viz. Caring, Christ-centred Community, Quality Christian Education, Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership and Management) formed the basis for the development of a pen and paper questionnaire. This questionnaire, administered to teachers, senior staff, school council members, and parents and friends executive members was refined and validated to its final form as a 30 item questionnaire

with six 5-item scales. During the development of this questionnaire, it proved necessary to change the recipe knowledge dimension Christian Leadership and Management to Christian Leadership to enhance the questionnaire psychometric properties. The psychometric properties of this instrument proved it to be a valid and reliable instrument. Clearly it has been possible to develop a context-specific instrument to assess the important dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools.

**Research Question 3.** *How closely do the research data agree with the rhetoric of a distinctive culture in Queensland Lutheran Schools?*

Overall the results demonstrate that the two dictionary knowledge dimensions: Caring, Christ-centred Community; and Quality Christian Education were strongly supported by the questionnaire sample. The four remaining scales: Worship as Celebration; Worship as Life in Vocation; Christian Relationships and Interactions; and Christian Leadership showed overall support from the questionnaire sample. Thus it can be stated that the research data agree with the rhetoric of Lutheran schools.

**Research Question 4.** *How do the perceptions of culture vary between different groups in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

To further investigate the results of this study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools, six further research questions with cultural dimensions as dependent variables were studied using multivariate analysis. The answers to these research questions are presented in the following sections.

**Research Question 4a.** *To what extent do the perceptions of culture vary between different types of schools (i.e. primary, secondary, P-12)?*

Analysis of data collected from administration of the questionnaire led to two important results. First, perceptions of culture were more positive for primary schools than both secondary and P-12 schools on five culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community; Worship as Celebration; Worship as Life in Vocation; Christian Relationships and Interactions; and Christian Leadership. Second, results for P-12 schools corresponded to

results for primary and secondary schools with teachers in primary sections having more positive perceptions of culture than their secondary colleagues.

These results suggested that the perceptions of culture were affected by the type of school. Primary schools and sections of P-12 schools are more integrated, maintain a sense of balance and are organised to promote relationships resulting in a more positive view of the culture within the school. By contrast secondary schools, and secondary sections of P-12 schools, are characterised by more transient and impersonal relationships with specialisation being an important consideration within the school. This results in less positive perceptions of culture than those in primary schools and primary sections of P-12 schools.

**Research Question 4b.** *To what extent does the size of a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

The results indicate that, as the school size increases, perceptions of culture on all six cultural dimensions become less positive. Thus, size is an important variable which affects perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools. This is an important finding for Queensland Lutheran schools as it suggests that the size of the school attenuates the distinctiveness of Lutheran schools. Implications of this result are presented in Section 9.5.1.

**Research Question 4c.** *To what extent does denominational background of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools? To what extent does the percentage of Lutheran teachers within a school affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

Teachers with a Lutheran background had more positive perceptions of culture than teachers from other backgrounds on three culture scales: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, and Worship as Life in Vocation. Perceptions on all culture scales were more positive as the proportion of Lutheran teachers within a school increased. These results highlighted the importance of the staffing policy of Lutheran

schools with preference being given to Lutheran teachers (Lutheran Church of Australia, 1997b).

**Research Question 4d.** *To what extent does the proportion of Lutheran students affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

Results reported in Section 7.8 indicated that as the proportion of Lutheran students increases, so perceptions of all six culture dimensions become more positive. Of these, three culture dimensions: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Life in Vocation, and Christian Relationships and Interactions were statistically significant for the variation of proportion of Lutheran students.

**Research Question 4e.** *To what extent do the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools vary amongst major stakeholders (i.e. administrators, teachers, students, school councillors and parents and friends members)?*

Major stakeholders within the school held differing perceptions of the culture of the school. Generally senior staff held the most positive perceptions than those respectively of school council members, teachers, and parents and friends executive members.

**Research Question 4f.** *To what extent does theological professional development of teachers affect the perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools?*

Conventional wisdom holds to the belief that professional development results in improvement. However the results of this study indicate that theological professional development activities were shown to have a neutral effect on the perceptions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. This varied between the different types of schools, with theological professional development having a more positive influence in secondary and P-12 schools. This effect was evident for both the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education and the Theological Orientation Program for Staff. Section 9.5 presents recommendations pertaining to this important issue for Queensland Lutheran schools.

#### **9.4 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE RESEARCH**

Notwithstanding the answers to the research questions presented in the previous section, and the discussion of results in Chapter 8, this section presents conclusions arising from the research. This section allows synthesis of the answers to the research questions as well as allowing conclusions to be drawn concerning issues not encompassed within the research questions.

The first major conclusion to this research is that Queensland Lutheran schools do have a distinctive culture which is described by six cultural dimensions: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Quality Christian Education, Worship as Celebration, Worship as Life in Vocation, Christian Relationships and Interactions, and Christian Leadership. These dimensions are shared by the stakeholders in Queensland Lutheran schools. While these cultural dimensions bear similarity to those in Catholic schools, their emphases were derived from Lutheran theology, and the particular configuration of these cultural dimensions contribute to their distinctiveness.

Second, a difference exists in cultural perceptions between primary and secondary schools (and subschools). While these varying perceptions appear to result from organisational differences endemic to the different levels of schooling, it is important that both primary and secondary schools continue to strive to enhance the distinctive culture of Lutheran schools within their organisational constraints. Two particular areas of difference are those of community and worship. Recommendations relating to these two areas are presented in the following section.

The research clearly demonstrated that worship within the school is one of the differences in culture between primary and secondary schools. While not wishing to under estimate the attempts of secondary schools to enhance worship in the life of the school, the more integrated nature of primary education contributes to a more natural approach to worship in the lives of the students. It remains a challenge for secondary schools, where the student population is more diverse and students experience a different curriculum and personal focus, to continue to explore and develop worship practices which secondary

students relate to, and are edified by, to retain this distinctive dimension in the culture of Lutheran schools.

One contention of this thesis is that worship is one factor which contributes to the sense of community within the school. This partly explains the difference of perceptions in primary and secondary schools towards community. The very nature of these two levels of education contribute to this difference, given the more structured environment of the secondary school with its faculty culture, in comparison with the class teacher with the one class of students. The issues of pastoral care and the involvement of families are important issue for both primary and secondary schools in enhancing this cultural dimension.

Third, school size is a significant issue for Lutheran schools. The results suggest an inverse relationship between a strong, positive culture and the size of a school. This conclusion does not necessarily indicate that schools should reduce student enrolments. Rather special consideration needs to be given as to how the culture of the school may be enhanced through sub-schools or alternative structures which enable a *gemeinschaft* community to be developed within the Christian framework of the school.

Fourth, the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools reflects a priority to a quality education. This is acknowledged as an important component of school regardless of the level of schooling, size of the school, or the position or denominational background of the participant in the research. It was also apparent from the interview data that quality education is interpreted differently in different schools. This apparent difference reflects individual schools responding to perceived needs within their individual communities. Simultaneously, interview data did express some concern and frustration in providing a quality education across the spectrum of need within the community.

Fifth, the concept of vocation is one which was not perceived highly. The Lutheran church promotes service as an ideal, yet this does not appear to be a high priority from the results of the survey. Again perceptions were more positive in primary schools than secondary schools. Possible reasons to explain this disparity include the greater proportion of

Lutheran teachers in primary schools than secondary schools, and the different worship arrangements for primary and secondary teachers.

Sixth, teachers from a Lutheran background perceived three of the culture dimensions more positively than teachers from other denominational backgrounds. These scales, which reflect distinctive aspects of Lutheran theology are: Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, and Worship as Life in Vocation. It was concluded that it is important that as many teachers and other staff as possible, either have a Lutheran background, or are provided with ongoing professional development to develop these distinctive Lutheran understandings.

Seventh, the theological professional development currently offered within Queensland Lutheran schools does not have any significant impact on perceptions of culture by teachers. The previous paragraph highlights the importance of Lutheran theological understandings for all staff of Lutheran schools in enhancing the cultural understandings of staff. It is important that this professional development reflect current best practice and that it contain both declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge (Abdal-Haqq, 1996; Bull & Buechler, 1995; Nwosu1998).

Eighth, perceptions of leadership displayed the greatest variation across the sample who responded to the questionnaire. The results of the research can be interpreted to suggest that the activities within the school have the greatest effect on perceptual understandings of culture within a school. The literature suggests strong links between leadership and development of culture (Ott, 1989; Schein, 1992). The professional development of school leadership personnel in understanding, assessing, and developing school cultural perceptions of all stakeholders within the school is an imperative for the strengthening of each school's culture.

