

LEADERSHIP IN LEARNING AND CHANGE

**An evaluation of leadership in the context of implementing a bible college
programme**

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ABSTRACT

Leadership needs to be examined when a change process within a learning context renders significant problems. This thesis sets out to explore the nature of leadership, and its application in the context of implementation of a bible college programme. The literature review focused on discussion of leadership style, change, and culture and how they are interwoven in an educational setting. The concepts of vision and change are prominent.

The research adopted a qualitative methodology involving empowerment evaluation of the effectiveness of a bible college leadership team to gain an in depth understanding of view and application of leadership, its process in developing a vision to move away from a discipleship based learning programme to the bible college model. The first phase of data collecting involved conducting interviews with leaders involved in the implementation about their views and practices of leadership. Concurrently learners were questioned about their experience in the bible college and their views of the leadership in its implementation through an online survey. The second phase findings from the leaders and learners data in phase one provided a discussion point for a leadership focus group with the leadership team to provide them with an alternative dimension and critique of the bible college leadership from those it directly affected.

Themes that evolved from the findings were related to leadership integrity, a mismatch in needs of learners and vision. The research found that the leadership lack of commitment to the vision was mirrored by the learners. The recommendations that come from this research are that the bible college needs to re examine its vision and adjust it to incorporate the needs of the learners. Leaders need to analyse carefully the impacts on constituents before implementing change. Learners needs are best identified by empowering learners to feed into the decision making process for issues that directly impact on their learning.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Research Outline:

This research provides a critical evaluation of the leadership of the Lifestyle Bible College (LBC) within the context of the issues relating to the implementation of a Bible College curriculum. This inquiry will apply its critique of the LBC Leadership Team against principles of effective educational leadership, organisational culture and change. I was appointed as a member of the leadership in this organisation with a strategic mandate to evaluate the current state of the LBC with its future development in mind, and was not apart of the original LBC team that implemented the strategy and programme four years prior. The proposed outcomes are intended to assist the ongoing development of the LBC programme, that constituents may be better vocationally equipped for Christian ministry.

Background:

The context for this research project is the implementation of a Judeo-Christian educational curriculum within a local church development programme. The vehicle for delivery of the curriculum was to be known as the Lifestyle Bible College (LBC) a formal programme of instruction to extend the theological knowledge of its church constituents. Prior to the implementation of the LBC the Church Leadership Board had in existence a programme to establish church members in foundational principles of Christian doctrine and practice through a one to one peer discipleship teaching programme. This programme was in essence successful in achieving its objectives of providing a platform of faith and understanding with an emphasis on training and role modelling. The success of this initial programme was confirmed by the existence of multi generational growth, whereby teachers taught another, who will grow to teach another, and in effect have four generations of teachers. Several years later the Church Leadership Board developed the view that extending the knowledge base of

theological concepts was now an educational imperative because it was necessary to see constituents moved from learning elementary principles to acquiring advanced concepts and understandings about God so they can respond in practice to what His requirements and statutes are. Praxis in this area of subject matter is dependent upon the level of theological understanding as this provides the fabric for Judeo-Christian world view. In other words people will do what they know, and what they know and do is what they are, a concept encapsulated by Wenger's community of practice social learning theory that supports an emphasis on practice, identity and meaning as interwoven (Wenger, 1998). Without an educational curriculum to facilitate this kind of learning it was the LBC leadership's perception that learners would not be equipped to make apologetic defences for their world view, and at a more serious and practical level constituent members would remain unchallenged and in danger of becoming indifferent to the application of knowledge.

Therefore a mandate was issued by the Leadership Board to address this need through the implementation of a system of learning which was to be called the Lifestyle Bible College. Members of the Church Leadership Board involved in Teaching Ministry were appointed to the LBC Leadership Team and charged with implementing an educational framework to address the required needs of the organisation. This then provided a programme of work to be undertaken to develop a curriculum, and within that specifically instructional design. Initially subject matter and an indicative template for the curriculum were acquired from a partner tertiary education organisation in the United States of America. This formed the introductory modules for the curriculum in the areas of hermeneutics and doctrine.

The problem:

There is a potential for project implementation to encounter issues and problems. At the introduction to this chapter I stated that my intention was to critically evaluate the LBC implementation against principles of effective educational leadership, culture, and change. This framework for critique has been aligned against the problems that have been encountered. Firstly, leadership as a practice was a focal point for my

investigation for a number of reasons, but pre-eminently because leadership is the critical determinant in pulling together vision and applying strategy. Chaffee and Tierney (1988) suggest that vision and strategy emanate from the realm of leadership. And that is consistent with the nature of this implementation and how it came about. The Church Leadership Board had developed a vision based on espoused biblical foundational principles for the growth of its constituent members, and the LBC implemented by the LBC leadership team was the strategy vehicle by which they intended to fulfil that vision. Leadership practice also provided a point of inquiry because the LBC leadership team who were appointed on the basis of educational or academic experience. The appointed LBC leaders stated they were not skilled or technically proficient in the design and development of curricula. The appointment of the leadership team had been fundamentally based on two key criterion; firstly they were long serving ‘discipler- teachers’, and secondly they had oversight over the initial discipleship training programme. These leaders had demonstrated a track record of care and commitment to church members in discipling and teaching over a period of years. Based on personal attributes it could be said they were ideal appointments. However from a technical sense, the lack of knowledge and experience in relation to curriculum development and design were possible contributing factors to two interrelated problems that informed the scope of this evaluation research.

Firstly there had been significant slippage in curriculum developmental timeframes and milestones. The LBC curriculum implementation was initiated in April 2004 and it was forecasted that 15 assignments were to be designed and delivered over a 4 year programme. However development had fallen well behind projected milestones. In actuality eight lessons had been completed, with the last lesson taking 15 months to develop. Systemically this oriented itself as a leadership problem as implementation of the vision for learning was in the realm of the leadership.

Secondly, organisational culture and change were mandatory considerations to be examined in this process. There is a critical interdependency between leadership and culture (Bush & Bell, 2002; Chaffee & Tierney, 1988); the most fundamental construct of an organisation, as of a society is its culture. An organisation’s culture is

reflected in what is done, how it is done, and who is involved in doing it (Bush & Bell, 2002). It concerns decisions, actions, and communication both on an instrumental and a symbolic level (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Therefore it was essential to underpin this research with an exploration of the culture within the LBC. Furthermore it was essential to explore change management and how it affects culture. This change process was a profound shift away from the traditional mode of learning and training for constituents. This significant change in the learning context was a change in approach away from the discipleship teaching mode which was the cornerstone of teaching practice within the church. This newly engendered self directed learning model called the LBC was intended to develop autonomous learners who would not require the close proximity and accountability between teacher and learner offered by the discipleship teaching programme. This posed a potential challenge for participants who engaged with a new process and leaders having to manage the impacts on their learners. Kouzes and Posner (2002) state that these rapid departures from the norm can create environments for leadership challenges to flourish. This research provides a platform to evaluate how the LBC leadership had responded to the implementation of this new learning dimension and its impacts.

At a surface level they have experienced issues of quality and inconsistency with the assessment of assignments and participants not attending to assessment deadlines with any urgency or fervour. My inquiry will delve beyond the symptomatic issues of the curriculum implementation and examine how aspects of transition from one learning model to another may be a contributing factor to the implementation problem discussed above.

In my initial sounding out of the LBC leadership about a potential research project, they were very interested in the twofold objectives I proposed as outcomes from this enquiry. These being the examination of the systemic issues underpinning the implementation of the LBC:

- 1) To critically analyse the leadership practices of the LBC in relation to the implementation of the LBC programme.

- 2) To recommend and suggest in the findings and summary of this thesis, options and strategies to possibly assist the implementation of the LBC programme through to completion.

Overall aims:

1. To evaluate the effectiveness of the leadership LBC Leadership Team in the implementation process of the Lifestyle Bible College programme

Research questions:

This evaluation research analysed the issues and developmental opportunities relating to the implementation of the Lifestyle Bible College (LBC) programme with a particular critique against principles of effective educational leadership, organisational culture and change evident in the literature. It was informed by the following research questions:

1. Is there congruency between the LBC's Leadership Team vision and the actualisation of the LBC at this stage of the implementation process?
2. What leadership challenges and issues are inhibiting the implementation of the LBC programme?
3. What improvements need to be made so that the issues inhibiting the implementation of the LBC programme can be addressed?

Outline of thesis

The rest of this thesis is structured across five chapters that follow this first one. In Chapter 2 I draw on two key areas of literature within the discipline of educational leadership. I discuss leadership generically as it pertains to organisations, and how it

meshes with culture and strategy. Following this I condense the scope of the discussion to concepts of leadership in an educational context.

In Chapter 3 I provide a rationale and justification for choosing a qualitative methodology with an evaluation approach for data collection and analysis for this study. This chapter describes the methodological paradigm that undergirds the choice of research method as well as explaining the analytical approaches applied in this inquiry. It also identifies and addresses issues of reliability, validity and ethical considerations.

In Chapter 4 I present the research data from the LBC Leadership team and the LBC learners. I analyse what is said by learners and leaders in relation to how the leadership has implemented the LBC.

In Chapter 5 I give a thematic analysis of my research findings and how these align with educational leadership literature as discussed earlier in chapter 2. The key themes I discuss in this chapter are; vision, and commitment to the vision of the LBC, leadership responsibility, and the LBC cultural implications.

In Chapter 6 I consolidate my conclusions in reference to the research questions and the summary of the research data findings of this evaluation. I discuss the strengths and limitations of this inquiry and propose in-depth conclusions. Consequently I propose recommendations that I may help resolve the systemic problems of the LBC.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This research is primarily concerned with educational leadership as necessitated by the introduction of the LBC as a new mode of biblical instruction. I discuss leadership as a generic concept expanding my discussion to include interrelated concepts of culture and change. I conclude this chapter with discussion of key concepts of leadership that I view as necessary to the context of the evaluation of the LBC leadership.

The Leadership Concept

Many definitions have been posited about leadership. The variegated definitions and theories point to the complexity and ambiguity of leadership as a concept. There are differing opinions about what constitutes leadership with no general consensus reached amongst theorists as to the utopian definition. What many experts in this area of knowledge concur on is that there is no set of behaviours, intelligence or ability that can ring fence an individual for leadership. It is an illusive, emergent phenomenon with contextual variations. Leadership theory and approaches are not seen as definitive but elusive and constantly changing, reflecting an ever changing society and world (Razik & Swanson, 2001; Rudman, 2002). Leaders place emphasis on values, vision and motivation and understand intuitively the non-rational and unconscious elements in leader–constituent relations. A leader thinks in terms of renewal that is they seek revision of process and structure because reality is in constant flux.

A survey of leadership theory can help us to distil leadership research down into several categories; traits, behaviour, power and influence, and situational or contingency theories (Razik & Swanson 2001; Yukl, 2002). Early trait theories were based upon individuals possessing certain physical characteristics, personality, and intellectual abilities. Leaders were seen as naturally endowed with the gift of leadership. Behavioural theorists attempt to determine what effective leaders do by

identifying both the behaviour of leaders and the effects that leader behaviour has on subordinate productivity and work satisfaction. Leadership style is seen the pattern of behaviours of a person who assumes or is designated to a position of influence in an organisation. Power and influence theory defines leadership in terms of the process of facilitating the performance of a collective task. It defines leadership by who exerts influence, who the intended beneficiary of the influence and what the resultant outcome of that influence is (Yukl, 2002). Gardener (1990) refers to this as the capacity to bring about certain intended consequences in the behaviour of others. Razik and Swanson (2001) make distinctions of power leadership theory in transformational leadership and transactional leadership. They discuss power as being exercised when someone marshals their power base, human, financial and administrative resources to activate motives of respondents towards organisational goals. It is viewed as a reciprocal process by which both followers and leaders are mobilised towards achieving both individual and mutual goals. In transactional leadership persons engage in a relationship for the purpose of exchanging valued things. They are conscious of each others power, usually pursue their own purposes and goals and form temporary relationships. In transformational leadership one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. In such relationships power bases are linked and relationship purposes are linked and leadership becomes moral as leaders and followers unite to achieve higher goals. Situational or contingency theorists define leadership behaviour as determined by situational characteristics and leader traits qualities (Goleman, 2000). This leadership model attempts to integrate leadership traits, behaviours, contingencies, and situational determinants into one model. Theories about leadership are multidimensional. That is no one theory has embraced all the necessary variables to define satisfactorily the complexity of the leadership role or to predict best case leadership scenarios (Razik & Swanson, 2001).

Leadership and Culture

Leaders are responsible for building and maintaining organisational culture. And culture is the instrument through which a leader can engender influence. Leaders play an important role in creating, sustaining or destroying cultures, and cultures can mediate effective school leadership if leaders build this intent within the development

of the culture that they create (Bush & Bell, 2002; Southworth, 2004). The organisation culture is expressed through customs, traditions, ceremonies, rituals, norms, and the characters and legends that embody school folklore. It is visible in words and actions as people go about their daily activities. Bush and Bell (2002) imply that because culture is a constructed reality, it demands that leaders apply thought, skill, integrity and consistency to establish and maintain alignment across the constituency that encompasses the school.

Cultural Dimensions

Schein (2004) argues that organisational culture is a complex multilayered dynamic, not to be discerned purely on the obvious visible characteristics. Cultural phenomenon can be discovered at varying degrees of observability. Schein (2004) suggests a model where culture manifests itself in three key concepts; artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions. Artifacts are defined as the surface level manifestations of culture, they are easily visible, the physical structure, processes, and style. Artifacts in and of themselves provide a limited picture of cultural depth and they can be constrained by the observers imposition of their own views and assumptions on the phenomenon. Artifacts are easily seen but not easily decoded and cannot be reliably evaluated in isolation of an organisations espoused values and underlying assumptions. Espoused values speak of an organisations publicised commitment to a specific vision, strategy and values. In any organisation people hold to someone's original ideas and values, a list of descriptors about what ought to be, as opposed to how things work in actuality. At this level of observation values and ideas are only tacitly adhered to by the group as they have yet to be successfully applied and adopted as shared views and thus entrenched as basic assumptions. It is only after a value has been repeatedly applied with effective results that the group will view that value no longer as hypothesis, but as fact. Schein (2004) suggests a process of cognitive transformation is required to migrate a groups perception of a value to an accepted fact.

Dimmock and Walker (2002) propose a six dimensional model for educational organisational culture that influences the way in which educational leadership is exercised and practices are carried out to implement values and vision. Dimmock and Walker (2002) say that research studies over time have found that educational cultures

for the most part hold the same values but the way in which they behave may differ. The Dimmock and Walker model proposes that leadership is practiced according to the cultural context of the organisation and conversely leadership influences the cultural dimension of the organisation.