Finally, the Lutheran Schools Culture Inventory has proven to be a valid, reliable, and economic instrument to assess the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. This instrument will prove useful to schools to assess the culture within individual schools. School leaders need to demonstrate a preparedness to use this instruments, and other similar instruments, in managing the culture within their schools.

## **9.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE RESEARCH**

The purpose of this section is to consider the key implications of this study, to suggest important policy directions for Queensland Lutheran schools, and to suggest substantive directions for future school culture research. Section 9.5.1 presents recommendations for the future policy direction of Queensland Lutheran schools, Section 9.5.2 presents recommendations for methodology for future culture research, while Section 9.5.3 presents recommendations for future directions of school culture research.

### **9.5.1 Recommendations for Queensland Lutheran schools**

The first implication from this study relates to one of the dimensions identified previously (Section 8.6) as being critical to Queensland Lutheran schools: Caring, Christ-centred Community. The four characteristics of this dimension are: forgiveness acceptance, growing as individuals, family orientation and pastoral care. These characteristics provide a broad conceptual outline of this dimension but lack specificity. Each of these characteristics are open to interpretation and greater understanding of the implications of these characteristics is needed. Terms such as pastoral care and Christian community require further explication in the context of Queensland Lutheran schools. Research needs to be conducted to further understand the richness and diversity of the various manifestations of the uniqueness of community in Queensland Lutheran schools. Dissemination of results from this research will assist stakeholders within Queensland Lutheran schools to appreciate the richness and diversity of community in their schools and to consider further methods by which it can be further enriched. Accordingly, it is recommended that case study research be undertaken into the dictionary knowledge dimension of Caring, Christ-centred Community and its associated characteristics: forgiveness acceptance, growing as individuals, family orientation, and pastoral care (*Recommendation 1*).

Worship as Celebration is a dimension of culture important to Queensland Lutheran schools. Evident from this research is the disparity in perceptions between primary, and secondary and P-12 schools. This difference was evidenced between senior staff, teachers, school council members and parents and friends executive members. As this study was



correlational in nature, it was unable to determine causal links. However it is hypothesised that there is a strong causal link between the worship life of the school, both formal and informal, and the two dictionary knowledge dimensions, especially the Caring, Christ-centred Community dimension. As a dimension critical to Queensland Lutheran schools, research is therefore recommended into the worship patterns of staff, students, and parents and friends in Queensland Lutheran schools to document and analyse the worship life in all schools. Furthermore, it is important that these results be shared across all schools and that a task force be established amongst Queensland Lutheran schools to assist schools and teachers in worship planning (*Recommendation 2*).

Worship as Life in Vocation is another important cultural dimension in Queensland Lutheran schools which contributes significantly to the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. However, the scale mean scores for the whole group were the second lowest with the second highest scale standard deviation. Again, there was disparity between the results for primary, and secondary and P-12 schools. Thus, the cultural dimension, Worship as Life in Vocation, also requires further research to understand the differences in perceptions between primary, secondary, and P-12 schools, and to develop strategies to assist schools in enhancing stakeholder's understanding and perceptions of this culture dimension (*Recommendation 3*).

It is clear from the results discussed in Section 8.4 that the six dimensions of culture identified within this research are shared across all Queensland Lutheran schools. However, it has also been established that the three different types of schools within the Queensland Lutheran school system have varying perceptions of these dimensions. While this research identified these variations, the scope of this research is such that it is only possible to suggest the causes for these variations. However, one highly probable factor is the organisation and structure of the school. Discussion in Section 8.5.1 hypothesised that primary schools displayed more *gemeinschaft* tendencies as opposed to the more *gesellschaft* nature of secondary schools. These structures are pervasive underlying forces in determining cultural manifestations within the schools. As school culture is such an important and underlying factor in all schools, research is recommended to determine whether the differences in culture due to the differences in organisational structures in schools result in changes to the classroom and school environments, the academic,

sporting, and cultural outcomes of the students, and the manifestation of Christian belief within the school (*Recommendation 4*).

The discussion in Sections 8.5.1 to 8.5.6 drew attention to a number of variables which impact on perceptions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools. One of the variables which displayed major differences in perceptions was the type of schools. Discussion above recommends that the differences due to structure and organisation in the different types of schools be researched. However whatever the structure, another important future research direction relates to the formation of cultural understandings within the schools. This aspects of leadership is one which is vital for leaders within Queensland Lutheran schools to continue to maintain the distinctive culture of the schools. It is important that those understandings of cultural formation are communicated to senior staff to assist them in assisting teachers, school council members, and parents to develop important cultural understandings relevant to Queensland Lutheran schools. It is therefore recommended that a study be commissioned on the subject of cultural formation and that the results be widely disseminated to assist Queensland Lutheran schools to retain their distinctive culture (*Recommendation 5*).

While the scale Christian Leadership did not display significant statistical difference on the variables in this study, results indicate the largest range and standard deviation of scale mean scores to be on this particular scale. As noted above, leadership is an important contributor to the formation of cultural cognitions within Queensland Lutheran schools. This research raises the question as to whether there is a particular leadership style suited to Queensland Lutheran schools. Patton (1990) delineates extreme case sampling as one of the many purposeful sampling strategies. Statistical analysis can be used to identify those schools which are extreme cases on the scale Christian Leadership (Dorman, 1994). An important development of this study is to undertake qualitative research in those schools selected through extreme case sampling on the culture scale Christian Leadership to determine the style of leadership perceived to be most appropriate for Queensland Lutheran schools. (*Recommendation 6*)

The effect of size of school has important implications for Queensland Lutheran schools. While these results need to be treated tentatively due to the nature of the sample,

indications are that as school size increases, the perceptions of culture become less positive. The literature (e.g. Raywid, 1995, 1996; Royal & Rossi, 1997)) suggests that one method of overcoming the effects of a large school is to form sub-schools within the overall school organisation. Sub-schools need to exhibit the characteristics as outlined by Raywid (1996). The largest schools within the Queensland Lutheran school system are all P-12 schools. However these all operate with sub-schools: generally a junior, middle, and senior school. These sub-schools indicate one strategy employed to reduce the effects of school size by providing continuity of place within the sub-schools and attempting to make the size more manageable within these sub-schools. The effectiveness of these sub-schools needs to be reviewed in light of research by Raywid (1996) who suggests that these sub-schools need to display two essential characteristics: an autonomous organisation, and distinctiveness so that students and teachers may identify with, and be affiliated to, the sub-school. Autonomy is an important issue which warrants investigation in regard to issues including: staffing, resourcing, curriculum development and implementation, communication with parents, and other school/parent lines of communication. This is an area which requires further research and discussion within Queensland Lutheran schools. Thus it is recommended that detailed case study research be undertaken into the effects of school size on the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. This research is to investigate various strategies to enable large schools to function as separate smaller sub-schools and the relative effectiveness of these strategies in relation to the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools (*Recommendation 7*).

The relationship of Queensland Lutheran primary schools to secondary schools requires further investigation. One popular model for development has been the large pre-school to year 12 school on one campus. While this model presents a number of advantages for continuity of place as well as economies of scale, the negative effects of large size need to be considered. An alternative model, for instance a secondary school surrounded by a number of small primary schools, may present important benefits for maintenance of cultural understandings in Queensland Lutheran schools. Accordingly, it is recommended that the Queensland Lutheran Schools Department investigate different models of provision of P-12 education apart from the single campus school. Consideration in this investigation needs to centre on the effect of large size on the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools (*Recommendation 8*).

Results for the variables percentage of Lutheran teachers and denomination both suggest that the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools is enhanced by Lutheran teachers within the schools, particularly for the scales Caring, Christ-centred Community, Worship as Celebration, and Worship as Life in Vocation. These results suggest that it is important for schools to continue to employ suitably qualified Lutheran teachers when available. However this has been difficult, especially in secondary schools. Accordingly it is recommended that the Lutheran Church of Australia, Queensland District School Department continues to promote teaching within Lutheran schools as an important and rewarding vocation and continues to develop opportunities for Lutherans to study within initial teacher education programs which include study of important Lutheran theological understandings (*Recommendation 9*).

The results of this research with regard to theological professional development of teachers showed little, if not negative effect, resulting from teachers completing formal theological courses offered through Lutheran schools. This result is in direct contrast to the expectations of such professional development: that teachers will increase their understanding of the theological underpinnings of Lutheran education and their application within a Lutheran school. It is quite clear from the results of this research that this is not having an effect on perceptions of culture within Queensland Lutheran schools. Thus it is recommended that an immediate investigative study be conducted to ascertain teachers' perceptions of the two courses (Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education and Theological Orientation program for Staff) and that a full review be conducted of these two courses. Furthermore, other methods of professional development need to be investigated to ensure that all staff in Queensland Lutheran schools receive adequate on-going theological professional development (*Recommendation 10*).

### **9.5.2 Recommendations for Methodology in School Culture Research**

Based on the conduct of this research, three implications for methodology in future school culture research are suggested. 3.5.1 discussed the literature on dimensions of culture noting authors (Deal & Kennedy, 1992; Kilman & Saxton, 1983; Schein, 1992) who proposed universal dimensions of culture while others (Bryk, Lee, and Holland, 1993; Queensland Catholic Education Commission, 1978) developed context-specific cultural

dimensions. This study adopted the approach of identifying context-specific cultural dimensions for Queensland Lutheran schools. These cultural dimensions account for the distinctiveness of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. The results of the study indicate the validity of this approach which has resulted in a deeper understanding of Lutheran schools and which has facilitated the development of a context-specific instrument based on these dimensions. Thus it is recommended that this approach of identifying context-specific cultural dimensions be encouraged for future culture research, especially for those schools which purport to have a distinctive culture due to their philosophical basis (*Recommendation 11*).

Secondly, this study has demonstrated that the methodological approach used in this study is appropriate for the study of school culture. This study utilised a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to identify key dimensions of culture, to develop and validate context-specific instruments and to survey a sample of stakeholders in Queensland Lutheran schools. On the one hand, the quantitative methods used allowed data to be collected from a large number of sites. On the other hand the qualitative methods allowed for understandings and meanings to be developed in the identification of the dimensions of culture. Recommendations from Section 9.5.1 suggest further research directions arising from this study which would utilise a variety of qualitative approaches. While the literature suggests that culture be studied through qualitative methods, (e.g. Ott, 1989; Schein, 1985, 1992), this study has shown that a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods adds to the breadth and depth of data collected. Accordingly, it is recommended that encouragement be given for further studies in school culture research to combine quantitative and qualitative data collection methods (*Recommendation 12*).

Unlike other cultural studies (e.g. Flynn, 1993) this study did not research students' understandings of cultural perceptions of culture. As the education of Queensland Lutheran schools is focussed on the students of the schools, it is important that these perceptions are researched to gain greater understandings of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools. Although this may present some difficulties with primary students, an important future research direction is to study student's perceptions of culture. Although a long term project, an important and informative research direction would be to track a

number of students through primary and secondary school and into adult life. This could form the basis of a longitudinal study of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools (*Recommendation 13*).

### **9.5.3 Recommended Substantive Directions for Future School Culture Research**

Little research has previously been conducted in Lutheran schools in Australia or America. In particular, research into the culture of Lutheran schools is almost non-existent. Based on the research reported in this thesis, the following suggestions represent interesting possibilities for future culture research.

The present study identified dimensions of culture in Queensland Lutheran schools and then surveyed stakeholders to determine the extent to which their perceptions were similar to those dimensions. Lutheran schools are purported to have a similar culture across Australia and hence schools in other states in Australia should also show alignment with the dimensions of culture identified in this study. However, the historical development of Lutheran schools varies from state to state (Section 2.3.1) which may introduce contextual factors into the culture of these schools. Therefore, replication studies should be undertaken, especially in South Australia, to determine whether the culture of Lutheran schools is homogeneous across Australia (*Recommendation 14*).

Additionally replication studies should be conducted on an international basis. Lutheran schools from the United States of America, especially those of the Missouri Synod, have influenced Lutheran schools in Australia. As the Lutheran Confessions form the doctrinal basis in most Lutheran churches, it would be worthwhile to conduct replication studies in Lutheran schools in international settings, particularly in Lutheran schools in North America (*Recommendation 15*).

Another useful direction of research similar to the present study is the investigation of school culture in different types of Australian independent schools which have different philosophical bases. For example, investigating Anglican schools which tend to be more exclusive, and Catholic schools which are regarded as having traditional values regarding gospel values and discipline and family values in comparison to Lutheran schools would

be important for all stakeholders in the schools. The study of Catholic schools would be particularly interesting as (like Lutheran schools) they explicitly espouse Christian beliefs although from a different philosophical basis (Flynn, 1993; Janetzki, 1985) (*Recommendation 16*).

## 9.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study of Queensland Lutheran schools was motivated by the notion that Queensland Lutheran schools have a distinctive culture developed from the theological beliefs of the Lutheran Church of Australia. Rhetoric from the Lutheran church and schools suggests that this distinctive culture is exhibited in its schools. Anecdotal data suggest that a number of factors mitigate against this culture: enterprise bargaining and industrialisation of the work place, lessening effect of the church in today's society, and the pressures of society on schooling today.

A literature search revealed a lacuna in empirical studies related to the culture of Lutheran schools both in Australia and overseas. This thesis represents an exploratory investigation of the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools to, in part, initiate a literature and research basis for this important topic. It was also considered timely to examine the claims of distinctiveness of Lutheran schools as the church and schools of the Lutheran Church of Australia grapple with change of society on the eve of a new millennium.

School culture is an often used phrase, but one for which there is no agreed definition. The three perspectives represented in the literature: holistic, cognitive and adaptational (Chapter 2) present different views of the elusive concept of school culture. This study adopted the cognitive approach and utilised the theory of different kinds of cultural knowledge as proposed by Sackmann (1991). The first stage of the research identified important dimensions of culture of Queensland Lutheran schools which were then operationalised in the form of a survey questionnaire, an important product of this thesis.

Results from the administration of this instrument to senior staff, teachers, school council members, and parent and friends executive committee members suggest there is an overall agreement to the six dimensions of culture which form the basis for the questionnaire.

This is an encouraging result for Queensland Lutheran schools. However it is also clear that other results from this study indicate that the culture of Queensland Lutheran schools is affected by the following variables: type of school (e.g. primary, secondary, and preschool to year 12), the size of the school, and the percentage of Lutheran teachers and students in the school. These are important results for administrators and policy makers in Queensland Lutheran schools to consider in order to optimise the culture of the schools. Also of importance is the result that the two formal theological professional development courses currently offered have a negligible effect on the cultural perceptions of participants. This is an area for serious review.

It is the contention of this thesis that school culture is a pervading factor in all schools, contributing to the effectiveness of schools in achieving their overall educational aims. It is an imperative for schools to carefully evaluate the culture of their schools in light of this research and the aims of the school for the church and for society. Lutheran schools seek to serve parents through provision of an education which prepares students for life in society and in the church. As Queensland Lutheran schools come to the end of 25 years of growth and as they await the developments of the new millennium, it is important that all stakeholders within the school are challenged to consider those fundamental assumptions about life and society which impact on the educational importance of all schools. Lutheran schools have an opportunity to make a unique and important contribution to education in Australia by offering a curriculum which focuses on all that it means to be a child of God.

Lutheran schools have been present in Australia since 1838. Since those early days of immigrants establishing schools as they adapted to a new life in Australia, Lutheran schools have faced many challenges. However perhaps their greatest challenge is to remain faithful to their mission. The legacy of Luther is to proclaim the truth of God's Word clearly in its truth and purity, even in times of debate and conflict, and to glorify God for the grace and love with which He continues to bless His creation. Queensland Lutheran schools have developed a distinctive culture which reflects this legacy. It is hoped that this research may enhance its development in some small way.



## APPENDIX 1

### LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA POLICY ON CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Adopted by General Convention (Horsham Victoria, 1972) as a program statement and present general guide.

#### *What is Christian Education?*

The church believes that Christian education involves and concerns all its members at every stage of their life, from baptism to the grave. It defines Christian education as all those influences, activities, institutions which have the aim to produce the harmonious development of the whole of a Christian's gifts and endowments for the glory of God through their use in the service of His fellowman in society. The church in Christian education has the particular purpose of transmitting to all its members its faith, life, and ideals, and seeks the wholehearted approval of all its members for the things it holds dear, and their willing co-operation in the bringing of its life to others. The church's treasure is above all the salvation that comes from God and is meant for all mankind. This treasure is tied to the pure preaching of the Gospel and the right administration of the Sacraments. The church is committed to its nature and its constitution to the Lutheran Confessions as a true exposition of the Gospel and the proper use of the Sacraments.

#### *Agencies of Christian Education*

In principle, the church should make use of every means available for the nurture of its members, every means, that is, that lies within its power from time to time. Among those agencies that might be mentioned are the following: Sunday schools, including all-age Sunday schools, vacation Bible schools, Saturday schools, church schools at various levels and the Christian home. It should also be alert to new possibilities that present themselves from time to time.