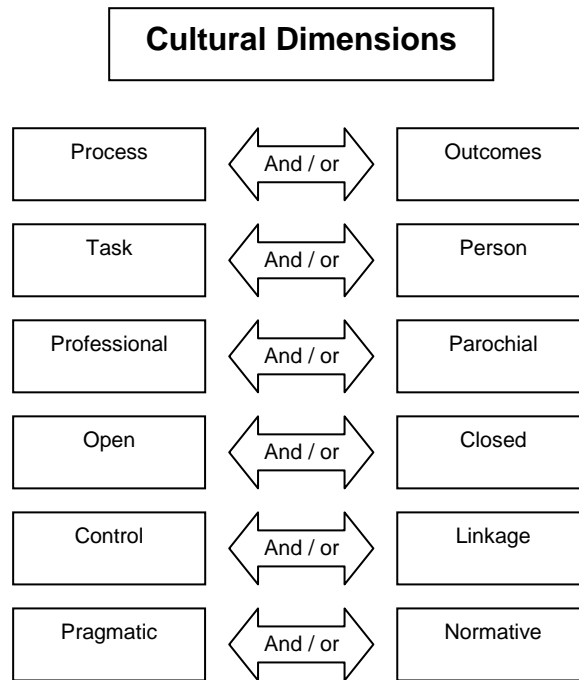


Figure 2.1 Dimmock & Walker - 6 dimensions of organisational culture

A first dimension they propose is one that demonstrates a process and or outcomes orientation. They suggest some organisations are predisposed toward technical and bureaucratic routines while others are driven by achieving performance indicators. Leaders in a process environment tend to be focused on refining bureaucratic processes. In an outcome focused culture people are treated more homogenously and leaders often find it is often easier to set targets than to define more effective processes. A second dimension has a task and or person orientation. Leaders in this context have considerable influence in designing the blend of job and person that is required to suit the needs of the organisation. Task oriented leaders create a culture that is heavily weighted on maximising productivity and may sacrifice the welfare of its staff. Conversely person oriented cultures accentuate the needs of people. A third dimension proposed is one that traverses parochial and professional elements of culture. In this sense a leader may influence the degree in which a culture is committed to a profession as a whole, for example teachers committed to the

profession of teaching or they may be more locally focused, perhaps toward the school and community that they work in. Fourthly a culture may be perceived as open or closed to the degree in which resources are shared or the way in which it interacts, or involves a wider constituency. This again will be heavily influenced by the leader's disposition. A fifth dimension is described as a control and linkage orientation. This has to do with the degree in which an organisation is flexible or rigid in its adherence to rules and regulations, how firmly they hold to values and stated values and beliefs, and the way in which leaders communicate with their followers. Lastly they speak of a pragmatic and or normative dimension in which an organisation determines to be flexible to meet the needs of its learners or conform more rigidly through bureaucratic approaches. A leader's pragmatic leanings will determine the extent to which a school will be learner oriented.

In organisations there are cultural non-tangible variables that people imbue upon the work place. This is referred to as politics. Politics are suggested to be part and parcel of any organisation where people are involved, and where change is occurring (Bolman & Deal, 1991). In a learning environment there is a propensity for 'politics' to take on an additional layer of complexity due to the intricate web of constituents that play a role in the learning community. The ability to cultivate support through relationship management is vital. In changing a culture there is a degree of courage required to challenge the non-discussables. These are the 'elephants in the living room', that are usually ignored or set aside in favour of avoiding conflict. To put this right there must be outrage against the flawed cycle of practice that hinders the priority of schools; that all constituencies learn (Sergiovanni, 2005). Educational leaders have to have the political skill to cope with conflicting multiple constituencies (Bolman & Deal, 1991; Gardener, 1990).

Leadership and change

Cultural upheaval can be the result of contextual change factors and this makes change a necessary discussion in relation to the implementation of the LBC programme because of the development and paradigmic shifts in approaches to learning that have occurred. Leadership is a key concept in managing the impacts of change within organisational cultures. Organisational restructuring is not the only

element in successful change, nor is it the main one (Fullan, 2003). Leading in a culture affected by change is about unlocking the mysteries of living organisations. Educational organisations are complex by nature, and complexities can be unlocked and even understood but rarely controlled (Fullan, 2003; Goleman, 2000). In light of this it is widely agreed that there is no full proof, step by step guide for managing change. Rather leaders need to be adaptive and exercise leadership styles as appropriate to the organisational context. Fullan (2003) redefines change as a 'reculturing', not a change of the bricks and mortar, nor human resource configuration, but a change of the way people, think, feel, and behave. Change is most importantly transforming a culture or as Fullan notes reculturing is changing 'the way people do things around here'. This human dimension in change implementation provides a plethora of potential challenges and problems. Fullan (2003) says that effective leaders know that reculturing is the key to progress but they also understand that it is hard work. Changing a culture requires expending effort, diplomacy, diligence, and resilience. Fullan (2003) describes it as contact sport that involves hard, labour intensive work. It is developing relationships, building knowledge, and striving for coherence in a polymorphous environment. He suggests that the ideal leadership approach in change should be more akin to Goleman's (2000) situational leadership model as a means to dealing with the complexity of culture and change.

Dimensions of change

There are two possible dimensions of change; negative or difficult change and positive or opportunity change. Firstly, leaders come to the fore in an organisation when change brings uncertainty, flux, or opportunity to bear on its members (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Throughout the last few decades the education sector has experienced many difficulties, strains and stresses as factors such as globalisation and commodification of education have impressed its paradigms, policies and approaches upon it (Bottery, 2004). To be successful in this kind of ever changing environment leaders have had to be masterful in building trust with tutorial staff and community stakeholders alike who have been subjected to centrally mandated change which has not always been considered positive (Bottery, 2004). It is such epochs of difficulty that have catalysed such concepts as situational leadership, and emotional intelligence to the fore. This view of leadership in changing environments has seen development of approaches away from static inflexible approaches to concepts that are fluid, that

encourage leaders to exercise flexibility in their approach to leading in response to task and environmental variables. Environments of spiralling change have seen the adoption of critically reflective approaches by leaders who look at themselves, and the types of strategies they apply to see if what they are practising is effective in a particular situation (Goleman, 2000).

Secondly, leadership in change also fosters a pioneering dimension that is about inspiring others to voyage into uncharted territory (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Indeed the root meaning of leadership speaks of direction and guidance and so when times of uncertainty befall an organisation we look to leaders to guide us into calmer waters (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). This notion of change precipitates the need for further discussion about the concept of transformational leadership, where leaders draw on their ability to move their followers towards a vision or mission by inspiring them towards a goal or objective by persuading them to share in the vision (Fidler & Atton, 2004). This notion of shared vision has inspired organisations for years to create a future in which leaders and constituents are single minded, purposed and committed towards the vision. It is binding together people around a common identity and sense of destiny, a genuine sense of vision where by people grow and learn because they want to, not because they are told to (Senge, 1990). Many leaders have personal visions that never get translated into shared visions that galvanise an organisation (Elkin & Inkson, 2000; Senge, 1990). The practice of shared vision involves the skill of unearthing shared pictures of the future, fostering genuine commitments and enrolment rather than compliance. Leaders have learned the counterproductiveness of trying to dictate a vision, no matter how heartfelt (Murphy, 1988). This concept of building a shared vision is a fine aspiration for a leader wanting to implement change but the reality is that an organisations culture will inevitably provide challenges and resistance. A leader has to become politically astute as the ability to cultivate support through relationship management is vital (Bolman & Deal, 1991). Resistance is inevitable where change of culture is concerned. Having an understanding of the political environment allows a leader to see where resistance is most likely to occur. Fullan (2003) suggests that leaders need to see opposition as an opportunity as they are more likely to learn more from people who disagree with them, then those who agree with them all the time. Leaders need to respect resisters for two reasons; they may suggest something leaders may have missed, and when it comes to the politics of

implementation these people may provide much needed support if a leader is to successfully implement a change strategy (Fullan, 2003). Whether in a positive or negative change environment leaders need to be adaptable. They need to be adaptive, emotionally intelligent beings that can respond to the culture of change and its impact on the culture of the organisation (Fullan, 2003).

Building trust through change

Leaders need to build and maintain trust and especially so in an environment of change. Tschanen-Moran (2004) proposes a model called the five facets of trust and expounds the element of trust as non-negotiable for the survival of instructional leaders. In other words leaders must have the trust of their constituency. Tschanen-Moran (2004) suggests that you can introduce collaborative decision making structures but if trust is missing communication becomes distorted and constrained making problems difficult to resolve. Learners need to have trust in their environment for learning. Humans have a tendency for distrust anyway and when trust is breached it is very hard to recover. A lack of trust will inhibit buy in to shared vision and goals. It is the educational leader's responsibility to build and sustain trust. Trust involves leaders being transparent in their vision for change; otherwise they will be accused of having hidden agendas, of being impatient or judgemental by unilaterally forging ahead with change. Trust is built on leader's role modelling what they expect from others. If being a role model is ever necessary, it is when it comes to cultivating a culture of trust. Trust is built on honesty which may require speaking the hard truths in a soft way to show others that a leader does value and care for those they lead. However leaders need to walk the talk and may at times have to forgo popularity. Trust can be lost as a leader avoids conflict by failing to say what is true to remain popular. Therefore in view of building and maintaining trust leaders need to reflect regularly on their words and their actions. This is difficult to do in complex change environments. Tschanen-Moran (2004) proposes several strategies for retention of trust in an educational leadership context. It requires a leader to become a coach of others exercising personal presence, active listening, powerful questioning, creation of awareness, planning and goal setting, design of actions, management of progress and accountability. If educational leaders master these they are more likely to foster enthusiasm and self efficacy beliefs. Trustworthy leaders can move their organisations to higher levels of productivity and success. Tschanen-Moran (2004) notes that the

trustworthy principal understands that teachers behave in response to the culture that pervades their school. For example if there is a slacking off in accountability, the principal will look for ways to influence a shift in culture and will also address this carefully with an individual. The role of coach proposed by Tschanen-Moran (2004) deals with the issues of deficiency with an individual discretely, maintaining their dignity. Trustworthy leaders cultivate a culture of discipline within their schools and this starts with the personal performance of the leader. This culture of discipline creates high trust environments, where principals can rely on people to be effective and productive without having too many rules to manage them. In short a trustworthy leader will find an equitable approach to handling policies rules, and procedures without abusing their power through manipulation or over reliance on a strict interpretation of rules.

Decision making through change

Leaders have a pivotal responsibility in implementing change. The process of change is initiated through a decision making process. The degree to which a decision is fully informed and effective depends on the style of leadership. In today's rapidly moving working environment organisations may act more unilaterally in making decisions for convenience sake (Owens & Valesky, 2006). Educational leaders in this context may for the sake of time, effort, and efficiency apply a traditional bureaucratic approach to decision making. This may not always be in the best interests of the organisation, nor the learning community. In an attempt to make quality decisions leaders sought to apply a scientific approach to decision making by what are known as rational decision making models. These usually have a predefined set of procedures to be adhered to if a decision is to be reached. These rational decision models provide clear prescription for an inductive process to reaching a decision. But rational decision making models do not take into consideration the issue of who makes the decision, and who is involved in deciding a problem. Owens and Valesky (2006) propose a framework for participative decision making that prescribes a process for determining who should be involved in making decisions. This model doesn't promote total inclusiveness of an organisational constituency but identifies three test criteria for who should participate in making decisions contextualised against the nature of the decision to be made. The Owens and Valesky (2006) participative decision making model identifies three test criteria that participants must be assessed against. Firstly they speak of relevance in

terms of those have a personal stake in the decision should be considered. Secondly a concept of expertise in the sense that a participant must have subject matter proficiency and or technical skill related to the problem. Thirdly, jurisdiction is viewed as an imperative in the sense that a decision making group must have the authorisation to enact decisions if it is to be a valid process. Vroom (2001) proposed a normative leadership model that outlines taxonomy of five leadership styles. In this leaders may opt to operate from one of three dimensions; autocratic, consultative and group decision making. They propose that a leader may work across all three dimensions of decision making depending on the nature of the decision. Autocratic decisions can be negatively tainted in the minds of some; however it is proposed that in some cases where common sense expediency is required it can be the optimum approach. Consultative approaches may appear to engage subordinates but the power to choose and effect a decision lies with an individual leader. Group approaches involve truly collaborative decision making whereby not only are the options evaluated by the group, but a decision is agreed to and enacted by the group.

Leadership in learning

In this section I discuss leadership in learning as a theme relevant to the context of this evaluation research. The LBC is an organisation that promotes learning and instruction of biblical subject matter. Therefore I discuss learning centred leadership as distinct concept from generic leadership theories discussed previously. A discussion of learning centred leadership is necessitated on the contextual basis of the LBC. When leadership is examined in the context of an educational setting it takes on an additional dimension. By nature educational organisations have a deeper sense of 'good' because they are rooted in community, with a view to benefitting a wide and diverse constituency. In this learning dimension, morals and values laden leadership are a pervading theme of the literature. They are models that outline a specific set of attributes evident in effective leaders. These are ideas that esteem qualities such as trust, support, moralism and sustainability as critical components of effective leadership (Chaffee & Tierney; 1998; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Schools exist to promote learning in all their inhabitants and leading in education is about getting the priority of learning to the forefront of the organisations agenda (Barth, 2004). Learning centred leadership is defined as leadership that influences what happens in

the classroom. There is collective agreement amongst researchers, policy makers and practitioners alike that leaders make a difference to learners. (Robinson & Lloyd & Rowe, 2008; Southworth, 2004). There is no middle ground asserted by this notion, a leader will influence change that will either be negative or positive in varying degrees. Leaders influence in all kinds of ways, some beneficial, in some instances not so beneficial. Leaders can frustrate, antagonise and de-motivate others. Or alternatively they can inspire and motivate others towards a common goal or purpose. Southworth's (2004) concept of learning centred leadership proposes a two-way influential model whereby subordinates influence leaders as much as leaders influence subordinates. Influence then is not an issue of office but can be interpersonal (Southworth, 2004). The impact or nature of influence of an educational leader can be affected by the scale of the school or organisation in terms of teachers and learners. This assertion identifies channels of influence and how they are facilitated most effectively in varying school sizes (Robinson & Lloyd & Rowe, 2008; Southworth, 2004). Southworth (2004) is critical of 'direct effects', and suggests that places too much weight on the outcome causation from the leader or principal alone. In other words there are usually mitigating factors, or other variables that contribute to an impact on learners. Southworth (2004) suggests direct effects places all the responsibility on the leader and as a result may contribute to leaders not exercising models of distributed or shared leadership through mediated and reciprocated influence. This will in turn stifle the building of new leaders who can share the burden and workload of the educational organisation. Personal accountability for the performance of a school can be a constraining factor for leaders because of their unwillingness to trust others to bear the load because leaders. If the focus of influence sits squarely on the shoulders of the leader, the potential for mediating and reciprocating influence may be neglected.

Servant leadership provides an alternative dimension that perhaps embodies the essence of educational leadership notions of values, moralism and learner centeredness. The notion of leaders as servants is not new or emerging in as much it has re-emerged over recent decades. The roots of servant leadership find their basis in Judeo Christian biblical principle. Therefore the discussion of servant leadership is critical in the discussion of the LBC, a learning community that espouses the practice of biblically principled leadership. Servant leadership is the inverse notion of power-

over perception about leadership and authority. Greenleaf (1998) makes the observation that society is pervaded by a lack of servants. There is a lack of leadership vision that has meant that the youth of society have been left to develop self-fulfilling values. Leaders have not laid down the vision to perpetuate next generational servant maturity.

Servant leadership encompasses a set of values and competencies based on a defined set of attitudes and actions. Much of contemporary literature on leadership has developed a moralistic dimension inherent in servant leadership (Youngs, 2002). There is general agreement amongst leadership theorists that leadership is not a matter of exerting power and authority over subordinates, but winning the hearts and minds of co-servants in pursuing a mission of common purpose. Servant leadership can be defined simply as sacrifice. It is sacrifice of oneself; ones own interests, ones rights, power and authority for the good of another, or of the organisation in which one leads (Greenleaf, 1998). This inquiry will provide a theory of practice examination of LBC leaders as espoused servant leaders in relation to the implementation of the LBC programme. Sergiovanni, (2005) proposes a values, morals based leadership model. It espouses a notion of self sacrifice. He does not decry direct leadership as he views it as necessary in a particular context where incompetency is prolific and or clear direction is required for staff who are wavering with uncertainty. But servant leadership is modelled by leaders who willing yield themselves to serve others for the greater good. This leadership model places the power to make decisions and forge direction in the hands of those people who the leadership are serving. It is a leadership model that has open processes for dialogue, discussion and development when it comes to setting a vision in place, and applying a strategy.

Servant leadership thrives in an environment where leaders trust others to exercise leadership outside of the office of formal leadership. It recognises that leadership is an action, a quality that resides in people and can be drawn on to accomplish a shared vision. Collins (2001) proposes a model akin in many aspects to servant leadership, a model of leadership quality based on values. He suggests that what makes leaders so effective is that they display the best attributes that humans have to offer. They exemplify values, hard work, humility, modesty, next generation thinking, selfless, and they have a dogged determination to make the company successful. They are not

for personal gain and they accept blame and responsibility but credit others with success. Servant leadership embodies the qualities of trust, morals and selfless service and a rare commodity among leaders (Sergiovanni, 2005).

Summary

Leadership is a necessary and critical concept for organisations undergoing change, and cultural reshaping. In education the need for leadership is no less vital, but the nature of leadership needs to be considered on a contextual basis. Theorists have touted various best practice approaches to the application of leadership. The evolutionary process of leadership thinking has brought us to a contemporary understanding that one size does not fit all. If organisations are to learn and grow leaders must develop reflexive praxis. They must be able to evaluate situations and adjust the way in which they exercise leadership. Rigid adherence to a particular style of leadership may prove to encumber organisations from developing to their full potential. Where education is concerned whatever leadership approach is employed it is imperative that it encompasses the moral dimension of leadership as this dimension is focused on values that prioritise learning and learners ahead of all other organisational agendas. Leadership may not be the only factor contributing to the research problem, but there is broad agreement in the literature that leadership in change processes will impact on the cultural dimensions of an organisation. Therefore the literature discussed in this review has confirmed the importance of evaluating the leadership practice in the implementation of the LBC.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY & METHODS

Introduction

This chapter provides a rationale and justification for choosing a qualitative methodology for data collection and analysis for this study. This chapter describes the Methodological paradigm that undergirds the choice of research methods employed as well as explaining analytical approaches applied in this inquiry. I discuss evaluation as a specific approach of critical analyse of leadership practice. A brief overview is given of the issues of reliability, validity and ethical considerations applied to ensure that respondents were protected through this process.

Methodology

The choice of paradigm for any inquiry should be contingent on the kind of knowledge we are searching for, and the basis of any educational research is to formulate a platform for action (Husen, 1997). My assertion is that the context and nature of the problem I proposed for research warranted the methodological considerations that are predominantly in the qualitative paradigm.

Firstly, the intention of this research was to uncover the root of the problems encountered through the implementation of the LBC by gaining insight and understanding of the contextual and intrinsic issues of this community. In drawing out people's perceptions and perspectives, it was proposed that I could uncover the strengths and weaknesses of this leadership. In light of this it would be possible for this organisation to adapt or enhance its approach which may affect the growth and development of the LBC. Therefore by default this inquiry sat comfortably within the interpretivist paradigm. Qualitative methodology would permit me to garnish rich descriptive information such as intrinsic motivations of learners which might not be captured or understood through empirical analysis. Therefore the thrust of this inquiry was overwhelmingly qualitative and the design of this research reflects approaches that seek to question, understand and if necessary allow for the reshaping of questions as the inquiry unfolded. Husen (1997) suggests that positivist approaches seek to explain rather than understand phenomena, with a view to establishing generalisations, laws and rules for efficiency and best leadership practice. Therefore

in my view a positivist approach may have worked antagonistically with the objective of this research if it were the methodology employed.

Evaluation

Secondly, a formative evaluation approach to this research methodology was applied for topical and contextual reasons. The context of this social research lent itself to such an approach as it was focused on an implementation issue within an organisation where there was an interdependency of constituencies who held a stake in the implementation of the LBC programme (Web Center for Social Research Methods, 2008). While there are varying definitions about what evaluation is, a simple definition widely accepted by theorists is that it is a process for determining or discerning the worth or value of an evaluation object (Worthen, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1997). The generic goal of most evaluations is to provide ‘useful feedback’ to relevant constituencies (Web Center for Social Research Methods, 2008). Fetterman, (2001) proposes a concept of evaluation that goes beyond this notion of feedback to actual empowerment of those affected by the process as they are encouraged to examine themselves through a critically reflective lens. My view was that this would be a natural consequence of evaluation within the LBC framework as leaders were asked to look in the mirror and assess themselves against what they espoused as essential leadership practices and what they did. The nature of the evaluation was formative as the implementation of the LBC was still in process and the essence of my intention was to initiate this inquiry on the basis of improvement and ongoing development (Worthen, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1997). A summative evaluation was not appropriate or tenable as any discussion about discontinuation of the programme would be extremely premature and premeditated given that the LBC programme was still being implemented.

Methods of data collection and analysis

The underpinning paradigm for this inquiry was interpretive. In this working version of the research design (see fig 3.1) I selected data collection tools that would best extrapolate the kind of rich and descriptive data I sought from respondents. I conducted this research with two sets of respondents; the leadership team and the

learners within the LBC programme. My focus was to draw out rich data based on the small size of the leadership and learner sample groups.

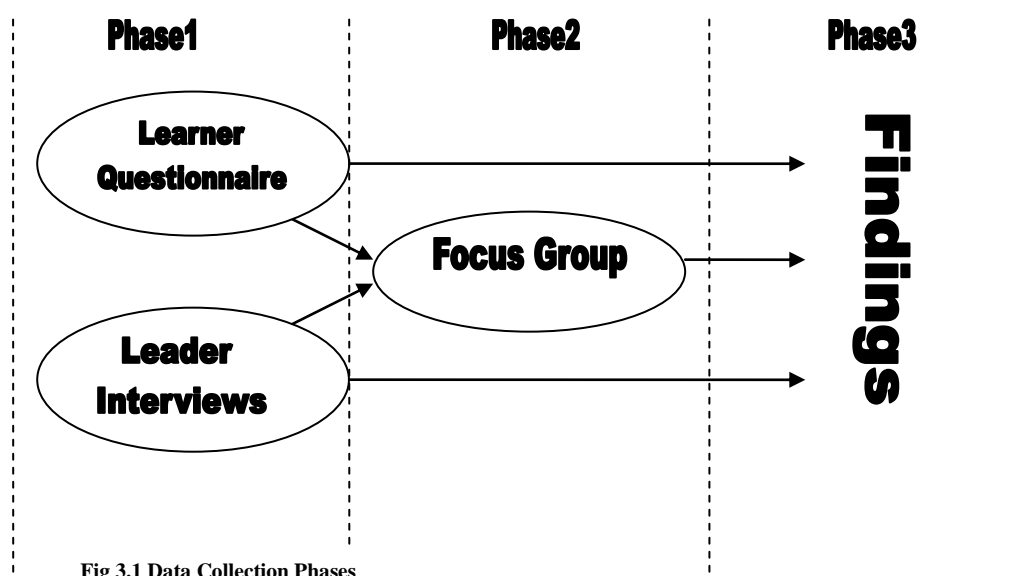


Fig 3.1 Data Collection Phases

Problematic for the social research paradigm is the perceived inadequacy and ambiguity of validating findings sourced from interpretive data collection tools (Cohen & Manion, 1997). To mitigate that problem and establish the veracity of the inquiry, a multi-method triangulation approach was a mandatory consideration to offset any credibility issues that might be apportioned to a single method approach.

The research process involved:

1. One to one interviews with three leadership respondents
2. Online survey questionnaire sent to 50 learner respondents
3. Focus group with 3 leadership participants. The focus group was informed by the findings of phase one data.

Leader Interviews

I selected interviews as one instrument for the inquiry because of my intention to acquire rich data from the respondents. Walford (2001) and Freebody (2003) point out that interviews can be both useful and harmful to the research process in the sense that if managed properly they generate free flowing data, but the quality of the data may be skewed by the artificiality of the interview process itself. In other words there is

the potential that interview subjects may be inclined to cover up deficiencies in the interview, or not to be wholly truthful. Walford's (2001) preference was for observation but he suggests that observation is not always feasible because of time constraints and interviews can provide an effective alternative. Despite Walford's reservations about interviews my plan was to mitigate the potential for distortion of data by comparative analysis of the leader's responses with the learner survey responses. There are advantages to interviews that set it apart from other research methods; responses can be procured instantaneously; interviewees can be coached through the process, given explanations, clarification about concepts, and reasons for questions (Cohen & Manion, 1997). In this inquiry interviews would be particularly advantageous when it came to the leader participant group. Leaders form a small group of respondents and this provided for a greater degree of personal interaction and also meant that the interview component of this inquiry would not be excessively time and labour intensive. The diagram below (fig.3.2) depicts the areas of questioning put to the leaders these being; the level of person involvement in the LBC, their perceptions of personal leadership style, success of the LBC implementation, and their vision for the LBC and what needed to be improved. These were comparatively analysed with the learner data in the following phase of data collection.

Leader Interview questions

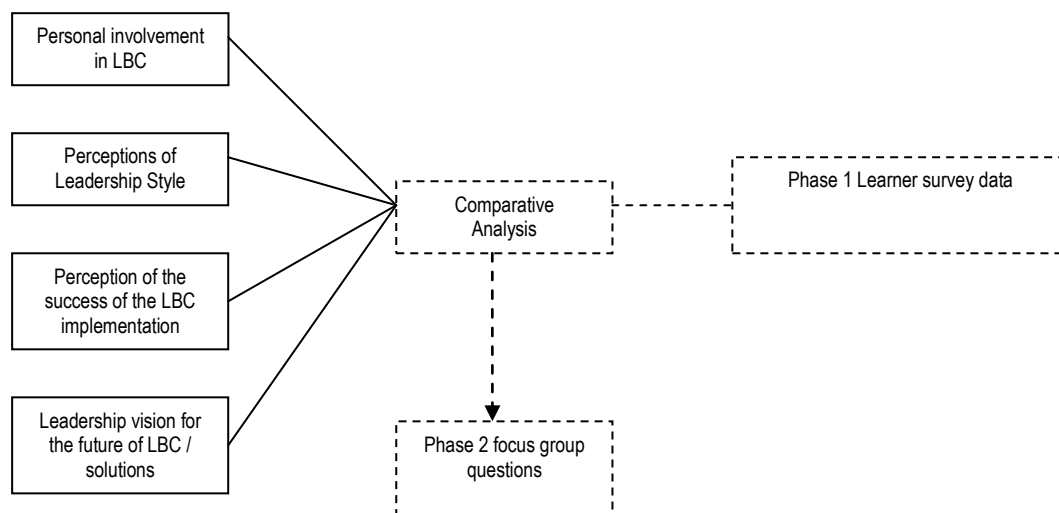


Figure 3.2 Phase one leaders interviews

I conducted a series of one to one interviews with 3 members of the leadership board; each interview was aiming to be no longer than 20 minutes in duration. Interviews are an ideal research instrument for obtaining a greater depth of information (Hinds, 2000), and the preparation and planning of the interviews was essential to collect a quality of rich and descriptive information. Therefore I structured the interviews with a series of predefined areas for questioning that are focused, but with a minority number of open ended questions to generate discussion about areas of the subject matter that may have been inadvertently excluded by virtue of the interview structure and questioning. Time was factored into the research design allowing for a process of shaping, testing and reshaping of questions. Despite the time set aside to develop the questions I was changing and reshaping the questions up until the actual interviews took place (refer to appendix 1).

Analysis of the interviews

The interviews were transcribed verbatim and because the interviews were structured with an identical process of questioning this allowed me to extrapolate key word and theme patterns question by question. It was important to code the data from each question and this done in direct alignment with the research problem (Cohen & Manion, 1997). The process of analysis involved tabulating the respondent's data side by side to identify commonalities and disparities in the responses. As themes were identified in the data I manually circled and appropriated the response data to a particular theme.

Learner Survey Questionnaire

The purpose of the survey was to collect a depth of data from a large group of learners in a way that would be convenient, confidential and easy for participants to complete. There are a number of considerations that impact on the decision to use a questionnaire for data collection including the purpose of the survey, the population you wish to survey and the resources that are available to you (Cohen & Manion, 1997). The following diagram (refer fig 3.3) depicts the areas of questioning covered by the learner survey as it sits in context with the leader interview questions. As previously mentioned the phase one data would be comparatively analysed to provide the foundation for questioning in phase two of data collection.

Leader interview questions

Learner survey questions

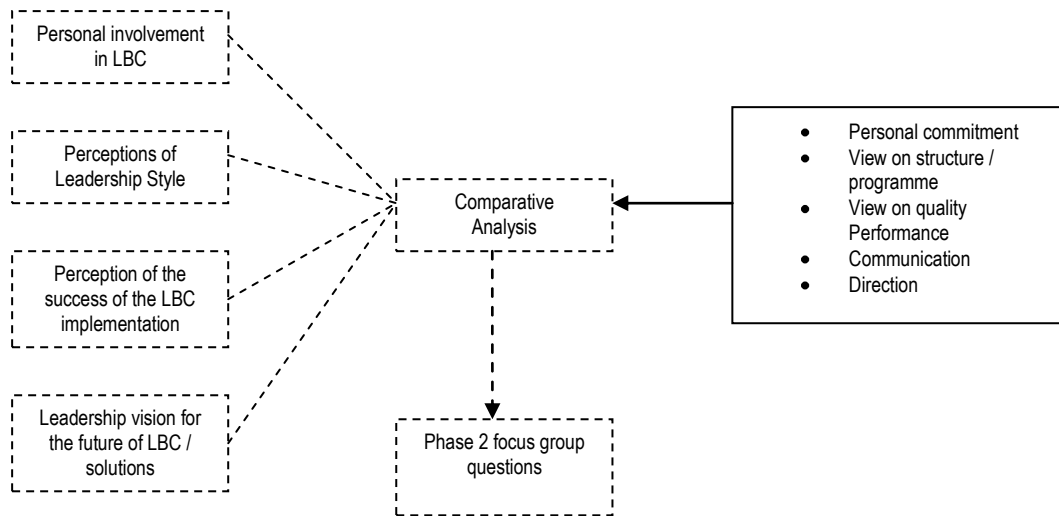


Figure 3.3 Phase one learner questionnaires

My selection of the online survey tool assumed that the majority of the LBC learner group had sufficient computer literacy and access to digital technology to be able to participate in the survey. This assumption was founded on the basis of a pre-existing email network. Learners formed the majority of the respondents targeted for this research with approximate numbers of around 50 in the LBC. Of this group I intended to collect data at a 30-50% response rate and the actual response rate achieved was 54% with 27 respondents completing the survey. I developed a web enabled survey questionnaire as the instrument of data collection for reach and timeliness requirements. Questionnaires are an ideal tool for collecting data from a large sample group that may have the added complexity of geographical disparities (Hinds, 2000). I didn't perceive that there would be an issue for reach or distribution to the learner group as I mentioned previously there was a considerably large online community within this participant base. I utilised Survey Monkey a web based survey tool to survey these respondents. Survey Monkey is a purpose built survey tool with the functionality required for collecting and analysing data, providing a central repository for information, providing time and complexity efficiencies in the management of data. The design of a survey can be a complex and time consuming process (Hinds, 2000). The design of the data collection tools and how data is collected will directly

impact on the degree of complexity when it comes time for analysis and summary of the findings (Anderson, 1998). Time was factored into the research design plan allowing for a process of shaping, testing and reshaping questions, and the usability of the survey (refer appendix 2). Despite the significant time taken to construct and test the survey a minor complication was uncovered in the collection process which created confusion amongst respondents. However the question was negligible and did not critically impact on the data collection or analysis. I wanted to draw out rich data in this survey by collecting free text responses, however it was important to ensure that the amount of data extracted was manageable for sorting and analysis. As a mitigation measure of information saturation I incorporated smart questioning methods such as the use of Likert scales and pre-coded multi-choice questions (Jenkins, 1999).

Learner survey questionnaire analysis

Themes and patterns were analysed against the responses from the survey questionnaire. The survey provided for a greater complexity and multiplicity of data. Multi-choice questions and Likert scales were measures applied to minimise the scope of data collected and simplify my ability to carry out comparative analysis in an effective way (Anderson, 1998). The responses to the Likert scales and multi-choice questions were measured quantitatively. A mean was established and responses were appropriated a rank.

Because free text response fields were also utilised word analysis techniques such as 'key words in context', and 'word count' were applied to refine text to patterns, themes, and commonalities (Ryan & Bernard, 2000). This was a lengthier analysis than the leaders' interviews as there were numerous more responses to review. Responses were extracted by question and assigned to an excel spreadsheet. Once assigned to a specific worksheet in the spreadsheet, I was able to highlight themes by colour coding responses.