However, among the agencies available, some are more basic than others, and others present special problems and particular comments on these are called for.

### *The Home*

The Christian home is the primary and fundamental agency for the education of the members of the church. In the Christian home all those processes which contribute to the growth of the Christian in all the dimensions of his personality are naturally harmonised. No matter what other agencies are made use of, the home remains the essential one. This is so much the case that, if the home fails in its educative task, all the other agencies will likewise fail in great part, if not wholly. The preservation and fostering of Christian homes must, therefore, be one of the paramount concern of the church and especially its pastors.

### *Schools*

When and where formal education for the Christian must extend beyond the home, the church sees the church school as that institution which provides the most complete education for the whole Christian man. The church school most closely approximates and is the most natural extension of that harmonious and integrated education which the home provides. The church believes that where through unavoidable circumstances the processes of education are divorced so that part is carried out by the State and part by the church, the church has the special responsibility of using its other agencies as fully as possible. In particular, it must try to ensure that members grow in their awareness of those dimensions of the truth about the nature of man, his responsibility, and his ultimate destiny which cannot be present in a State system of education.

Where the means are available, the church therefore favours the establishing and maintaining of Lutheran kindergartens, primary schools and secondary colleges. Extensions into the tertiary level, except for the specific training of pastors, teachers, and other church workers would at this time involve resources which church does not possess. The objectives of such schools in so far as they relate to the individual, must always include all dimensions of education necessary for the growth of the whole person, education for a rich and meaningful life in society through the proper development of natural endowments and the transmission of all that is best in our culture, and nurture through the Means of Grace. No dimension of education should be lacking lest the school forfeit the right to exist either as a school or as Lutheran.

The nature of education involves the dimensions not only of personal growth but also community growth. For Christian education, two communities are involved, the special community of the redeemed, the church, and the civic community. The objectives of church schools should therefore include the consolidating and strengthening of the church also through the fostering of the potential leadership within the church, (pastors, teachers, etc.) and the promotion of the welfare of society in general by providing it with responsible Christian citizens equipped to serve its best ends.

Schools conducted by the church must face the co-existence with the State school system. The State school system is not to be denigrated or despised by the church, but is to be seen as part of the good which God bestows upon us through the State. The establishment of church schools, however, does involve the thought that in very essential and basic respects the education provided by the state falls short of what the church seeks to achieve in Christian education. On the other hand, the presence of such a system of education puts the church under obligation on its part not to fall short of the standards that are set by the State education system.

The foregoing observation points to the difficulties that the conducting of Christian schools must meet and also to the conditions that must be met by a church which makes Christian schools a part of its programme. These include the following:

- (1) The necessary teachers at all levels must be recruited and given an adequate academic and theological training. "Adequate academic training" means that which is demanded by the parallel State education of its teachers from time to time; "adequate theological training" will, of course, be determined by the church itself.
- (2) The church must see to the continuing welfare of its teachers and a continuing high standard of teaching. In-service training should be offered; conditions of work should be as attractive as possible; salaries should be commensurate with the services required and given; a continuing sense of vocation should be fostered by an evident concern for and proper honouring of the members of the teaching force.
- (3) While provisions may be made for the enrolling of non-Lutheran pupils and for the employment of non-Lutheran teachers, the Lutheran and Christian character of a school cannot be preserved where the proportion of non-Lutheran in both categories or in either category becomes too large. What the proper proportion is,

cannot be fixed mathematically but the majority in any case should be Lutheran, and the governing authority (headmaster, school council) must naturally be Lutheran also. Besides, no teacher or child should be accepted or tolerated who in life and action continually rejects what the school stands for. Particular attention should be paid to this matter by the headmaster concerned when a child is enrolled or a teacher appointed.

- (4) Where government aid is given without conditions affecting the basic purpose of the Christian school, it may be received with both good conscience and gratitude. However, the church must be alive to the possibilities of increased government control with increased financial dependence upon the government. An independent spirit must go hand in hand with the desire to maintain an independent church school, so that, in principle, the Christian school should be prepared to function without government aid.

*Christian Schools and the Church's Total Programme*

The establishment and maintaining of Christian schools should not be set in opposition to other ventures of the church, as, for example, its mission programme, for in various ways schools further the church's overall programme. However, some measure of co-ordination with, and integration into the whole programme of the church must be brought about and correct balance maintained.

## APPENDIX 2

### STATEMENT OF FACTS CONCERNING THE POLICIES AND PRACTICES OF LUTHERAN SCHOOLS

#### 1. *The scope and nature of education in Lutheran Schools*

Education in its fullest sense involves the whole man for the whole of life.

Education which involves life in its totality must of necessity include or assume either explicitly or implicitly some form of philosophy of life arising out of some belief system. In Lutheran schools that philosophy of life is the Christian faith as understood by the Lutheran Church.

Education in Lutheran schools therefore involves both general education, that is, education that is common to schools in general, and education in the Christian Faith.

#### 2. *Basic reasons why the Lutheran Church establishes and maintains schools*

Lutheran schools are maintained:

- a) For the benefit of the child by taking into consideration the needs of the child in terms of the whole dimension of its identity, including the religious.
- b) For the benefit of parents by assisting parents, both Christian and non-Christian, in their desire and right to have that kind of general education for their children which covers life in its totality through the integration of religious values with general learning. Such freedom of choice is in line with Article 26 (3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:  
  
Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that should be given to their children.
- c) For the benefit of the Church by helping the Church to carry out its responsibility in nurturing its young in the Christian Faith, believing that the Church school is one of the best agencies to this end.
- d) For the benefit of the State -

- (i) By strengthening and maintaining the quality of life of the nation. As the quality of life of a people is dependent not only on technological skills, but also on cultural excellence and common moral values, and as cultural and ethical values have their roots in a belief system, Lutheran schools contribute towards quality of life by strengthening that religious faith which has formed and undergirds our culture and value system, namely the Christian Faith.
- (ii) By allowing for plurality in our society, and thus safeguarding the element of freedom and inhibiting the progress of a totalitarian philosophy of life and therefore also of education.

### **3. *Basic aims of Lutheran schools, and policies which flow from these aims***

The aims of Lutheran schools can be divided into those which involve general education and those which involve specific education in the Christian Faith.

#### **3.1 *Aims of general education***

- a) To nurture each child so that it can fulfil its potential as a whole person and live a rich and meaningful life both as an individual and as a member of society.
- b) To promote the well-being of the State by providing it with citizens who, through the development of knowledge and skills together with a sense of integrity and responsibility, are equipped to serve its best ends.
- c) To transmit all that is best in our culture, both that which has been inherited and that which is being created.

#### ***Policies and practices which flow from the above aim***

- 1) Lutheran schools regard it as essential that standards in all major subject areas be at least equal with those prevailing in other school systems in the community.

- 2) Lutheran schools maintain a co-operative relationship with other school systems in the community by participating in curriculum experimentation and initiation, by sharing facilities and expertise by making themselves available to the tertiary institutions for the training of student teachers, and the like.
- 3) It is required that the teachers who staff the schools shall have secured their qualifications through the prescribed courses obtaining at the respective Colleges of Advanced Education or through the available degree or diploma courses offered at tertiary institutions in the respective States.
- 4) Lutheran schools welcome and encourage community involvement, so that they can more adequately meet the needs of the community as well as the needs of young people as they prepare for life in the community.

In-so-far, then, as Lutheran schools are sharing with the State the responsibility of general education and are committed to do as effectively as possible both from the point of view of the well-being of the individual and of the State, Lutheran schools accept financial aid from the State additional to the contributions of the parents and the Church.

### **3.2    *Aims of specific education in the Christian Faith and policies and practices which flow from these aims***

- a) To nurture the individual child as a child of God in the Christian Faith.
- b) To consolidate and strengthen the Christian Church and, in particular the Lutheran Church through the fostering of potential leadership within the Church and the development of an informed and committed laity.
- c) To pass onto children, whether Christian or non-Christian, an understanding of and appreciation for the Christian heritage which is so much a part of our country's cultural heritage.

***Policies and practices which flow from the above aims***

***1) Church Relatedness***

Primary schools are controlled by school councils, of which, according to their constitution, parents are predominantly the members. Secondary schools are controlled by councils appointed by the Church in the respective State.

While schools have a high degree of autonomy within the general policies laid down by the Lutheran Church, the Church maintains general administrative ties with them, recognising that these ties are essential to the continued maintenance of their specific identity and purpose.

***2) Curriculum***

All students are required to attend religious exercises and religious instruction in the teachings of Scripture as understood by the Lutheran Church. However, respect is shown for other faiths, and it is not the policy of the schools deliberately to lead children into the membership of the Lutheran Church unless this is requested by children and parents. Parents who elect to send their children to Lutheran schools are made aware of these policies.

The Christian Faith is not restricted to the religion period and to religious exercises only, but is made the basic philosophy of all subjects and is shown to be relevant to all dimensions of life.

***3) Staffing***

Because the attitude to and understanding of the Christian Faith is influenced not only by what happens in religious exercises and the formal religion class, but by all that happens in the life of the school, as far as possible teachers are appointed who are practising adherents of the Lutheran Church. However, as competency in the required area of teaching is always an essential criterion of selection, non-Lutheran teachers are



the following: 39% of teachers in secondary schools and 5% in primary schools are non-Lutheran.

Lutheran schools are working towards the ideal of having more and more teachers complete a course in Christian education either through a one-year post-graduate course at Lutheran Teachers College or through in-service studies.

Currently 12% of secondary teachers and 41% of primary teachers have completed such a course.

#### **4) *Student enrolment***

Policies relating to admission vary in some details. However the general principles and criteria which are taken into account include:

- (i) Preference to children from Lutheran homes (provided early application has been made by a specified date), but at the same time an openness to accept the children of any parents who are willing to accept the aims of the school.
- (ii) Every effort to accept subsequent members of any family, whether Lutheran or non-Lutheran, from which a child has been enrolled.
- (iii) The length of time for which the application has been lodged.

All students are required to conform to the religious policies and practices of the school. The school cannot tolerate a development where its Christian aims are nullified by an over-riding antithesis on the part of parents and students. The doors of Lutheran schools are open to those from whatever background who are prepared to enter willingly and fully into the life of the school as a Christian school.

The current percentages of Lutheran students to non-Lutheran students is the following:

- (i) in primary schools - Lutheran, 63.66%; non-Lutheran, 36.34%
- (ii) in secondary schools - Lutheran, 51.89%; non-Lutheran, 48.11%.

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **THE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF AUSTRALIA AND ITS SCHOOLS**

#### **1. The Lutheran School**

- 1.1 The Lutheran Church of Australia has a variety of agencies through which it carries out its ministry and mission of proclaiming the Word of God and administering the sacraments in accordance with the Confessions of the church.
- 1.2 One such agency is the Lutheran school. The Lutheran Church of Australia, through its congregations and districts, owns and operates kindergartens, primary schools, and secondary schools in order to make available to its members and to others in the community a formal education in which the gospel of Jesus Christ informs all learning and teaching, all human relationships, and all activities in the school. Thus through its schools the church deliberately and intentionally bears witness to students, parents, teachers, friends, and all who make up the world of the school.
- 1.3 Specifically, through its schools the Lutheran Church of Australia offers a program of Christian education which
  - serves students, parents, the church, the community, and the government, by providing a quality education for the whole person;
  - strives for excellence in the development and creative use by all students of their God-given gifts;
  - equips students for a life of service to God in the church and the community;
  - provides an alternative to a secularistic, humanistic philosophy and practice of education; and
  - includes, as a core part of the program, a Christian Studies curriculum which has been developed deliberately and consciously from the perspective of confessional Lutheranism;
  - involves the school community in regular Christian worship.

## **2. The Lutheran School and Education**

- 2.1 The Lutheran school is committed to serving its students by providing a quality program of education which meets the requirements of the state, responds to the needs of its students and develops their God-given abilities as fully as possible within the resource limits of the school community;
- 2.2 The principal functions as educational leader in the school and is responsible to the governing body for the total program of the school;
- 2.3 The Lutheran school operates from an underlying holistic world view which recognises the role of both God's revelation and human reason, and into which all learning and teaching is integrated.

## **3. The Lutheran School and Worship**

- 3.1 The Lutheran Church of Australia confesses that worship of God is central to the life of the people of God in mission to the world of the school. Within the school such worship may be:
  - public worship of the faithful, involving the ministry of word and sacraments. This worship is open to all and will be organised to meet the needs of the school and the wider community.
  - School or class devotional exercises which are part of the regular program of the whole school and which in different ways involve all students and staff.
- 3.2 The Lutheran Church of Australia urges and encourages schools and local congregations to work together in worship and mission in the world of the school.
  - The school pastor serves as worship leader. He oversees and encourages staff, students, and others as they serve as leaders in class and school devotions. He feeds and equips the people of God for service and leads them in mission.
  - Christian principals, teachers, and other staff are key persons in ministry and mission to the world of the school. They participate in worship and lead it when appropriate. They model the Christian lifestyle, and uphold Christian values.

- The school worshipping community works in mission together with surrounding congregations. It has a formal link with the Lutheran Church of Australia, either as a distinct worshipping group or as an extension of a local congregation.

#### **4. The Lutheran School and Responsibilities of the Lutheran Church of Australia**

- The Lutheran Church of Australia commits itself to the promotion and support of its schools by
  - assisting and encouraging congregations, associations, and districts to provide for the Christian education of members, in keeping with the command of Christ;
  - providing means and opportunities for the professional theological pre-service and in-service education of teachers;
  - encouraging congregations and parishes to follow-up and minister to the contacts made in the wider community by the school and to involve the members of the school community in their ministry and mission of the congregation;
  - working with the schools to assist them to realise their full potential as mission agencies of the church.

#### **5. The Lutheran School and Responsibilities of Governing Councils and Principals**

- The Lutheran Church of Australia expects the governing councils and principals of its schools to
  - staff its schools with skilled and registered educators who are able to uphold the teachings of the church and model the Christian life-style. In the first instance it seeks to use the services of active members of the church. Beyond that, the church seeks to staff its schools with people who are active Christians from other denominations willing to uphold the Lutheran teaching of the school.
  - support and encourage in-service training - including theological training - for the professional development of teachers;
  - promote the ministry of the school in the local congregation, zone, or district;

- help the local congregation, zone, or district to use the school as a means of establishing and maintaining contact with the wider community;
- actively pursue every opportunity for maximising the school's effectiveness as a mission agency of the church.

## **6. The Lutheran School and Parents**

- The Lutheran Church of Australia acknowledges that parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. As a church, through its schools, it therefore seeks to support Christian parents in the fulfilment of their responsibilities to their children. Furthermore, the church, through its schools, offers to all parents the option of a Christian education for their children.

## **7. The Lutheran School and Government**

- 7.1 The Lutheran Church of Australia acknowledges that the State has accepted the responsibility for providing schooling for all its citizens. This education is compulsory, free, and secularistic in its orientation.
- 7.2 The Lutheran Church of Australia further acknowledges that the government permits non-government authorities, such as the churches, to operate schools, provided that they meet certain government-determined criteria, such as curriculum and health and safety requirements.
- 7.3 The Lutheran Church of Australia will continue to own and operate its schools in accordance with government requirements, provided that meeting these requirements does not bring the church into conflict with the Word of God or the Confessions of the church.
- 7.4 The Lutheran Church of Australia will continue to accept financial assistance from the government under conditions determined by the government from time to time, provided that the confessional position of the church is in no way or at any time compromised.

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **THE TEACHER IN THE LUTHERAN SCHOOL**

The Lutheran school is an agency of the Lutheran Church of Australia through which the Church seeks to carry out its ministry and mission to the people of Australia.

The specific ministry and mission of the Lutheran school is to provide quality formal education in which the Word of God informs all learning, teaching and activities and where forgiveness and grace govern the relationships of the members of the school community.

In order to fulfil this ministry and mission the teacher in the Lutheran school, as well as being a qualified and competent educator, will be one who is committed to the Christian faith as confessed by the Lutheran Church, is willing to identify with, uphold and promote the Lutheran ethos of the school and will exemplify and model the Christian life-style in and beyond the school.

The Church will determine from time to time what specific qualifications it requires of teachers to equip them for this ministry and mission of the Church in Lutheran schools. It encourages local school authorities to commission teachers who are appointed to service in a Lutheran school. Every teacher appointed to service who continues to meet the requirements determined by the Church will be an Accredited or Provisionally Accredited teacher in the service of the Church.