Leader Focus Group

Focus groups are useful tools for data collection purposed towards drawing out people's perceptions about a particular event, idea or experience (Hinds, 2000). Focus

groups have several strengths. Focus groups can draw out a greater depth of data about a specific topic providing a simultaneous observation of synergies and themes as opposed to post hoc analysis of separate interviews (Morgan, 1997). Focus groups are particularly useful where a phenomenon is not easily observed. Focus groups are only effective in qualitative research if they are applied as a complimentary dimension in true partnership with other qualitative data collection tools (Morgan, 1997). This focus group provided an ideal platform for the leaders to examine their practice in response to the data extrapolated from the learner survey. It also provided the opportunity for the leaders to reflect on the comments they proffered through the interviews. The focus group (refer fig. 3.4) was incorporated in the design not as an end in itself but as a funnelling mechanism to synergise perspectives and perceptions of the leaders with those who were being led.

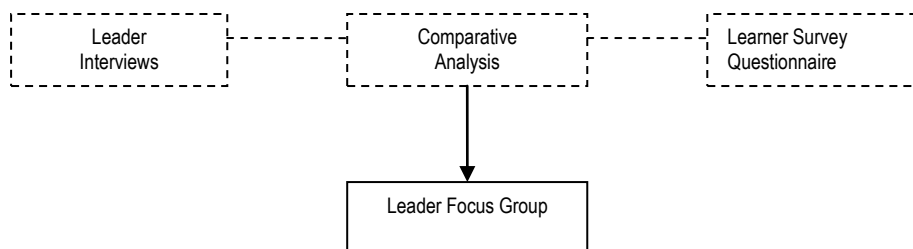


Figure 3.4 Phase 2 leaders focus group

Three leaders who were involved in the phase one interviews were involved in the focus group discussion. Leadership was under the microscope of this inquiry it was important that the leaders who were directly affected by results were given opportunity to see the threads and themes that result through the research process, and were given opportunity to discuss how they viewed and responded to the findings. This aligns with the empowerment notion of evaluation (Fetterman, 2001). This small number of participants afforded an environment that fostered comfort for individuals to openly discuss and contribute their ideas about the findings of the survey and interview data (Hinds, 2000). The success of a focus group is critically dependent on its design, and how well the moderator guides the process (Morgan, 1997). The importance of design of the structure and nature of questioning cant be over

emphasised. This was vital in encouraging deep and rich feedback from the participants within the group. It was important to create a balance of tight direction but allowing enough flexibility for responses to flow. This was managed through provision of phase one response data for pre-reading a week prior to the focus group to stimulate relevant discussion. Predetermined questions were formulated to provide a parameter in which to confine the discussion. A balance of open and close ended questions were pivotal in drawing out rich data, but not compromising the width of discussion too far outside the scope of the inquiry. (Krueger, 1994).

Focus group analysis

Content analysis is an appropriate form of analysis in respect to the interview sessions and the focus group. Content analysis is generally associated with quantitative research, but in a sense is critical when any form of content is being scrutinised whether it be in interviews, focus groups or from field notes (Merriam, 1998; Ryan & Bernard, 2000). Content analysis provided the opportunity to extrapolate themes. This was achieved through a process of coding, whereby response data was tabulated and comments of like theme were appropriated a distinct symbol.

Validity and reliability

Interviews

The reliability of interview data is assured by the design of its tools and collection methods (Anderson, 1998). In the process of constructing the interview structure great care was given to ensuring that the questions provided a degree of elasticity; constraining enough to focus on core leadership and implementation issues, but open enough to allow for interviewees to articulate their ideas freely in respect to the question areas (Freebody, 2003; Walford, 2001). This sense of elasticity also provided a countermeasure for the tension identified by Cohen and Manion (1997) where by an overly rigid interview structure would increase reliability, but could create a potential decrease in validity. It was important to balance that tension in the design part of this process.

Where validity is concerned, authenticity and credibility of the interview data was established by a two measure approach; firstly interviewees were fully informed of

the interview process and subject areas for questioning and signed a consent form to validate this. Secondly Interviewee candidates were emailed copies of the transcripts from the interview with the opportunity to dispute any inaccurate recording of data, or to expand on any answers they felt were not articulated clearly enough.

Questionnaire survey

The design phase of the survey was critical to ensuring that reliable data could be obtained from respondents. Questions have to be worded appropriately for the respondent group. Educational jargon could have prohibited the quality of responses received therefore it was imperative to simplify questions without patronising respondents (Cohen & Manion, 1997). The survey questionnaire was designed to provide an alternative dimension of feedback to the Leadership interviews. A comparative analysis was able to be made about the views and perceptions held by the learners and the leaders. This process of triangulation ensured that the problems associated with the LBC were discussed and commented on from alternative perspectives.

The validity of a questionnaire can come down to two issues that may effect the accuracy of data; whether or not respondents answer the questionnaire accurately and completely, and whether or not non-respondents would have reflected the same distribution of answers as the respondents (Cohen & Manion, 1997). In a research such as this one it is highly appropriate to apply non-probability sampling due to the small constituency of the LBC (Cohen & Manion, 1997). In this instance it was necessary to use convenience sampling as the selection process for respondents because the group size was relatively small. There is no clear cut figure that could be stipulated as the optimum amount of responses for a survey. For purposes of statistical analysis 30 cases are considered to be a minimum requirement and although the intention of this survey was not for statistical purposes this was an appropriate guideline to validate the data (Cohen & Manion, 1997). Establishing an ideal sample size should be based on variables such as population size and the nature or purpose of the survey which as stated before was primarily to garnish qualitative responses. The total population was small in scale approximated at 103 constituents at the time of the survey. Fifty members of the constituency had online access and my intention was to

collect a minimum number of 15 responses. I received 35 responses of which 27 responses were satisfactorily completed a total response rate of 26%.

Focus group

The use of a focus group in this inquiry was valid as it was not the sole method of data collection, but a complimentary aspect of the overall research design (Morgan, 1997). It was built into the process to align the findings of the first phase where leaders were interviewed and learners were surveyed. It brought focus to the findings of phase one and enabled the researcher to get a greater depth of understanding about what the survey and interview data meant through the perspectives of the leadership. It also provided a vehicle for the leadership to decipher the challenges and problems and discuss potential solutions in line with the empowerment evaluation approach adopted in this research.

To ensure that the data generated by the focus group was reliable it was necessary to recognise weaknesses of a focus group and mitigate these through robust design and moderation (Morgan, 1997). Firstly focus groups require careful coordination. Time and location need to be considered to obtain the level of participants required. The local church premises fulfilled these requirements. Because all the participants met there on a regular basis it was not difficult to coordinate timing and availability. Secondly there is a perception with focus groups that the moderator may exact too much influence on the data, and this is heightened by the high visibility of the moderator in leading and directing discussion. To negate the effect of my presence in the focus group I prepared a briefing document with data related to the questioning as pre-reading for the participants (refer appendix 3). This allowed me to minimise the amount of time I needed to verbalise and clarify the questioning in the discussion reducing my interaction. Thirdly there is the issue of consensus whereby some participants may withhold ideas in a group setting and conform to ideas generated by other group members. The group was relatively small with only three participants. This allowed for a more intimate interaction. The focus group participants were also given the opportunity to make additions, or adjustments individually upon receiving a draft of the transcribed notes from the discussion.

Ethical Considerations

This research inquiry was undertaken with great care to ensure that respondents in the research process were not harmed, humiliated, or subject to loss, or recrimination for any part they had in expressing their perceptions and perspectives. My residence within the community of practice presented some advantages in the process of making ethical considerations (Cohen & Manion, 1997). I have longstanding relationships with the respondent group; I know who they are, their general cognitive abilities, and I was confident that I could apply a socially competent approach to ensure the safety of these people that I know and have personal respect for. To mitigate ethical risks I developed a framework based on a model proposed by Diener and Crandall (1978). This provided me with a critical grid with which to develop procedures to ensure the safety of those who participated in the inquiry process.

To ensure that participants were protected, participation was voluntary and formal consent required. This was clearly explained both in the consent and information forms supplied to the participants who could not participate with signing their consent. Where personal interaction with the participants was involved in the process the information and consent sheets were supported by my verbal explanation. In relation to the learner survey individuals were emailed and invited to contribute to the research. They were directed to a survey monkey web link where they could post a totally anonymous survey response. The research purpose and process was clearly articulated on the cover page of the survey with the ability to opt in or out. A check box consent form was on the cover page with a requirement to have read, understood and agreed the purpose of the research and that it is purely voluntary to participate (refer appendix 2). A respondent could not proceed without having indicated that they were fully informed, had volunteered to participate, and agreed not to identify themselves. Where the leader interviews were concerned an information and consent form was given to the participant and I personally explained the purposes and nature of the research to them. Participants signed the consent form agreeing that they had the intentions, purposes and the process of the inquiry fully articulated to them and that they by of their own volition agreed to participate.

In regard to the Focus Group, participants were also given an information sheet that explained the process and structure of the focus group. It explained the intended

purposes and outcomes of the focus group and how this data contributed to this research project.

It was necessary also to make provisions for the rights, confidentiality, and preservation of anonymity of participants. Total anonymity was provided for in the survey process. Survey monkey has a distribution and analysis function that will ensure that respondents cannot be matched to responses. Individuals and their comments could not be personally identified by others outside of the researcher and the individual participant in the summaries or findings from either the Interviews or the Focus group.

To ensure the minimisation of harm toward participants, specific individuals were not identified in the summarised analysis of research data collected. The focus of the inquiry and how it was to be fed back to assist the leadership was articulated clearly in the online survey and through the information and consent forms supplied to interview and focus group participants. To assure that ethics were maintained in this aspect I confined access to the raw data to me as the researcher.

Ethical provision for cultural and social sensitivity also needed to be considered. The cultural and social thread of this community was one based on a set of common religious values. Over 17 years of being involved in this community I have accumulated enough social and cultural capital to know the constituents personally and therefore able to navigate the issues and concerns of these people. Conversely these people knew me very well; they knew my motives and intentions were not for harm but for the growth of our learners. It has been through a process of ongoing discussion and explanation of the research that I gained acceptance and approval from the Church Leadership team to undertake this inquiry as well as gaining full ethics approval from the Unitec Research Ethics Committee.

To minimise the potential for misunderstanding of this research and to limit the potential for deception the intended outcomes of this inquiry were openly communicated as part of the process for gaining participant consent. This was achieved by way of information sheets for the interviewees, and a cover page on the

electronic survey (see appendix 1). The distribution and dissemination of data collected in this process was clearly articulated in the information sheets.

The dissemination of the findings from this research were clearly articulated as part of the informed consent process. Participants were advised that the findings were primarily to meet the academic requirement of my research thesis and as a by product these findings will be shared with the Church leadership board for the practical aspect of improving and enhancing the LBC. This was a completely voluntary process and participants had to accept the conditions upon which findings would be disseminated if they wanted to contribute to the research. Participants were given the opportunity to retract their response, or change feedback up until 2 weeks after the data was collected without having to provide a reason. No respondents requested a retraction of their responses or amended any of their feedback.

To minimise conflict of interest I undertook this inquiry in the capacity as a Unitec Master of Educational Leadership and Management student for the fulfilment of the academic requirements of this programme and this was clearly articulated to participants. All the participants in this research engaged in the process already knowing me very well and my involvement at leadership level but were still prepared to participate with provisions for protection of anonymity in place.

The research design adequately provided an ethically robust platform for collecting data that ensured the safety of the participants through measures that ensured anonymity and therefore freedom to contribute fully to the process. The aims and objectives were factored into the selection of methods, tools and analysis.

This was an educational leadership and culture problem, therefore the tools for data collection were selected on the basis of providing rich qualitative data in a timely and convenient process that did not compromise the safety of the respondents. The inquiry intended to utilise empowerment evaluation as it means of critical analysis. This necessitated the extraction of rich data from learners and leaders, through appropriate data collection tools undergirded by safe processes to ensure the protection of participants.

CHAPTER 4: REPORTING OF DATA

Introduction

In this chapter I present the research findings from the data collection phases of the research. The collation of this data provided the basis for critical analysis of LBC leadership practice in the process of implementation. The research design focused on investigating the perceptions and views about the implementation of the LBC, its leadership, problems and challenges that have been encountered along the implementation journey, and potential opportunities to resolve these. Findings are summarised specific to the data collection tool that was applied at each phase of the inquiry (as pictured below in figure 4.1). This chapter lays the platform for thematic discussion and evaluation of the leadership against the backdrop of the leadership literature covered in chapter 2.

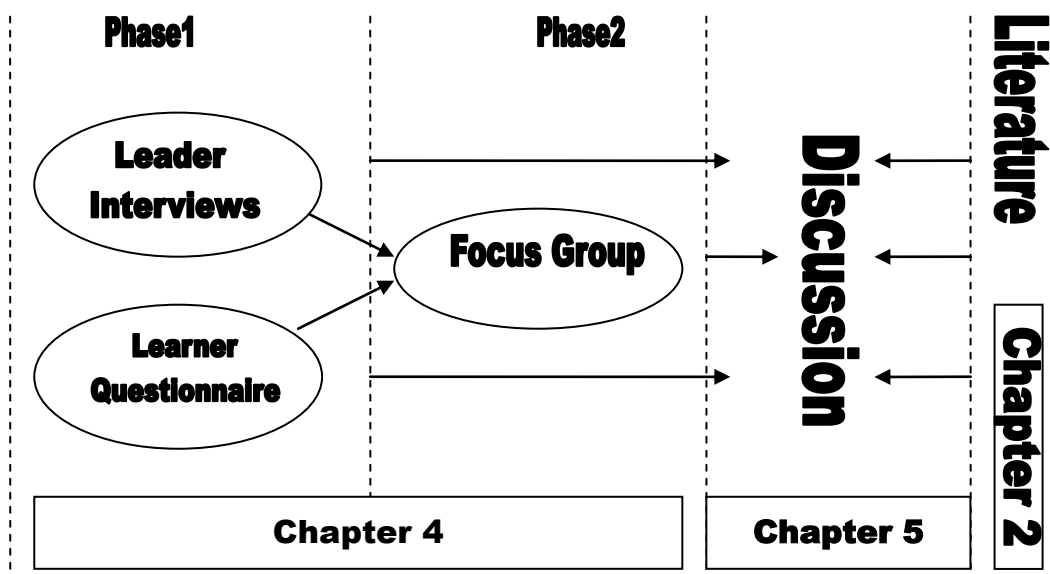


Figure 4. 1 Chapter Design

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first reports on phase one data which was drawn from leader interviews and learner survey responses. The second section includes phase two data drawn from the focus group conducted with the leaders group.

Phase One Leader Interview Data

Leaders from the LBC team were asked to participate in one on one interviews. Of the wider LBC leadership group of 5 individuals 3 agreed to be interviewed. The sample group responses for the 3 leaders are labelled L1-L3 for the purpose of reporting throughout this chapter. The leaders varied in length of time involved in the LBC, two of the leaders were involved from the inception of the LBC. The third participant had been involved for over two years. A manual analysis was applied to the raw interview transcripts to sort key words that aligned with the essence of the research questions. In analysing the data I was able to extrapolate several key themes. These were; individual leadership style, collaborative leadership and inconsistency.

The leaders spoke about their individual leadership style. There were similar threads across a couple of the leaders who spoke of a directive approach to leadership. By this they expressed an approach that required them to set an example, and then call others to follow. This explanation of leadership was about setting clear goals and objectives, and then 'leading from the front'. A 'hands on' approach, being more accountable, and credible through their own personal integrity and therefore having the right to challenge or call others to follow. Participants spoke of serving and leading as being intertwined. This to them meant leading actually involved resourcing, researching, writing, instructing, equipping and training the constituency they were leading.

L1 *...our style has to be hands on...not just passing on things...it's the way it has to be at the moment. We're very much at the beginning, at the teething stages of the BC so there's a lot of interacting between us 4 and with some people outside, overseas for instance...at the moment it's hands on.*

L2 *I was very direct when it first started, but 2005-6 I took the reins and ran with the whole LBC direction...leading, managing the whole process...*

One participant provided an alternative view of leadership in that he saw himself as a follower of the others within the leadership group. This could be attributed to this

leaders comparative inexperience when measured against the involvement of the other leaders.