## APPENDIX 5

### THE INTERVIEW GUIDE

Data Type	Questions
Background	What is your experience in Lutheran Schools?
Demographic	What experience have you had in other schools? What is your religious (Lutheran) background? What study have you completed on Lutheran Education e.g. LTC, TOPS? Do you teach Christian Studies? Do you have home class responsibilities?
Reportorial	What do you believe are the distinctive characteristics of Lutheran Schools?
Dictionary	What is important in an authentic Lutheran School?
Knowledge	What are the essential aspects of a Lutheran School? What are some events which occur through the year which are important to the ethos and culture of the school? What do you believe is the mission of this school? What do you think are the essential characteristics for a person to be able to work at this school?
Recipe Knowledge	What is distinctive about the way things are done (should be done) around here? Describe an experience which you believe typifies the way things are done in a Lutheran School. If something goes wrong, how is this handled? Is this how you believe issues should be handled in a Lutheran School? What do you believe are the reasons for the above? What problems do you see in this school? What should be done to improve this school? How do you feel about the way things are handled at this school?
Axiomatic	What do you think are the fundamental beliefs of the school?
Knowledge	What do you particularly value in a Lutheran School? What is the most important belief of this school? How do you feel about working in a Lutheran School?
Perceptions of different groupings	How do you think administrators, pastors, students etc see this? What do you think administrators, pastors, school councillors see as important to the school?
Devil's Advocate	What are some things which might happen at another school which would not happen here? Why not? What thing (or things) would lead to this school closing?
Change	Do you believe the important characteristics of the school have changed since you have been here? How and why?

## APPENDIX 6

### SCALE ITEMS FOR THE SIX CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF THE LUTHERAN SCHOOL CULTURE INVENTORY - INITIAL VERSION

#### CARING, CHRIST-CENTRED COMMUNITY

Description: Extent to which it is perceived that the school community accepts members with forgiveness, allows students to grow as individuals, has a family orientation and practises pastoral care.

#### Scale Items

1. People are accepted with forgiveness in this school community.
7. A student who gets into trouble must be punished before being accepted back into the community.\*
13. This school values each student as a precious and unique individual.
19. Students at this school are treated exactly the same.\*
25. The school believes that it is important for all students to grow in Christ as members of the community.
31. Little is done at this school to help a student who does not fit into the school community.\*
37. Parents with a problem are able to see a teacher at any time.
43. In this school parental complaints are not treated seriously.\*
49. This school has a family atmosphere.
55. This school gives extra help to students whose families are experiencing problems.
61. Christ is at the centre of the school community.
67. The gospel is central to the operation of this school.

Items marked thus \* are reverse scored.



## QUALITY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Description: Extent to which it is perceived that Lutheran schools provide a quality Christian education where holistic learning for life and striving for excellence are valued.

### Scale Items

2. The Christian beliefs of the school do not influence the way teachers at this school teach the curriculum.\*
8. Christian beliefs are taken into account when curriculum is developed.
14. This school provides a quality education.
20. Within this school, teachers have an holistic view of education.
26. At this school it is important for students to achieve to their potential.
32. As long as a student passes, the level does not matter.\*
38. The curriculum of this school has been designed to cater for a variety of learning styles.
44. The school curriculum recognises that students are gifted in different ways.
50. The curriculum at this school overemphasises academic subjects.\*
56. Students at this school are well prepared for their future lives.
62. The staff at this school demonstrate a Christian approach to education.
68. Students at this school are encouraged to integrate Christian principles into their learning.

Items marked thus \* are reverse scored.

## **WORSHIP AS CELEBRATION**

Description: Extent to which it is perceived that Christ, life and the community are celebrated in worship.

### Scale Items

3. Devotions are an important time for each class at this school.
9. During worship times staff and students celebrate how God has freely forgiven us all.
15. Christ is celebrated by holding worship activities at this school.
21. Students enjoy praising Christ during worship.
27. Students at this school think worship activities are ordinary events.\*
33. Worship helps staff and students realise that the school is a special community.
39. Worship helps staff and students realise that they are important to the other members of the school community.
45. Worship activities have little effect on this school community.\*
51. The importance of relationships is often celebrated in worship.
57. Different people participate during worship times.
63. People at this school often praise God for His guidance in their lives.
69. Attending chapel does not change the way people at this school think about life.\*

Items marked thus \* are reverse scored.

**WORSHIP AS LIFE IN VOCATION**

Description: Extent to which it is perceived that staff feel called to their positions by God so they may serve Him in their vocation.

Scale Items

- 4. Staff are at this school because God has led them here.
- 10. Staff believe God has led them into their vocation.
- 16. Staff enjoy serving God in their vocation at this school.
- 22. Staff's commitment to this school flows from their belief in God.
- 28. Staff serve God at this school because of what He has done for them.
- 34. Staff work in this school only because the conditions are good.\*
- 40. This school staff serves the students and their families because of their belief in God.
- 46. Staff serve God by serving others at this school.
- 52. Teachers at this school work hard because of their commitment to God.
- 58. Staff work as well as they can because of what God has done for them.
- 64. Teachers view their work as part of the mission of the church.
- 70. Teachers model Christian service in their work.

Items marked thus \* are reverse scored.

## **CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS**

Description: Extent to which it is perceived that imperfect relationships are informed by Christ to give forgiveness support.

### Scale Items

- 5. People recognise that Christian beliefs are important in relationships in the school.
- 11. A teacher who makes a mistake with a student will admit it.
- 17. At this school it's okay to say that you have made a mistake.
- 23. Staff at this school will forgive other students or staff who have done something to hurt them.
- 29. When students have a disagreement, a teacher will talk to them about Christ's love and forgiveness.
- 35. The people at this school don't show forgiveness to one another.\*
- 41. Grudges between staff and students are a problem at this school.\*
- 47. At this school people try to act out Christ's love in their relationships.
- 53. At this school it is better to admit to a problem and receive collegial support.
- 59. When someone has a problem at this school we talk about it and settle it.
- 65. Christian support is evident at this school.
- 71. Teachers will give students in trouble another chance.

Items marked thus \* are reverse scored.

## **CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Description: Extent to which leadership is perceived to be open, collaborative and shared, and management is perceived to be a stewardship delegation.

### Scale Items

- 6. Everyone at our school is able to contribute to school leadership.
- 12. At this school, the senior staff communicates well with all staff.
- 18. At this school, important decisions are made by the senior staff without collaboration.\*
- 24. Decision making at this school is collaborative.
- 30. The senior staff of this school encourage people to try new ideas.
- 36. Any suggestions staff have to improve the school are listened to by the senior staff of the school.
- 42. At this school staff are expected to professionally manage delegated responsibilities.
- 48. The senior staff at this school allow staff to manage their area of expertise.
- 54. Staff members are trusted to fulfil their duties.
- 60. Staff at this school are restricted in what they are allowed to do.\*
- 66. Staff at this school willingly discuss concerns with the senior staff.
- 72. The senior staff support other staff in performing their duties.

Items marked thus \* are reverse scored.

## APPENDIX 7

### THE QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE

*Table A.1*

Number of schools and participants in each school in the questionnaire sample (N = 21 schools and 384 participants)

School Type	Number of Schools	Number of Participants
Primary	13	175
Secondary	4	98
P – 12	4	111
Total	21	384

*Table A.2*

Number of participants in the questionnaire sample by position and school types (N = 384)

School Type	Teachers	Senior Staff	Pastors & Chaplains	Board Members	P & F Members	Total
Primary	73	15	11	30	46	175
Secondary	55	14	3	12	14	98
P - 12	66	22	3	9	11	111
Total	194	51	17	51	71	384

*Table A.3*

Number of primary and secondary teachers in the P – 12 questionnaire sample (N=66)

Teacher Level	Number of Teachers
Primary Teachers	29
Secondary Teachers	37
Total	66

*Table A.4*

Number of teachers in the questionnaire sample by denominational background (N=194)

	Lutheran	Non-Lutheran	Missing Values	Total
Primary Teachers	55	16	2	73
Secondary Teachers	18	36	1	55
P – 12 Teachers	36	29	1	66
Total	109	81	4	194

*Table A.5*

Number of teachers in the questionnaire sample by the variable TOPS (N = 194)

	Completed TOPS	Not Completed TOPS	Missing Values	Total
Primary Teachers	45	24	4	73
Secondary Teachers	38	17	-	55
P – 12 Teachers	50	14	2	66
Total	133	55	6	194

*Table A.6*

Number of teachers in the questionnaire sample by the variable Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education (N = 194)

	Completed Grad Dip	Not Completed Grad Dip	Missing Values	Total
Primary Teachers	29	39	5	73
Secondary Teachers	5	50	-	55
P – 12 Teachers	23	39	4	66
Total	57	128	9	194

*Table A.7*

Number of teachers in the questionnaire sample by the variable teaches Christian Studies (N = 194)

	Teach Christian Studies	Do Not Teach Christian Studies	Missing Values	Total
Primary Teachers	55	14	4	73
Secondary Teachers	12	43	-	55
P – 12 Teachers	31	32	3	66
Total	98	89	7	194



## APPENDIX 8

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE FORM

**To aid the analysis of the data please answer the following questions**

I am completing this questionnaire because I am a (please circle)

teacher

senior staff member (Principal, Head, Deputy)

chaplain employed by the district

pastor of a congregational or parish school

school board member

parents and friends member

Sex  
(please circle)

M

F

Age  
(please circle)

21 - 25

26 - 30

31 - 35

36 - 40

41 - 45

46 - 50

51 - 55

56 - 60

61 - 65

Over 65

My religious denomination is:\_\_\_\_\_ (Please be specific)

I am involved in church activities: (please circle)

More than once a week

Weekly

About fortnightly

About monthly

Only on special or family occasions

**The following apply only to teachers and senior staff only:**

I teach mainly in a      primary school/section      (please circle)

secondary school/section

I have/ have not completed the Theological Orientation Program for Staff (TOPS). (please circle)

I have/ have not completed the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education. (please circle)

I do/ do not teach Christian Studies (CK, Scripture etc.). (please circle)

Please Turn Over

[illegible]

## INSTRUCTIONS

There are 72 questions in this questionnaire. They are statements about your school. Think about how well the statements describe your school.