L3 *I guess more or less follower in a sense, I don't know too much about systems so I don't know how to implement a lot of the stuff...so I follow the other guys concerned....I don't have too much experience or expertise in that area so again minimum to be honest.*

This participant acknowledged his perceived technical deficiencies, however he expressed complete commitment to the work of the LBC yet seeking insight and clear direction from other leaders in the leadership group.

A second theme that pervaded the data was leadership as being shared or collaborative within the parameters of the leadership team. There was a sense given by the participants that while being directive, leadership power and authority did not reside with one individual. The process of decision making was not exercised in isolation but shared among the core group of the LBC leadership with the final say on matters to be agreed upon with complete unanimity. Participants inferred that there was an ongoing internal consultative process, that tasks and goals were initially discussed and from time to time reviewed by the LBC leadership team.

L1 *I get together with the rest of the other 3 guys and we talk about our goals concerning the ministry and so my involvement is to come alongside the men and we're given different responsibilities that we should be doing within the overall scheme of things and my job is to follow up the actual bible college which is separate from the teaching ministry...*

L3 *...I also know leadership is a collaborative thing...many times, especially in the eldership and the way scripture pictures leadership...*

L2 *...I was one of the 5 guys at the time...discussed the whole BC idea with the head pastor and decided this was the direction we wanted to take. We wanted to lead our people into... a natural progression from what we currently have running in the church, in terms of discipleship programme.*

A third theme from the participants' feedback indicated a general agreement that while there were issues with the LBC there was some degree of success in just having

established it. The common thread of the participants' feedback spoke of fact that instructional material was being slowly developed. The participants commented that they felt that some of the LBC goals that were set were attained, in particular getting the LBC established, and having produced a portion of the intended curriculum. They also acknowledged there were certainly areas of deficiency with the LBC, in particular the lag in developing instructional material, the failure to spell out clear aims, and requirements, and the inability to deliver on the vision which was set for the LBC constituency. They suggested that while there was a collaborative intent amongst the leaders to implement the LBC the process of getting together to review tasks and goals and deal with problems also fell by the wayside.

L1 *...our people are being taught the word which is the goal...which is the teaching of the Word and encouraging the Lord's people to have a lifestyle of being taught the Word, so yes in a sense it is successful. But in saying that there's still a lot of work to be done. Although we are achieving the step by step goals that we have set but there are a lot of areas that we need to work on, for instance the consistency of supplying the material. At this stage it's inconsistent, we need to be more frequent in supplying our people with the BC lessons and that's something we've been talking about within the leadership.*

L3 *The fact that we have lessons that to me is success in a sense...it's basically better than nothing, we've had 7 or 8 lessons so far...in that sense yes, but as we have noted the frequency of it probably isn't as successful as we have wanted it.*

One leader commented that one intention of the LBC was to have people learn autonomously and observed that this had broken down the accountability between teacher and learner. This break down was not detected until two years into the implementation. It was interesting that this was not identified as a potential risk given the move toward a self directed model for learning.

L2 *... we've learnt in these last two and a half years some lessons that we probably didn't learn initially in the first term. It wasn't until halfway through the BC that we realized the break down of accountability between students and teachers. What we initially hoped for was that the LBC was going to be implemented in a more self directed*

methodology where we would challenge the students to move off from spoon feeding them to feeding themselves. That was one of the main emphasis that we wanted to bring across initially. What we found half way through was that the whole accountability between the disciple and discipler had broken down completely. As a result lessons weren't done and weren't learned a result so it was disappointing from that aspect.

The leadership team participants spoke of their need to be committed, to stand up and be more accountable, and to take the lead through setting the example. The mixed feelings shared about the success of the implementation reflected a critical self evaluation of the participants about the way in which leadership was exercised. They concurred about the lack of commitment to completing tasks according to milestones that the leaders themselves had set and publicised to the constituency.

L1 *That we're convinced that this is a necessity, a vital part of the needs of our people which is clearly set in the Word...the key for us is that if we're convinced that this needs to happen is we will give our all to it...I need to be convinced of this and make it a part of my own lifestyle and therefore I will see it as a need for those in my congregation. If anything we need leaders who will lead, by this I mean we are convinced of the need of the Word in our lives and the lives of those in our congregations.*

L3 *The biggest challenge at the moment is finding time to collate information, gather information, formalize lessons and deliver them, on time and with good balance and content...I want to be more consistent in collating and delivering good materials that will help assist our people in the Word of God.*

L2 *Basically it comes down to commitment, leaders must see the importance of training Gods people...being consumed in the Word so that should become a motivating factor in producing lessons so the people will look to mature and continue to learn. I guess in a sense it may come down to a lack of leadership, it's not seen as important...maybe we're too busy...we've got other things.*

The leaders said that they were not convinced, committed, or consistent and this was in their mind the greatest area of their leadership challenge. In summarising the

leaders interview data the participants were quick to identify their perceived shortcomings and were able to identify particular aspects of their leadership they felt needed to improve. There was a general sense from the leaders that the leadership model was not the issue but rather individual leaders showing some integrity in applying what they espoused as leaders.

Phase One - Learner Survey Questionnaire Data

Demographics

35 respondents out of 50 engaged in the survey process with 27 completing the survey with a sufficient contribution to constitute a valid response. This sample reflects 26% of the LBC learner constituency of 103.

Table 4. 1 Respondents gender and years in attendance

Years attending	Respondents	Male	Female
0-5 years	0	0	0
6-10 years	3	2	1
11-15 years	8	-	8
16-20 years	8	2	6
21 years or more	8	3	5

The Survey questionnaire prompted respondents to submit a small amount of demographic information. The fields required were; years in attendance at the local fellowship of the LBC and gender. The gender ratio of the total populace is weighted in favour of the female over male. This gender imbalance was reflected through the survey with 20 respondents having indicated that they were female and 7 male. All respondents had been involved in the constituent community for a minimum of 6-21 years. There were no respondents with less than 5 years in the constituency indicative of the fact that learners may spend up to 4 years in the discipleship programme before entering the LBC.

Learner Perspectives

The LBC leadership team had implemented a policy prescribing a timeframe for completion of lessons with a deadline of two months. This was to provide learners with adequate time to complete the reading of the lesson and accompanying

assignment. 21 of 27 respondents indicated that they were completing the lessons outside of the timeframe policy (refer figure 4.2).

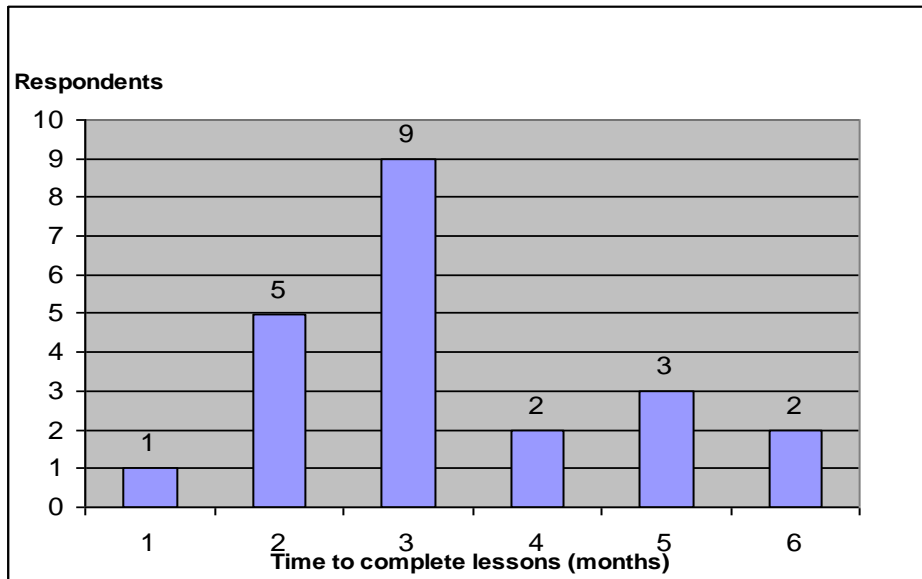


Figure 4.2 Length of time to complete lessons

An open ended question required respondents to give explanations as to why they were or were not meeting the timeframes for lessons. This sought to inquire as to intrinsic or extrinsic motivational variables of the respondents. Those that indicated that they were not meeting the deadlines cited several prohibitive factors including; poor time management; a lack of personal discipline; a lack of clarity of what was required or combinations of these reasons given. Learners that met the timeframe policy requirements for the lessons cited inverse factors (refer table 4.2) to those respondents who did not attain to the standard.

Table 4.2 Factors prohibiting lesson completion

Prohibitive Factors	Frequency
time	7
time & discipline	4
clarity of understanding	2
discipline	2
combination	1

They stated they were disciplined that they set aside specific and regular blocks of time to apply themselves to read the instructional material and complete the associated assignments.

Learner expectations

Learner expectations were sought in respect to their participation in the LBC why they engaged with the LBC with a view to evaluating whether or not their expectations were met.

Table 4.3 Reasons for participating in LBC

Response	Frequency
To further understand Biblical Theology & Doctrine	17
Because it will help to improve my Christian practice	13
Because it is expected by the Leadership	13
Because everyone else is participating in it	6
To gain a theological qualification	1
Other	1

Most of the respondents flagged multiple reasons of why they wanted to participate in the LBC with only 5 opting for a solitary reason for participation. The reasons indicated that most respondents entered the LBC with a balance between personal interests and external motivation from peers or leaders. What is not evident in that data was the degree to which the leadership had directly or indirectly promoted that participation in the LBC would extend learners understanding of theology and Biblical doctrine; this may have aided the high frequency of this response. The learners were asked to rate the degree to which their reasons for participating had been actualised. The rating data overall affirmed two views; firstly the LBC has thus far provided the theological doctrinal extension of learning that respondents had sought; secondly it had failed to deliver on improving their Christian practice.

Table 4.4 Importance of the LBC to respondents

Rating Statement	0=Low	1	2	3	4	5=High	Mean
Importance of the Bible College to you personally	0	2	3	6	8	8	3.63
Your own commitment to the Bible College Lessons	2	2	7	11	4	1	2.59
Impact of the Bible College on you personally	0	3	6	11	5	2	2.89
Frequency of the Bible College Lessons	4	2	6	8	3	4	2.59
Quality of the Bible College Lessons	2	2	6	10	5	1	2.63

The above table shows how respondents rated each statement and highlights a gap between the importance of the LBC to the respondents which is rated mostly as high, and the actual impact of the LBC on them personally. This suggests a lack of realisation of the expectations held by the respondents based on what they believed the LBC would deliver for them. The data reflects an issue of misalignment between the importance of the LBC to individual respondents and their commitment to it. They perceive that the LBC is of critical importance; yet they also indicate that they are perhaps lacking a desire to meet the demands required of a learner in the current format.

Learners' perspectives of the leadership

Learners were questioned as to how the LBC has been led thus far. The responses indicated that learners do perceive problems with the delivery of the LBC. The lowest area of rating was first of all frequency of lesson delivery. This was consistent with the identification of this as a symptom of the research problem. Secondly, learners expressed that they were uninformed as to the direction and purpose of the LBC and not consulted of the value to learners.

Table 4.5 Respondents rating of the delivery of the LBC

Rating Statement	0=Low	1	2	3	4	5=High	Mean
Quality in design of lessons	3	4	8	8	3	0	2.15
Support in understanding completing lessons	4	3	9	7	2	1	2.12
Involving you in the future direction of the Bible College	5	3	12	6	0	0	1.58
Timely / frequent delivery of lessons	5	7	8	6	0	0	1.58
seeking your feedback about the value and importance of the Bible College	6	7	5	5	0	1	1.54

The data suggests that much of the communication from the leadership was one way and infrequent. However the data does not indicate as to whether or not respondents were seeking more involvement or communication about the LBC direction. There were mixed responses relating to the quality of the lessons and the support systems underpinning the learning of lessons.

The table below presents responses from the learners of how they rated the effectiveness of how the leadership team communicated the LBC's purpose, vision, standards and processes to learners.

Table 4.6 Leadership communication effectiveness.

	Low					High	
Rating Statement	0	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
Purpose of the Bible College	1	6	5	6	2	6	2.77
Deadlines for completion of assignments	3	1	8	6	3	5	2.77
Time frames for lesson development	3	5	2	12	3	1	2.38
Future vision for the Bible College	5	4	5	6	4	2	2.23
Marking of assignments	7	4	3	5	4	3	2.15

The responses were spread across the rating scale, but it was clearly evident that the way various aspects of the LBC are communicated needed to be examined further. The data infers mixed opinion from respondents about the effectiveness of the leadership in communicating aspects associated with the LBC implementation.

Overall comment on the Leadership

This was an open ended question with a free text field response. The types of feedback about the leadership of the LBC implementation could be sorted into three main categories; a first group were totally positive in the sense that they offered only positive comment; as second group were positive and critical in the sense that the respondents were positive about the leadership while offering critique; and a third group were totally critical whereby respondents placed responsibility and critique squarely at the feet of the leadership team. Overall the feedback was overwhelming critical.

Firstly, there were 5 respondents who were totally positive about the LBC leadership and expressed a common theme; they agreed with the vision laid down by the leadership, and that they were heading in the right direction. They were accepting of the fact that the leadership had technical capacity and capability shortcomings, but believed that through a process of learning the leadership would develop the LBC into the vehicle for spiritual knowledge and growth that they require. As one respondent stated –

The Leadership is still learning as they go. So far they have done a Great job in implementation and will only get better as we go on.

And as this respondent commented –

I Believe they have an overall vision of where and what they want the bible college to be, however I think they need help in filling in the administrative gaps and details, but overall the theological teaching is good

A second group of 8 respondents were positive mixed with critical views about the quality of the LBC and the leadership performance in the implementation. On the one hand they acknowledged the effort made by the LBC leadership team to fulfil the vision but on the hand implied that it was not up to standard, and was not fulfilling the needs and expectations of the learners. These respondents said -

Good, but could be better.

Acceptable, taking into consideration this is their first time trying to implement the Bible College

They have done their best with the materials/information/data that they had to implement the Bible College. Improvements can always be made however.

Started off great...

The survey responses confirmed that learners believed that the LBC concept was implemented to grow them spiritually and extend their theological knowledge. The learners were aware of the LBC proposed vision but had felt that it did not deliver what the leaders had proposed.

A third group of 14 respondents provided critical feedback about the LBC and the leadership. There were several common threads through the responses that highlighted areas perceived as inadequate by the learner constituency. Leadership accountability was identified as a vital ingredient absent from the way in which the LBC had been implemented. They wanted leaders to deliver on what they had promoted, to do what they said they were going to do. Respondents suggested that direction and support was not sufficiently provided in the LBC. They wanted to have the leadership come alongside and reiterate and remind learners about the requirements of the LBC while providing adequate support along the way; this was perceived as a critical success factor if the leadership were to deliver on the vision of the LBC. As stated by these respondents -

ok could be improved in the area of accountability of completion and getting feedback once lessons are completed and handed in I wouldn't have a clue how my last few lessons went I've even asked about it a couple times and was fobbed off.

I think there does lack a leadership role in the sense that the Lessons are just handed out and left for teachers/disciplers to study and teach. A crash course or maybe a lecture session could be good way of leading the

teachers into the lessons.

The initial establishment of the LBC looked promising but since its inception it has lacked leadership with regards to coordination, meeting deadlines, and who the responsibility lies with in coordinating it.

I think the leadership need to be more on-hands with the handing in of the lessons and setting deadlines as people often lag behind.