You will be asked how much you agree or disagree with each statement. There are no right or wrong answers. Your opinion is what is wanted. All information is confidential. Do not write your name on the paper. Please respond to all statements.

Think about how each statement describes what your school is like. Draw a circle around

SD	if you <b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b> with the statement;
D	if you <b>DISAGREE</b> with the statement;
N	if you neither agree or disagree or are not sure;
A	if you <b>AGREE</b> with the statement;
SA	if you <b>STONGLY AGREE</b> with the statement.

If you change your mind about an answer, just cross it out and circle another.

Please turn over to start the questionnaire

- |     |   |             |
|-----|---|-------------|
| 1.  | People are accepted<br>with forgiveness in this school community.   | SD D N A SA |
| 2.  | The Christian beliefs of the school do not influence<br>the way teachers at this school teach the curriculum. | SD D N A SA |
| 3.  | Devotions are an important time for each class at this school.  | SD D N A SA |
| 4.  | Staff are at this school because God has led them here.   | SD D N A SA |
| 5.  | People recognise that<br>Christian beliefs are important in relationships in this school.                     | SD D N A SA |
| 6.  | Everyone at our school<br>is able to contribute to school leadership.   | SD D N A SA |
| 7.  | A student who gets into trouble must be punished<br>before being accepted back into the community.            | SD D N A SA |
| 8.  | Christian beliefs are taken<br>into account when curriculum is developed.                                     | SD D N A SA |
| 9.  | During worship times staff and students<br>celebrate how God has freely forgiven us all.                      | SD D N A SA |
| 10. | Staff believe God has led them into their vocation.   | SD D N A SA |
| 11. | A teacher who makes a mistake with a student will admit it.   | SD D N A SA |
| 12. | At this school the senior staff communicates well with all staff.   | SD D N A SA |
| 13. | This school values each<br>student as a precious and unique individual.                                       | SD D N A SA |
| 14. | This school provides a quality education.   | SD D N A SA |
| 15. | Christ is celebrated by holding worship activities at this school.  | SD D N A SA |
| 16. | Staff enjoy serving God in their vocation at this school.   | SD D N A SA |
| 17. | At this school it's okay to say that you have made a mistake.   | SD D N A SA |
| 18. | At this school important decisions<br>are made by the senior staff without collaboration.                     | SD D N A SA |
| 19. | Students at this school are treated exactly the same.   | SD D N A SA |
| 20. | Within this school teachers have an holistic view of education.   | SD D N A SA |
| 21. | Students enjoy praising Christ during worship.  | SD D N A SA |
| 22. | Staff's commitment to this school flows from their belief in God.   | SD D N A SA |
| 23. | Staff at this school will forgive other students<br>or staff who have done something to hurt them.            | SD D N A SA |
| 24. | Decision making at this school is collaborative.  | SD D N A SA |
| 25. | The school believes that it is important for all<br>students to grow in Christ as members of the community.   | SD D N A SA |

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|-----|--|-------------|
| 26. | At this school it is important<br>for students to perform to their potential.                            | SD D N A SA |
| 27. | Students at this school think<br>worship activities are ordinary events.                                 | SD D N A SA |
| 28. | Staff serve God at this school<br>because of what He has done for them.                                  | SD D N A SA |
| 29. | When students have a disagreement a teacher<br>will talk to them about Christ's love and forgiveness.    | SD D N A SA |
| 30. | The senior staff of this school<br>encourage people to try new ideas.                                    | SD D N A SA |
| 31. | Little is done at this school to help<br>a student who does not fit into the school community.           | SD D N A SA |
| 32. | As long as a student passes the level does not matter.   | SD D N A SA |
| 33. | Worship helps staff and students<br>realise that the school is a special community.                      | SD D N A SA |
| 34. | Staff work in this school only because the conditions are good.  | SD D N A SA |
| 35. | The people at this school don't show forgiveness to one another.   | SD D N A SA |
| 36. | Any suggestions staff have to improve the school<br>are listened to by the senior staff of the school.   | SD D N A SA |
| 37. | Parents with a problem are able to see a teacher at any time.  | SD D N A SA |
| 38. | The curriculum at this school<br>recognises that students have a variety of learning styles.             | SD D N A SA |
| 39. | Worship helps staff and students realise they are<br>important to other members of the school community. | SD D N A SA |
| 40. | This school staff serves the students<br>and their families because of its belief in God.                | SD D N A SA |
| 41. | Grudges between staff and<br>students are a problem at this school.                                      | SD D N A SA |
| 42. | At this school staff are expected<br>to professionally manage delegated responsibilities.                | SD D N A SA |
| 43. | In this school parental complaints are not treated seriously.  | SD D N A SA |
| 44. | The school curriculum<br>recognises that students are gifted in different ways.                          | SD D N A SA |
| 45. | Worship activities have little effect on this school community.  | SD D N A SA |
| 46. | Staff serve God by serving others at this school.  | SD D N A SA |
| 47. | At this school people<br>try to act out Christ's love in their relationships.                            | SD D N A SA |
| 48. | The senior staff at this school allow<br>staff to manage their area of expertise.                        | SD D N A SA |
| 49. | This school has a family atmosphere.   | SD D N A SA |
| 50. | The curriculum at this<br>school over emphasises academic subjects.                                      | SD D N A SA |

- |     |  |             |
|-----|--|-------------|
| 51. | The importance of relationships is often celebrated in worship.                                  | SD D N A SA |
| 52. | Teachers at this school work hard<br>because of their commitment to God.                         | SD D N A SA |
| 53. | At this school it is better to<br>admit to a problem and receive collegial support.              | SD D N A SA |
| 54. | Staff members are trusted to fulfil their duties.  | SD D N A SA |
| 55. | This school gives extra help to students<br>whose families are experiencing problems.            | SD D N A SA |
| 56. | Students at this school are well prepared for their future lives.                                | SD D N A SA |
| 57. | Different people participate during worship times.   | SD D N A SA |
| 58. | Staff work as well as they can<br>because of what God has done for them.                         | SD D N A SA |
| 59. | When someone has a problem<br>at this school we talk about it and settle it.                     | SD D N A SA |
| 60. | Staff at this school are<br>restricted in what they are allowed to do.                           | SD D N A SA |
| 61. | Christ is at the centre of the school community.   | SD D N A SA |
| 62. | The staff at this school<br>demonstrate a Christian approach to education.                       | SD D N A SA |
| 63. | People at this school<br>often praise God for His guidance in their lives.                       | SD D N A SA |
| 64. | Teachers view their work as part of the mission of the church.                                   | SD D N A SA |
| 65. | Christian support is evident at this school.   | SD D N A SA |
| 66. | Staff at this school willingly<br>discuss concerns with the senior staff.                        | SD D N A SA |
| 67. | The gospel is central to the operation of this school.   | SD D N A SA |
| 68. | Students at this school are encouraged<br>to integrate Christian principles into their learning. | SD D N A SA |
| 69. | Attending chapel does not change<br>the way people at this school think about life.              | SD D N A SA |
| 70. | Teachers model Christian service in their work.  | SD D N A SA |
| 71. | Teachers will give students who are in trouble another chance.                                   | SD D N A SA |
| 72. | Senior staff support other staff in performing their duties.                                     | SD D N A SA |

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. Please place it in the envelope provided and return it to your school's contact person.