Again we see that communication was discussed as an area that the leadership needed to improve upon. The suggestion was made by respondents that very little dialogue occurred between the leaders and learners following the initial inception of the LBC. At the inception of the LBC there was a lot of discussion about the vision and direction of the LBC, but following the initial engagement there was very little mentioned by the leadership. According to the respondents communication about the LBC became almost non-existent except when a new lesson was delivered which became exceedingly infrequent. Little feedback was given about the lessons in the development, the marking requirements, and the expectations of them as learners. They therefore suggest their motivation and commitment to the LBC diminished as a result. As stated by one respondent –

We don't generally hear about the Bible College until a new lesson is ready to come out or at camp time...the periods in between are quite silent and so are we about it.

And stated by another respondent –

A little slow actually and often miscommunicated. Could be better informed re future/vision of Bible College

The commitment and integrity of leaders was brought into question by respondents who made a direct correlation between the lack of motivation of learners with the perceived lack of commitment and prioritisation demonstrated by the leaders themselves. The comments tended to suggest that some leaders themselves hadn't internalised the vision of the LBC, and thus there was no importance placed on the

work the leaders had to do with some of the implementation tasks. As these respondents commented -

Not very convinced about how important or relevant these lessons are. Some of the leaders don't even complete the lessons themselves.

There has been a lack of credibility in the delivery of lessons. The congregation fail to hand in lessons and complete the lessons because there is a lack of commitment from the leadership.

Because of the delays in the delivery of lessons there was a sense that learners devalued the importance of completing the lessons and assignments because the leaders were not perceived to be following up the learners with any great urgency.

Importance of the LBC to Learners

Learners were asked to evaluate the impact the LBC model had made on them in comparison with the discipleship programme in terms of their expectations they had for participating in the LBC. The LBC was rated as comparable with the Discipleship programme to the degree of impact it had on the learner in increasing their motivation and passion for theology and self directed learning. However there was an overwhelming disparity in favour of the discipleship programme over the LBC model when it came to the practical application of knowledge and the in-depth understanding of biblical principles.

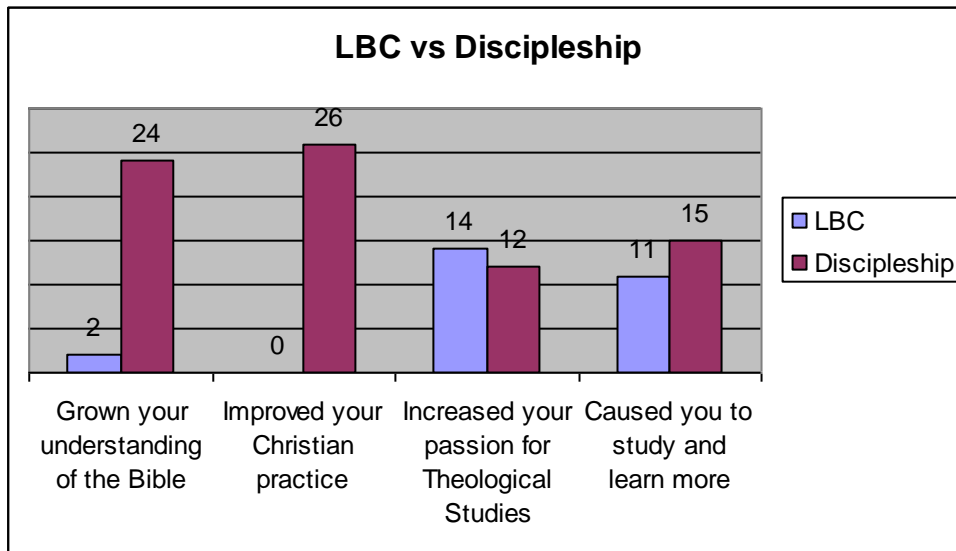


Figure 4.3 Importance of LBC to learners compared with Discipleship

The data in figure 4.3 shows that there is a disparate gap between the LBC and the discipleship programme in two dimensions; personal growth through understanding of the bible and the impact of the lessons through discipleship on respondent's daily Christian practice. I will look to explore this further in chapter 5 but suggest there are methods and approaches in discipleship that enhance the way that learning impacts on the individuals lives that may be absent from the current LBC format. The almost unanimous response in these first two dimensions warrants further discussion about this proposition. Having said this, the last two dimensions in this comparative question show that a mixed and almost equal divergence in responses. Respondents said that the LBC provided a challenge for them as learners to exercise self-discipline to complete the requirements set out for LBC lessons. Almost half of the respondent group appreciated the new found learning autonomy and mentioned a positive outlook for what the LBC held for them in the future. A number of respondents also expressed that the LBC had in fact extended their knowledge beyond what was learned through the discipleship programme. Respondents also commented positively in reference to the depth of and quality of the lessons -

It has caused me to take more responsibility for my own biblical study...

It has definitely caused me to study and I'm eager to do so as well.

Individually I am more responsible to do assignments on my own etc where the onus is on me.

I have gained more knowledge in biblical doctrine. However in the lesson on giving it seemed to go more into depth than what has been taught in one-on-one discipleship and it had a lot more practical application than the other lessons.

I have found the depth of theology changed more once in bible college. The desire to know more is an issue of the heart rather than the avenue in which it is delivered. In saying that Bible College has dealt better with the depth.

These positive responses for the LBC need to be evaluated in light of an almost equal proportion of responses in (figure 4.3) who had indicated that the discipleship programme had more impact on their personal study and learning. These cited that the LBCs self directed approach resulted in a lack of accountability, and personal involvement between disciple and disciplers, and leaders and learners. There was sentiment conveyed by respondents that they were in favour of returning to the discipleship style accountable relationships for learning. As these respondents stated -

Unaccountability. Bible college is self teaching really, one to one has accountability.

...not that great, i love the one on one accountability with disciples, but bible college is somewhat leaves you out to cope with by yourself, some are okay with personal teaching, but some prefer one on one accountability,...

There was an indication from some married female respondents who felt that they were now further disenfranchised from the rich relationships they once had with other women in the discipleship programme. This could be an expectation within the local constituency, predicated on their interpretation from the Bible that husbands should provide leadership and accountability on a one to one level with their wives, but this

expectation was in some cases not met. This consolidated the view shared by the respondents that a lack of accountable, personal leadership was proving to be prohibitive to personal spiritual growth.

I would say that since one on one discipleship ended I have been left to myself, husband discipling their wives is a joke and now I have very little support from other women because they don't want to override my husband so they want help at all.

Sorry, Bible College lessons has had no effect, not lately at least. And I used to be very enthused about the morning Bible School classes we have 3 x per year, but even that's waned lately ... not sure why(we) women are even included in that part of the curriculum

Most respondents however suggested that the LBC could work, but for it to function to its potential and grow the constituency in understanding and practicality it should in some way integrate the relational aspects of one to one discipleship. That is learners being lead, supported, encouraged, and having regularly dialogue and direction. The respondents mentioned the notion of life transference, a giving of one self to another; not merely a transaction of imparting of knowledge but of the teachers life also. This was discussed as a missing vital ingredient from the LBC model with its paradigmic shift to self directed learning.

I enjoyed the personal contact that one-on-one discipleship involved and think it's vital for the growth of a disciple to have that spiritual leadership. I think the Bible College lessons could incorporate the same approach as discipleship

It causes one to take personal responsibility for bible study. Although 1 to 1 should still be part of the BC process to not lose sight of life transference of what's learned from the bible in keeping one another accountable to doing the Word.

...bible school has been another good discipline for me to be in the word, needs some work with the implementation, one on one is theory in practice the best way to learn and apply the word

into your life and the lives of others.

The responses indicated that in the minds of the learners there was a clear distinction in the two models and for most they identified that the critical component of discipleship relationship as a necessary enhancement required to ensure that the LBC would live up to the vision presented by the leadership. Learners gave the perspective that the LBC in many ways was an impersonal approach to learning, which precipitated a lack of accountability and care. Despite this no respondent at any point suggested a complete deconstruction of the LBC indicating that they saw some worth in the vision that was held by the leadership, yet they did hold views about how the LBC needed to evolve if it were to meet their personal expectations.

One respondent suggested a practical approach to developing the LBC to incorporate the supportive and directive elements of the discipleship programme. The participant went beyond previous comments to make specific suggestions pertaining to structural changes, such as providing an additional classroom delivery of subject matter, along with the one to one ongoing support of a teacher.

Overall it has been good going over some deeper truths and really having an appreciation of theology. But I do still appreciate the ONE on ONE but would even love a tutorial or lecturer environment which could benefit people like myself

Overall the learner participants gave mixed responses about the vision of the LBC. There was broad support for an amended vision which focused on training and equipping the learners for the work of ministry inclusive of the success factors integral to the discipleship programme.

Phase Two – Leader Focus Group Data

Common problems and issues had been identified and acknowledged by both leader and learner participants through the first phase of the data collection and analysis process. This established the platform for the second phase of the research which sought to unearth responses from leaders about what challenges needed to be

overcome to see the LBC vision realised. Whether or not the vision associated with the LBC was the best one is a matter for discussion in the following chapter.

The findings from the learner questionnaire survey were filtered against the back drop of the research questions. This provided a platform for questioning in the leaders focus group. The questions encompassed three main subject areas; the congruency of the LBC vision; the challenges of the leadership; and cultural issues of the LBC (see appendix 3). Time was taken to present summarised findings from the learner survey to the leaders in the focus group a week before the focus group was held. The focus group was the mechanism through which a comparative discussion took place concerning the leadership's perspectives and what the learner respondents perceived regarding the LBC. The intent of the focus group was to distil the issues down in concert with the research questions with the resultant outcome being the leadership identifying resolutions to the issues at hand. Three leaders agreed to participate in this focus group interview. These were those who were involved in the interviewing process in phase one of the data collection. They were given preparatory reading, a summary of some of the themes that came back from the learner survey to assist in stimulating responses. The focus group participants were not outwardly overly shocked by the results of the learner data, but it did reinforce the need to evaluate the leadership's role in the implementation and what needed to be improved.

The leaders were asked to examine the responses of the learners about the value they placed on the LBC as meeting their expectations parallel to their commitment to it. The learner responses challenged them to evaluate the effectiveness of the LBC implementation in terms of the actualisation of its vision. The leaders were shown survey data from the learners that focused on the learners' commitment to the LBC and their personal expectations and whether they had been met or not. The leaders were asked in response to the learner data as to whether or not the vision of the LBC was being actualised.

L1 *People sense no urgency with the leadership and therefore it is not important to them*

L2 *We all agree the vision is still the same we are still progressing towards that vision but we have dropped the*

ball with the execution, implementation of the syllabus

L3 *It is the leaders who are to be committed to train and equip
the saints*

These comments above suggested a threefold deficiency on the part of the leadership; a lack of intrinsic motivation, a lack of technical delivery, and a breach of their principled mandate to train their constituency.

They were given a follow up question about the way in which the leadership had set expectations around the vision for the LBC, and how effectively they had communicated with the learners. The leaders were questioned in relation to challenges the leadership faced in terms of reinvigorating a commitment within the congregation towards the vision of the LBC. They were asked what needed to be done from a leadership perspective in terms of communicating and regaining buy in from the LBC constituency.

L1 *Not surprised we have been rated moderate to poor in
terms of delivery, timing and frequency*

L2 *We need to provide more feedback and direction*

L3 *The leadership needs to direct with more prominence*

They indicated that they needed to raise their standards in regard to dialogue with the learners. It was apparent upon sharing summarised results from the learner survey that the focus group participants were not surprised by the critical feedback given by learners, but more so by the degree of how these views were shared. In particular they were surprised by the learners perceptions and importance placed on the LBC. The leaders had from the outset of the inquiry assumed culpability where deficiencies in the implementation have been concerned, but this data reinforced the need for urgency in making corrective measures in the establishment of the LBC.

The focus group participants were sure that the vision had been clearly articulated to the constituency of the LBC, however that vision may have been blurred or lost overtime due to the protracted nature of the implementation process. It was also discussed that the wider leadership group initially supported the vision and gave

verbal commitment to it, however this translated into mediocre assent to the LBC. Notably not much was said about the extent and degree of involving the learners in the development or implementation of the vision. It was assumed that it was the right vision and setting the vision was the sole domain of the leadership. A challenge to be discussed will be how the leadership involves or incorporates the feedback from the learners in moving the LBC forward. This will provide the basis for further discussion through chapter 5 in relation to the nature of the leadership and how it can best serve its constituency.

In discussing what challenges the leaders needed to address to rectify the problems through the implementation of the LBC there were a couple commonalities' shared by the focus group participants. First of all from a human resource perspective it was commented that time and expertise may have been a contributing factor to the problems. Capacity and capability issues were seen as a challenge. The participants expressed a lack of time, resources, and technical expertise as factors that encroached on their ability to deliver on the LBC vision. The leaders were themselves volunteers with finite time due to family, work and church commitments proving to encumber their ability to prepare, develop, and evaluate the progress of the LBC effectively. Because none of the leadership had a background in instructional design, or educational management they had to implement the LBC through trial and error, with little support or advice, and no systems in place to adequately project manage the implementation process. This view was shared by the participants who saw themselves not as typical seminary administrators, but on the job, trial and error practitioners. This identification of technical deficiency pointed to a flaw in the process of decision making prior to the implementation of the LBC in relation to the test of expertise. I will discuss this further in chapter 5.

- L1 *The ideal would be that we do this as a full time job*
- L3 *We have looked at administrative help and utilising gifted men... We have looked at resourcing from the overseas College*

Secondly, each of the leaders reaffirmed their responsibility as leaders to ensure that the vision of the LBC was fostered firstly within the core and wider church leadership, and thus permeated down through the wider constituency. One participant

did suggest that the tasks of the implementation needed to be delegated wider and had sought to do so. However in an attempt to spread the workload the leaders of the LBC found that the wider leadership group were less concerned about meeting the scheduled milestones for delivery, and hence they decided to retract some of that responsibility back to the core LBC leadership. There were no major variations in perspectives amongst the leader focus group participants. One leader observed and noted that potentially more could be done in the context of one to one accountability to provide ongoing feedback with the learners about their individual progress.

The third area of questioning related to the culture of the LBC, and what leaders as pattern setters for that culture needed to change and influence if the vision of the LBC was to be fulfilled. The concept of ‘leaders lead, and followers follow’ view of leadership that was mentioned many times in the data was raised in questioning. The participants were asked about whether learners had become over reliant on the leaders to make them accountable. Again the leaders were not prepared to accept that as being the critical issue. They reiterated that principally leaders needed to set a pattern and direction and call others to follow.

L1 *Leaders are to lead, but they're (learners are responsible to be committed)*

L2 *There is a culture of accountability ...Leaders have to lead by Gods spirit that's His design they have to set the pattern -1 Corinthians 11:1, ...
We are making followers leaders themselves*

L3 *Accountability is a principle that we have been called to apply. One to one teaching and leading is the way we mature people. This maturity does not happen over night.
Leaders need to lead and hold their folk accountable*

However there was an acknowledgement that perhaps in the establishment of the LBC provisions should have been made to cater for that transition from fully accountable discipleship to self-managed learning. The leadership may well have assumed that the discipleship model was inadequate to deliver higher theological learning, and yet the learner participants tended to suggest the contrary.

L2 *There maybe an over reliance on leaders to spoon feed the folk due to indiscipline and immaturity*

L3 *Accountability is a principle that we have been called to apply. One to one teaching and leading is the way we mature people. This maturity does not happen over night. Leaders need to lead and hold their folk accountable*

Finally, the focus group interview discussed the issue of organisational culture, and what cultural inhibitors needed to be addressed, or adjusted if the problems of the LBC implementation were to be remedied. Each participant shared common views relating to the sense of practicality about how the leaders view knowledge, and the intent of the LBC to promulgate ‘gnosis’ or doing learning. They alluded to the fact that this way of learning was also how the LBC was implemented, in an experiential trial and error fashion.

L2 *We hold a view that differs from formal education, more hands on, on the job and experiential. This is what we are looking to do. And we are learning as we are implementing. This vision has rubbed off on us.*

L3 *We have learning as we go ‘on the job’ approach to development as a church. We are not seminary types...as the leaders mature the church grows and matures with it.*

An assertion was made that there had to be a balance struck between the leaders leading and assuming total responsibility and the accountability of learners to acquiesce to the LBC vision and take personal responsibility to learn. One distinct observation identified the need to adapt the approach by leaders with learners in consideration of the diverse nature of the learners and their abilities.

L1 *Have to strike a balance between accountability (one to one teaching) and personal responsibility...a variety of people make up the church and they all grow at different paces.*

Summary of Data

Overall there were some major divergence in views between learners and leaders expressed about the leadership of the LBC in its implementation. Leader participants were in consensus acknowledging the problems and assuming responsibility for the areas of perceived deficiency in how the LBC was being delivered. Learners and leaders agreed that leaders needed to exemplify the commitment for the LBC. Data from both participant groups also emphasised the technical and capacity issues that hampered the effectiveness of the leadership. The learners' expectations were not met by the LBC, the root cause of this disparity between expectation and actualisation was apportioned to the leadership. The leaders were adamant about their failings but may not have diagnosed the fundamental issues that underpinned the problems coming out of the LBC implementation. The Leaders were silent about two ideas raised by the learners; the lack of accountability between learners and leaders within the LBC, the breakdown in relationships between disciplers and disciples, and for some wives and husbands in the LBC. For further examination in the following chapters I will explore in more depth how the LBC implementation impacted on the relational aspects of the constituency. In chapter 5 I explore the nature of the decision making processes in view of the LBC leaders and their leadership practice, style and methodology in this process of change.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

In this section I present a thematic analysis of my research findings and how these align with educational leadership literature as discussed earlier in chapter 2. The key themes for discussion directly align to the research questions these were; the leadership vision and commitment to the vision of the LBC, the responsibility of the leadership and the cultural implications created by the implementation of the LBC.

Vision and commitment to the LBC

Initially the vision of the LBC was highly profiled amongst the constituency. This promoted an expectation about participating in the LBC. Learners stated personal growth and knowledge acquisition as the main incentives for having the LBC. The vision was clearly articulated at the advent of the LBC, and the learner group data showed that initially there was positive support and enthusiasm for the LBC, but this has become stymied over time as communication and service delivery from the leadership became increasingly infrequent. It was mentioned by the leader respondents that the vision was still the same and still relevant. The vision was viewed as an issue for two reasons; it assumed that the discipleship model was no longer required, and potentially the leaders weren't committed to the vision by virtue of their delivery of the LBC. Commitment to the vision had waned with both leaders and learners. If the vision was truly shared this would be evident through commitment. This diminishing commitment suggested that this lack of buy in is due to a vision which had not been democratically developed (Razik & Swanson, 2001; Tschanen-Moran, 2004). Murphy (1988) in his case study of leaders attributed successful leadership to leaders who were not only visionary, but that they exhibited absolute belief in their vision. Leaders who are committed to a vision will work hard to share that vision and engage with their followers in such a way that this vision is comprehended and embraced. It was apparent that the vision for the LBC was vividly clear in the mind of the leaders who were charged with bringing together the implementation. The leadership focus group however commented that as the LBC leadership looked to draw on the services of a wider leadership group to carry out

implementation tasks the level of commitment from the wider leadership group was less than that from the core LBC leadership team. This exposed an inability of the leadership to inspire a shared vision. Visions only seen by leaders are insufficient to create a significant change in any organisation (Murphy, 1988). Given that the wider leadership group had not wholeheartedly bought into the vision it would be difficult to expect that the wider constituency would adhere to it. People will not follow until they accept a vision as their own, and leaders cannot command commitment to that vision, they can only inspire it, and that through a process of dialogue. Sergiovanni (2005) points to this concept of purposing where shared visions are established through an iteration and reiteration of purposes. A shared vision must go beyond external rhetoric and be accepted within the hearts and minds of those who follow. Sergiovanni (2005) states this will lead to a transformation of an organisation into a covenantal community. Senge (1990) says it is a binding together of people around a common identity and sense of destiny, a genuine sense of vision where by people grow and learn because they want to, not because they are told to. This fundamental of shared vision and purposing is a critical yet missing ingredient in the implementation of the LBC, and I base that assertion on the importance and value placed on the LBC by those surveyed as was evident in the data.

In regard to the vision another worthwhile point of discussion is the process of engagement that the leadership had in establishing the vision and determining that the LBC model was the way forward for its constituency. There is little information provided through the data from either the learners or the leaders about how the vision was established. It would seem moving from one to one discipleship to self directed learning had a detrimental impact on the practical application of biblical studies, and personal growth (refer figure 4.3). The findings from the data have identified positive aspects from both models. The following diagram (see figure 5.1) illustrates the two key dynamics that learners described as fundamentally necessary to achieving their learning aspirations.

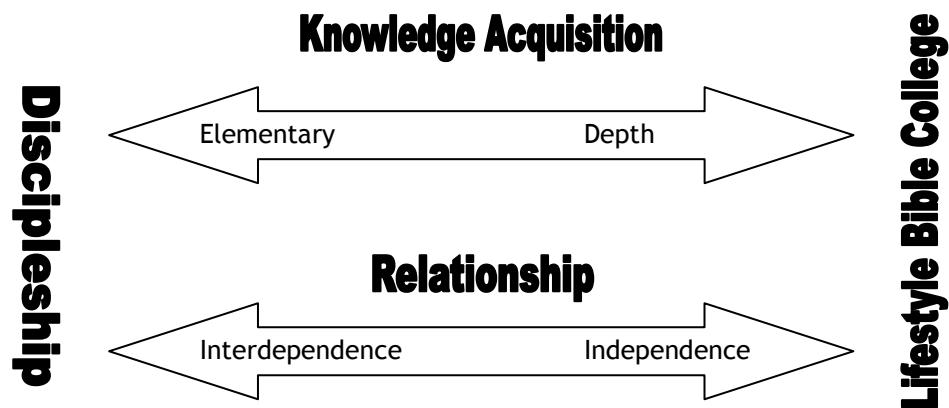


Figure 5.1 LBC and discipleship comparison continuum

Figure 5.1 depicts the different ends of the continuum on which the discipleship programme and LBC are positioned in providing for the needs of the learners as they have expressed their requirements. The LBC provides a high level of depth in theological knowledge as shown on the knowledge acquisition continuum. Both learners and leaders affirmed that there was a need for the constituency to be exposed to a greater depth of theological knowledge. The leadership deemed that the discipleship programme was an ideal platform for elementary learning of biblical knowledge but not an adequate mode for the delivery of theology. The findings confirmed that the LBC was providing the necessary depth of knowledge that was sought after. However the LBC is situated on the lower end of the continuum to providing the interdependence present in discipleship relationships. The discipleship programme sits on the higher end of the relationship continuum whereby interdependence of learners and teachers is the core foundation to learning. Learners stated that they missed the one to one instructional nature of discipleship, the supporting structure of a mentor, teacher, and helper to grapple with biblical knowledge and it's application to everyday life. Those who appreciated the accountability of a discipleship relationship appeared to struggle with adapting to the new approach. Respondents had expressed concern that they lacked support. Women in particular felt that the lack of personal discipleship from husbands was exacerbated by the move towards the LBC. To a degree the LBC had severed the close ties formed

through disciple relationships. It is apparent that leaders did not develop and implement the vision with a thorough evaluation of potential impacts.

The leadership appeared to have acted unilaterally in its decision to change to the LBC as learners were not given the opportunity to critique and discuss the potential impacts of such venture nor were they asked to help forge the vision. It was evident from the data that discipleship seemed to be operating effectively in as much as it met the needs of learners in terms of direction and support. It was apparent from the data that constituents were reasonably satisfied with their development under the discipleship programme. So it begs the question as to why the leadership felt it necessary to implement such a dramatic shift in approach. It appears that the needs of the learners were sacrificed for a programme of higher theological learning. Learner respondents did express support for theological extension, but they did suggest that learning would have been more effective through the process of discipleship. The decision making process that the leadership embarked upon prior to establishing the LBC must come under closer scrutiny. Owens and Valesky (2006) provide an ideal framework for examining the decision making process applied by the leaders in establishing the vision and implementing the LBC.

Participation Test	Descriptor	Result
Test of relevance	Participants must have a high personal stake in the LBC.	Learners with a high personal stake were excluded
Test of expertise	Participants in leadership decision making must have a degree technical competence to be able to contribute effectively to the establishment of the LBC	Those with technical skills were excluded
Test of jurisdiction	Participants must be given the necessary delegations to implement decisions	Participants fully authorised to implement decisions were included

Fig 5.2 Evaluation of the LBC decision making process

In Figure 5.2 the actual decision making process exercised by the leadership is shown to be fundamentally flawed. Not everyone has to be included in the decision making process but it should include those who have a high degree of relevance in the outcome of the decision. Leaders were not the only group with a personal stake in the outcome of the LBC. Arguably learners had a higher personal stake in that their spiritual needs were the platform for the proposed change. Therefore the decision that the LBC leadership team arrived at missed the opportunity for fully informed decision making by excluding potential participants whose relevance at least matched that of the leadership involved in decision making.

A test of expertise should have been applied to ensure competency in the process of establishing a bible college. The decision making that lead to the LBC establishment also didn't involve people with the requisite skills and knowledge for educational administration. The wider leadership group and some of the constituency could have been drawn upon to utilise the abilities of those with skill in educational planning and instructional design. This was expressed in the data by the leaders and by some of the learners that the implementation was hampered by inadequacies in these areas.

Decision makers may meet the requirements of relevance and expertise but if they do not have jurisdiction they will be frustrated in not being able to implement decisions. The leadership did meet the criteria for jurisdiction as they had the ability to implement change. This test did not apply to learners in this instance as they were excluded from the process. However should the leadership adopt a participative decision making model they will have to be careful that inclusion of learners would not be superficial by virtue of depowering their ability to implement decisions.

Leadership responsibility

It is my contention that there may be a misunderstanding of leadership and misapplication of leadership styles in the context of change. The leaders viewed themselves as servant leaders, but the rhetoric from the data was more consistent with transformational leadership characteristics. There is a resounding pattern of heroism, trail blazing leadership that forges the way and calls others to follow. They saw

setting the vision and direction as primarily the domain of those who hold office and they held themselves personally accountable for achieving it. The inquiry pointed out one significant issue about the nature of the leadership; they did not abdicate fault or responsibility. Their view of leadership held to the notion of leaders setting the pattern, and courageously assuming culpability for successes and deficiencies. There was an overriding sense of openness in identifying the problems encountered with the implementation of the LBC as directly connected with the leadership's personal performance. This openness was encouraging because when leaders are 'lionised' it can be difficult to admit fault, or failure (Murphy, 1988). Senge (1990) stipulates that there is a degree of honest self examination and personal reflection that must occur within leaders individually if the organisation itself is to learn and grow. Great leaders don't only focus on their strengths but will identify their personal weaknesses with a degree of candour about disclosure and see it as a means to develop (Murphy, 1988). There is a need however to make the leap from a humble examination to addressing individual discrepancies with professional focus and determination to get things right (Collins, 1990). I contend that the leaders admitted responsibility for the inadequacies of the LBC but their estimation of what was wrong was not wholly correct when critiqued against the views of the learners.

In many ways the learner survey feedback and the leaders own admissions laid the problems encountered through the implementation process squarely at the feet of the leadership. Influence is as much about how one behaves as it is about 'titles'. Murphy's (1988) case study that exemplary leaders know that if they want to gain commitment and achieve the highest standards, they must be models of the behaviour they expect of others. Leaders must model what they wish to see in those who follow (Norris & Barnett & Basom & Yerkes, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2004). In regard to vision, if leaders are to effectively model the behaviour they expect of others, leaders must first be clear about their guiding principles, what the vision is all about, do they really believe it, and will they give themselves in service to it. A leader's words and actions must be consistent. People can first follow the person then the plan (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). This theme of pattern setting or role modelling was repeatedly mentioned throughout the leader's interviews, and the leader's focus group interview. The leaders saw their responsibility to be those who must exemplify their convictions that underpin the vision for the LBC. The learner data seemed to affirm that the

leaders were in large part responsible for the LBC. Some learners attributed deficiencies down to the point that this was the leaders' first attempt at establishing a bible college. Other learners were less forgiving equating their own low commitment to the LBC as a direct reflection of the leader's commitment. The theory of practice of the LBC leadership was one of servant leadership but the outcomes for learners suggest another leadership model was being exercised. There was a need to close the gap between theory and practice and examine the way in which the leaders lead (Owens & Valesky, 2006).

LBC Cultural implications

The cultural context of the LBC has been brought under closer examination through the process of this inquiry. Leadership is most notably tested when it confronts or challenges a cultural framework (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Whether this was the leaderships intention or not, the cultural threads have been strained through the advent of the LBC. The data collected suggests that in many ways the espoused values and assumptions of the LBC have been tested. In stratifying the themes of the data against Schein's (2004) model of cultural layering within an organisation I was able to make the following observations.

The visible layer

Firstly, the LBC exists as a non traditional educational construct within the life style of the local church; this is how it was envisaged to be by the leadership. On the surface it was evident from my discussions with the leaders and my interaction with the learners that within the outer cultural layering of this organisation there was a philosophy of learning for living. The leaders stated that their mandate was to train and equip its people to actualise their practical spiritual purpose. Under the discipleship regime every constituent member was involved to one degree or another in teaching or being taught. From the point that the LBC was introduced this fabric of teaching one another was disestablished. The leadership purported to be a 'can do' practical organisation and a lack of expertise or experience was not considered a barrier to implementing the LBC. The symptoms of this transformational forging ahead approach resulted in technical inadequacies of instructional design, planning, and time management that were encountered along the way. By their own admission

leaders commented that through the process they had been encumbered by administrative and technical shortcomings. They had proceeded with a vision without assessing and mitigating risks. In discussing leadership Kouzes and Posner (2007) comment that risk is inherent in leading in a change process. Leaders know well that change and innovation is fraught with risk but accept the challenge anyway and wise leaders can offset risk. In an effort to get things done the leadership has ventured out, neglecting to plan contingencies, to thoroughly consider the implications and impacts that initiating such a venture would have on the cultural dynamic of the LBC.

Beliefs and Values

Secondly, the LBC constituency affirmed that the binding force of leaders and learners alike were commonly held beliefs and values that they view as grounded in biblical principles. The rationale for implementing a vision and strategy to conduct the LBC was not dismissed out of hand by either the learners or leaders through the inquiry. All respondents acknowledged the necessity of the LBC in growing learners, giving them greater theological understanding, and helping them to apply biblical principles in their Christian practice. So in the minds of the constituency the principles upon which the LBC was inaugurated were sound. What wasn't articulated from either learners or leaders was the rationale for a complete deviation from the principles that underpinned the discipleship programme. There was no discussion about why the approach needed to change so dramatically. If there was something lacking in the discipleship programme the underlying principles of discipleship could have been examined. It also gives weight to the opportunity that was missed to make a comparative analysis of the principles of the discipleship against that of the LBC.

Underlying Assumptions

Thirdly, I was able to identify some key underlying assumptions that were prevalent in the data. The leaders repeatedly articulated their conviction that the leaders lead, they set the direction and the platform for which the constituents were to follow. The learners affirmed these values relating their perspectives of the LBC in direct connection with how the leaders have orchestrated the implementation of the LBC.

It is assumed by leaders and learners that leaders will lead, followers will follow, if the leaders don't lead and set the pattern then this will legitimate low standards and commitment from the constituency. This assumption certainly rings true of the data

from the survey questionnaire, and the leader interviews. The leaders were honest in their self-assessment not looking to offset any of the responsibility for the deficiencies of the LBC implementation onto the learners or anyone else. The learners articulated their belief that the leaders have the best interests of the LBC constituency at heart. But for all the best intentions of the leadership it was apparent that the learners needs had not been met. This may be attributed to some wrong assumptions about leadership on the part of the leaders and the learners.