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Items</b>
Caring, Christ-centred Community	1, <u>7</u> , 13, <u>19</u> , 25, <u>31</u> , 37, <u>43</u> , 49, 55, 61, 67.
Quality Christian Education	<u>2</u> , 8, 14, 20, 26, <u>32</u> , 38, 44, <u>50</u> , 56, 62, 68.
Worship as Celebration	3, 9, 15, 21, <u>27</u> , 33, 39, <u>45</u> , 51, 57, 63, <u>69</u> .
Worship as Life in Vocation	4, 10, 16, 22, 28, <u>34</u> , 40, 46, 52, 58, 64, 70.
Christian Relationships and Interactions	5, 11, 17, 23, 29, <u>35</u> , <u>41</u> , 47, 53, 59, 65, 71.
Christian Leadership and Management	6, 12, <u>18</u> , 24, 30, 36, 42, 48, 54, <u>60</u> , 66, 72.

Underlined items are reverse scored.

## APPENDIX 9

### SCALE ITEMS FOR THE SIX CULTURAL DIMENSIONS OF THE LUTHERAN SCHOOLS CULTURAL INVENTORY - FINAL VERSION

#### CARING, CHRIST-CENTRED COMMUNITY

Description: Extent to which it is perceived that the school community is centred on the gospel of Christ, showing care for its members.

##### Scale Items

1. The school believes that it is important for all students to grow in Christ as members of the community.
7. In this school parental complaints are not treated seriously.\*
13. Christ is at the centre of the school community.
19. Christian support is evident at this school.
25. The gospel is central to the operation of this school.

Items marked thus \* are reverse scored.

#### QUALITY CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Description: Extent to which it is perceived that Lutheran schools provide a quality Christian education.

##### Scale Items

2. This school provides a quality education.
8. At this school it is important for students to achieve to their potential.
14. The curriculum of this school has been designed to cater for a variety of learning styles.
20. The school curriculum recognises that students are gifted in different ways.
26. Students at this school are well prepared for their future lives.

## **WORSHIP AS CELEBRATION**

Description: Extent to which it is perceived that Christ and the community are celebrated in worship.

### Scale Items

- 3. Devotions are an important time for each class at this school.
- 9. Christ is celebrated by holding worship activities at this school.
- 15. Students enjoy praising Christ during worship.
- 21. Worship helps staff and students realise that the school is a special community.
- 27. Worship helps staff and students realise that they are important to the other members of the school community.

## **WORSHIP AS LIFE IN VOCATION**

Description: Extent to which it is perceived that staff serve others because of their belief in God..

### Scale Items

- 4. Staff's commitment to this school flows from their belief in God.
- 10. This school staff serves the students and their families because of their belief in God.
- 16. Teachers at this school work hard because of their commitment to God.
- 22. Staff work as well as they can because of what God has done for them.
- 28. Teachers view their work as part of the mission of the church.



## **CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS**

Description: Extent to which it is perceived that imperfect relationships are informed by Christ to give forgiveness support.

### Scale Items

- 5. A teacher who makes a mistake with a student will admit it.
- 11. At this school it's okay to say that you have made a mistake.
- 17. Staff at this school will forgive other students or staff who have done something to hurt them.
- 23. The people at this school don't show forgiveness to one another.\*
- 29. Grudges between staff and students are a problem at this school.\*

Items marked thus \* are reverse scored.

## **CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP**

Description: Extent to which leadership is perceived to be open and collaborative.

### Scale Items

- 6. At this school, the senior staff communicates well with all staff.
- 12. At this school, important decisions are made by the senior staff without collaboration.\*
- 18. Decision making at this school is collaborative.
- 24. Any suggestions staff have to improve the school are listened to by the senior staff of the school.
- 30. The senior staff support other staff in performing their duties.

Items marked thus \* are reverse scored.

## APPENDIX 10

## THE QUESTIONNAIRE FORM - FINAL VERSION

**To aid the analysis of the data please answer the following questions**

I am completing this questionnaire because I am a (please circle)

teacher

senior staff member (Principal, Head, Deputy)

chaplain employed by the district

pastor of a congregational or parish school

school council member

parents and friends member

Gender  
(please circle)

M

F

Age  
(please circle)

21 - 25

26 - 30

31 - 35

36 - 40

41 - 45

46 - 50

51 - 55

56 - 60

61 - 65

Over 65

My religious denomination is:\_\_\_\_\_ (Please be specific)

I am involved in church activities: (please circle)

More than once a week

Weekly

About fortnightly

About monthly

Only on special or family occasions

**The following apply only to teachers and senior staff only:**

I teach mainly in a      primary school/section      (please circle)

secondary school/section

I have/ have not completed the Theological Orientation Program for Staff (TOPS). (please circle)

I have/ have not completed the Graduate Diploma of Theology in Education. (please circle)

I do/ do not teach Christian Studies (CK, Scripture etc.). (please circle)

Please Turn Over

[illegible]

## INSTRUCTIONS

There are 30 questions in this questionnaire. They are statements about your school. Think about how well the statements describe your school.

You will be asked how much you agree or disagree with each statement. There are no right or wrong answers. Your opinion is what is wanted. All information is confidential. Do not write your name on the paper. Please respond to all statements.

Think about how each statement describes what your school is like. Draw a circle around

SD	if you <b>STRONGLY DISAGREE</b> with the statement;
D	if you <b>DISAGREE</b> with the statement;
N	if you neither agree or disagree or are not sure;
A	if you <b>AGREE</b> with the statement;
SA	if you <b>STONGLY AGREE</b> with the statement.

If you change your mind about an answer, just cross it out and circle another.

Please turn over to start the questionnaire

- |     |  |             |
|-----|--|-------------|
| 1.  | The school believes that it is important for all students to grow in Christ as members of the community. | SD D N A SA |
| 2.  | This school provides a quality education.  | SD D N A SA |
| 3.  | Devotions are an important time for each class at this school.   | SD D N A SA |
| 4.  | Staff's commitment to this school flows from their belief in God.  | SD D N A SA |
| 5.  | A teacher who makes a mistake with a student will admit it.  | SD D N A SA |
| 6.  | At this school the senior staff communicates well with all staff.  | SD D N A SA |
| 7.  | In this school parental complaints are not treated seriously.  | SD D N A SA |
| 8.  | At this school it is important for students to perform to their potential.                               | SD D N A SA |
| 9.  | Christ is celebrated by holding worship activities at this school.                                       | SD D N A SA |
| 10. | This school staff serves the students and their families because of its belief in God.                   | SD D N A SA |
| 11. | At this school it's okay to say that you have made a mistake.  | SD D N A SA |
| 12. | At this school important decisions are made by the senior staff without collaboration.                   | SD D N A SA |
| 13. | Christ is at the centre of the school community.   | SD D N A SA |
| 14. | The curriculum at this school recognises that students have a variety of learning styles.                | SD D N A SA |
| 15. | Students enjoy praising Christ during worship.   | SD D N A SA |
| 16. | Teachers at this school work hard because of their commitment to God.                                    | SD D N A SA |
| 17. | Staff at this school will forgive other students or staff who have done something to hurt them.          | SD D N A SA |
| 18. | Decision making at this school is collaborative.   | SD D N A SA |
| 19. | Christian support is evident at this school.   | SD D N A SA |
| 20. | The school curriculum recognises that students are gifted in different ways.                             | SD D N A SA |
| 21. | Worship helps staff and students realise that the school is a special community.                         | SD D N A SA |
| 22. | Staff work as well as they can because of what God has done for them.                                    | SD D N A SA |
| 23. | The people at this school don't show forgiveness to one another.   | SD D N A SA |
| 24. | Any suggestions staff have to improve the school are listened to by the senior staff of the school.      | SD D N A SA |
| 25. | The gospel is central to the operation of this school.   | SD D N A SA |

- |     |   |             |
|-----|---|-------------|
| 26. | Students at this school are well prepared for their future lives.                                     | SD D N A SA |
| 27. | Worship helps staff and students realise they are important to other members of the school community. | SD D N A SA |
| 28. | Teachers view their work as part of the mission of the church.  | SD D N A SA |
| 29. | Grudges between staff and students are a problem at this school.                                      | SD D N A SA |
| 30. | Senior staff support other staff in performing their duties.  | SD D N A SA |

Thank you for completing the questionnaire. Please place it in the envelope provided and return it to your school's contact person.

Scale	Items
Caring, Christ-centred Community	1, <u>7</u> , 13, 19, 25.
Quality Christian Education	2, 8, 14, 20, 26.
Worship as Celebration	3, 9, 15, 21, 27.
Worship as Life in Vocation	4, 10, 16, 22, 28.
Christian Relationships and Interactions	5, 11, 17, 23, 29.
Christian Leadership	6, <u>12</u> , 18, 24, 30.

Underlined items are reverse scored.

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