The leaders viewed themselves as servants appointed to meet the needs of the learners. However they have forged a vision and implemented the LBC void of constructive engagement with the learners in the process of deciding how to best meet their needs and expectations. Greenleaf (1998) suggests that servant leaders exercise humility by sacrificing their assumptions and personal agendas for the constituency that they serve and the data suggests this was lacking. The leaders expressed a desire to see the learners grow, mature and that through application of the biblical principles learned through the LBC programme, but they did not adequately involve the learners in the formative development of the vision for the LBC. The LBC leadership hold to this view that leaders are there to serve the constituents, not to be despots, or in the ministry for self gain or gratification but to deliver an environment whereby the work of sanctification of learners is stimulated. Some where in the process of implementation there is a suggestion that leaders as individuals may have lost sight of this view as their lustre and commitment to fulfilling the instructional design requirements waned. On the learners part there seems to be an assumption that the leaders always do what is right, there was a degree of implicit trust. This state of trust suggests that learners were to a degree complicit in the removal of the relational aspects of discipleship by virtue of blind acquiescence to whichever way the leaders lead. The data collected from the learners indicated that there is a high degree of trust apportioned by the constituents to the leadership based on relational capital compiled over time. In no way am I suggesting that this has been intentionally promulgated by the leadership, but the nature of the leaders and the leadership style may possibly have engendered this passivity among the learners. It may only have been in the process of this evaluation that they have been able to express these perceptions, learners found a voice for their thoughts about the vision and the LBC through the inquiry. Perhaps the learners needed to be more evaluative about the programme and how they are lead,

and leaders needed to provide mechanisms which stimulate critical evaluation of the way in which they exercise leadership. This could make for a more conducive environment for trusting relationships between the learners and leaders in the long term. Continuing in the current frame of practice will only lead to a diminishing of the trust that is apparent in the findings of this evaluation. This poses a leadership challenge in terms of maintaining the faith that the majority of the constituency have in the leaders and clawing back the trust lost through perceived inadequacies of the LBC. Tschanen-Moran (2004) places great emphasis on a leader who creates and enables an environment that is based on trust in relationships, across the wide range of school constituencies if an organisation is to be a productive and effective learning community. Trust is earned and must be maintained and without it is difficult to see out a successful implementation of the LBC. If the learners trust is not reclaimed by the leaders the problems of the LBC will not be resolved, only perpetuated.

Thirdly, organisational members need to question the leaders and learners assumptions of what defines leaders, and leadership. The leaders in the data used leaders and leadership interchangeably conveying a view that leadership is confined to the realms of an office. A leader may be distinguished by an office, but leadership can be a quality, an action exercised by people inside and outside of a formal office. Leadership can exist throughout all levels of an organisation but there must be a servant approach by leadership to empower others to lead (Gardener, 1990; Kouzes & Posner, 2007; Sergiovanni, 2005). Leadership and collaboration were discussed by the leaders in the context of the LBC leadership team, but it did not extend to the wider leadership group, or leadership exhibited by the learners who hold no office but are leading in discipleship and or in family relationships. So it was not true collaboration in the sense of shared or distributed leadership. Power resided fully in the hands of the leadership team, and they did not take the opportunity to distribute that power, to involve people in leadership by virtue of allowing them to participate in the development of the vision. Having said this there is no guarantee that the constituency would want to involve themselves in the process, or desire the power, but the opportunity must be afforded to them for consideration.

Fourthly, people that are admitted into the LBC were assumed to be at a point of maturity where they are able to learn and grow with minimal hands on direction and

accountability. This assumption was tested through the LBC process and found to be disparate in most cases with learners indicating they lacked the commitment and motivation to apply themselves to the self directed approach of the LBC. They expressed a desire to have more one to one teaching, and close accountable relationships with other constituents. Learners commented that left to themselves with no clear guidance, or accountability they were comfortable to do the bare minimum when it came to completing lessons. Kouzes and Posner (2007) comment that leadership is a relational notion and that success in leading will come down to leader's ability to build and sustain relationships with their followers. With the previous discipleship programme there was a close sense of interaction between the leaders, teachers and learners but the advent of the LBC had not aligned with the culture of a group that valued social cohesion.

Dimmock and Walker (1998) provide another model for analysis of the LBC leadership practice through the framework of six cultural dimensions (see fig 2.1). The nature of this model presupposes that values among educational organisations are comparatively similar but when translated into practice there are variations created by the nature of leadership and the organisational culture.

Firstly, through the LBC implementation learners were treated as a homogenous group not allowing for a mix of learning styles and needs. The data confirmed that only a minority of learners relished the autonomous model of learning through the LBC, but a majority had identified that their need for support and guidance central to the discipleship model was missing. As an educational imperative diversity in learning needs must be a key consideration. Secondly, the LBC existed in a parochial organisational culture where the learners and leaders are bound by a loyalty to the local constituency. The LBC constituency was drawn from a closely knit community with a profound history of interdependence through its discipleship programme. The evidence suggests that the move to the LBC cut across the fibres of this interdependent community. Thirdly, the leadership practices exercised through the LBC exhibited a high degree of 'closed-ness'. The culture of the LBC was influenced by a leadership that is protective of its mandate. They limited the personnel involved in the process of developing the LBC and the of establishment of the vision and carrying out its delivery to the LBC leadership team. There was a lack of openness

evident in the data shown by the way in which the leaders perceived collaborative leadership as purely internal within the office of leadership. There is no sense in the leaders' data that leadership as a notion exists beyond the realm of the formal structure. According to Dimmock and Walker (1998) this closed-ness is common in strong cultures where homogeneity is promoted through shared values and beliefs. This leadership finds itself straddling the two ends of the normative and pragmatic dimension of culture. There is a sense that the leaders want to do what is best for the learners but they have rigidly adhered to the vision and the implementation process of the LBC in spite of the negative impacts created by moving away from the discipleship programme.

Summary

Overall learners and leaders identified that there were problems that needed to be overcome. Learners wanted to reclaim the positive qualities of discipleship. The leaders identified their integrity and commitment as the main factor contributing to the LBC problems. Both parties touched on various symptoms of the problem. The problem which resides not in the failure of anyone but a misunderstanding of leaders and leadership. Both learners and leaders are fixed on a particular style of leadership that is detrimental to both learners and leaders as it was non-conducive to organisational learning in this context of change. The transformational nature of the leadership described in the learner and leader data was not optimal in the context of this change process (Barrett, McCormick, & Connors, 1999). It did not provide for leadership to be grown across the wider constituency through empowerment. The LBC Vision did not appear to be truly shared as the learner constituents had not been involved in the process of developing or implementing the vision.

6: CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

In this chapter I consolidate my conclusions in reference to the research questions, the summary of the research data and the findings that emerged from this evaluation. I present overall conclusions followed by recommendations that I believe will help resolve the systemic problems of the LBC. Prior to my final comments I discuss the strengths and limitations of this research.

The aim of the research

The aim of this research was primarily to evaluate the effectiveness of the LBC Leadership Team in the implementation process of the Lifestyle Bible College programme. This evaluation research analysed the issues and developmental opportunities relating to the implementation of the Lifestyle Bible College with a particular critique of the LBC leadership against principles of effective educational leadership, organisational culture and change from the literature base.

Revisiting the research questions

Firstly, I sought to find out what is the degree of congruency between the LBC's leadership team vision and the actualisation of the LBC at this stage of the implementation process. The vision for the LBC was to implement a new programme to extend the theological knowledge of its learners, resulting in spiritual growth. Both learners and leaders agreed that the congruency between the vision and the LBC were not in perfect alignment. The data confirmed that for a minority of the constituents they believed the LBC had provided them with the instructional material to grow their theological knowledge. However a majority of the learner group expressed that it was not yielding the growth and Christian practice that they desired.

Secondly I sought to explore what leadership challenges and issues were inhibiting the implementation of the LBC programme. In response to this question there are considerable implications for the leadership which I will itemise in more detail further on in my conclusions. I propose that the overarching leadership challenge is that the

paradigm of leadership practiced in the LBC was not the optimum approach in this context of change.

Thirdly, I questioned as to what improvements needed to be made to address the issues inhibiting the implementation of the LBC programme. There are two key areas that need to be looked at; remodelling of the LBC to include disciple relationships and a review of how the leaders exercised their decision making processes. I will answer this more explicitly further on in this chapter as I posit my conclusions and recommendations.

Conclusions

Effective Educational Leadership

The inquiry process established that the leadership through the implementation of the LBC did not demonstrate effective leadership practice in various key aspects of the implementation. The research problem identified the symptoms, but deeper, systemic issues of leadership were affirmed by the responses of the learner constituency. As the inquiry progressed and the findings of the data were analysed it was obvious that the leaders did not effectively engage the constituency in the development of the vision. While both leaders and learners indicated support for the vision there was plenty of evidence to suggest that the impacts of moving to a self directed programme were not thoroughly explored, nor responded to when problems arose. The leaders have to re-engage with the learners to breath life into the LBC as a vehicle for spiritual growth. To enlist people in a vision, leaders must know their constituents and constituents must in turn believe that leaders understand their needs and have their interests at heart. Murphy (1988) suggests that leaders can feel less 'heroic' even weak in democratising the development of a vision, but he suggests that in fact it is a strength to depend on others, and to let go 'to be a lamb is really to be a lion.' Murphy (1988) talks about forging a unity of purpose, breathing life into the hopes and dreams of their followers and enabling them to see the exciting possibilities that the future holds. The leaders were however constrained by an inability to muster their resources and apply efficient and effective use of these. They have stated that they were limited by expertise and time and it may well be that a sharing of the workload among experts outside of the leadership group is a necessary step for the successful completion of the

LBC. In my view progression towards a greater degree of shared leadership will require an honest review of the systemic flaws of the processes and approaches applied thus far.

LBC Culture

In revisiting the model for organisational culture proposed by Schein (2004) I have been able to examine the impacts of the implementation how they stem from the current leadership culture and how the process has not considered the culture within the constituency. From an educational perspective the construct of the LBC, its physical environment and operation is unorthodox. There are certainly technical deficiencies in the administration, instructional design, and delivery of the LBC programme. This was axiomatic in relation to the nature of the leadership and their pioneering approach towards getting things done. Those involved in the implementation of the LBC are voluntary and this has impacted on the work of the LBC. Education administration and instructional design are highly skilled occupations and the LBC has been implemented by part time, semi skilled practitioners. However committed this leadership is to training and equipping its people for its practical spiritual purposes, they perhaps lack the acumen required to adequately respond to the needs of the learners. The leadership have found themselves stretched, exerting themselves beyond their capabilities to achieve the aspirations of their vision. Leaders need to see change and innovation as risky territory to navigate and to minimise the risks of change through solid planning and evaluation and decision making. In an effort to get things done the leadership has ventured out, neglecting to plan contingencies, to thoroughly consider the implications and impacts that initiating such a venture would have on the cultural dynamic of the LBC.

Secondly, there are commonly held beliefs and values shared by both learners and leaders, and because of these beliefs and values there is a desire to retain the LBC but with modifications to meet the needs of the learners.

Thirdly, I was able to identify some key underlying assumptions that were prevalent in the data. The LBC hold to this view that leaders are there to serve the constituents, to deliver an environment whereby the work of sanctification of learners is stimulated. Somewhere in the process of implementation there is a suggestion that leaders as

individuals may have lost sight of this view as their commitment to fulfilling the instructional design requirements waned. The data collected from the learners indicates that there is a high degree of trust apportioned by the constituents to the leadership based on relational capital garnished over time. There were however a minority of respondents that levelled criticism at the leadership for perceived capability deficiencies, based on the quality of instructional design and the inability to deliver the programme in a timely fashion. This poses a leadership challenge in terms of maintaining the faith that the majority of the constituency have in the leaders and clawing back the trust lost. Tschanen-Moran (2004) posits that a leader who creates and enables an environment that is based on trust relationships is a vital ingredient in developing an organisation into a productive and effective learning community. Trust is earned and must be maintained and without it will be nigh on impossible to see out a successful implementation of the LBC.

A change in leadership style

It is my contention that the leadership has been exercised in a style akin to transformational leadership, setting visions, and calling for buy in (Gronn, 2003). This kind of leadership can be heavily dependent on the integrity of leaders who set the vision. Leaders in this vein need to model the way, and work hard at purposing the vision (Fullan, 2003). More appropriate to this context of change would have been a servant leadership model that grounded its vision firmly on the basis of the needs of the constituency (Sergiovanni, 2005). Servant leadership would have started the process of vision setting with the learners having meaningful input to the outcome. The leaders need to have in view the needs of the learners and the organisation in priority over and above their own agendas. To exercise servant leadership, leaders need the confidence of the constituents in the leaders to make decisions and judgements on the basis of competence, values and morals, not self interest. The leadership have the implicit trust of their constituency but this is not sustainable the longer the LBC fails to meet learners' needs and expectations. Servant leadership recognises that leadership occurs throughout an organisation, and seeks to draw on the breadth of opportunity to achieve organisational goals. Leaders work hard to make others strong capable and committed, to give them a sense of personal ownership (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Servant leaders are willing to distribute power outside the

office to develop true commitment towards a vision. Leaders allow others to act not by hoarding the power but giving it away. The leadership need to cultivate the courage to disperse the authority they hold among a wider group of constituents.

The process of decision making

The decision making process in the implementation of the LBC failed to adequately evaluate the needs of the learners in developing the vision for the LBC. The leaders themselves confirmed that the decision making in this process was limited to the domain of the leadership group. The leadership needs to take into consideration that organisations are made of individuals and learn the importance of harnessing the diversity of knowledge patterns and abilities and skills (Whittaker, 2003). My recommendation is that the LBC move to a participative decision making model. To be participative there has to be a willingness within the leadership to exercise servant leadership practice, putting learners needs first. In allowing the learners to have direct input into the decision making process this could help ensure that the vision of the LBC is not passively assented to but truly shared and committed to. The leadership needs to apply sound methodology to developing a participatory process if it is to yield quality decision making. In this instance I propose the Owens and Valesky model (2006) for participation as a useful framework to work from. The leadership need not be fearful that this becomes an overly democratic process that needs to be universally inclusive. In selecting participants to engage on the process they need to ensure that the people who participate will in fact enhance the process and want to be involved in the process. In revisiting the Owens and Valesky model (2006) I show how the leadership could make a fully informed approach to making decisions (see fig 6.1) by selecting decision makers who have a high personal stake in the outcome of the decision as well as including participants who may be able to contribute valuable expertise to the subject matter at hand..

Participation Test	Descriptor	Previous participation	Proposed participation
Test of relevance	Participants must have a high personal stake in the LBC.	Learners with a high personal stake were excluded	Leaders involve learners directly impacted by changes in LBC
Test of expertise	Participants in leadership decision making must have a degree technical competence to be able to contribute effectively to the establishment of the LBC programme	Those with technical skills were excluded	Those with technical skills included in planning and decision making for the future of
Test of jurisdiction	Participants must be given the necessary delegations to implement decisions	Participants fully authorised to implement decisions were included	leaders and learners fully authorised to implement decisions

Fig 6 .1 LBC decision making participation framework

Figure 6.1 depicts what an effective decision making model should incorporate in selection of ideal participants when applied to the context of the LBC. Organisational culture is highly influential on decision making and therefore there will have to be some reculturing to influence a change in thinking among leaders about divesting power to qualified participants (Owens & Valesky, 2006). Therefore if good decisions that benefit the totality of the constituency are to be arrived at there must be a re-examining of the cultural assumptions that prohibit this process. Leaders have to see that decision making can be exercised by the wider constituency, and can exist outside the office of formal leadership.

Recommendations

1. Review of decision making model

My first proposition is that the leadership transition from an autocratic decision making model to a consultative model of participative leadership decision making (Vroom, 2003). This would of course necessitate a change in leadership paradigm

from a transformational leadership approach to a servant leadership approach. There would be many opportunities generated from this change.

Figure 6.2 depicts a process by which a participative decision making model could be applied to the LBC. The process will include the wider constituency so a more panoramic view of problems and resolutions can be obtained. The leaders in combination with the qualified representatives of the learner constituency would provide the necessary expertise, relevance and jurisdiction to effect quality decision making in regards to all aspects of the LBC.

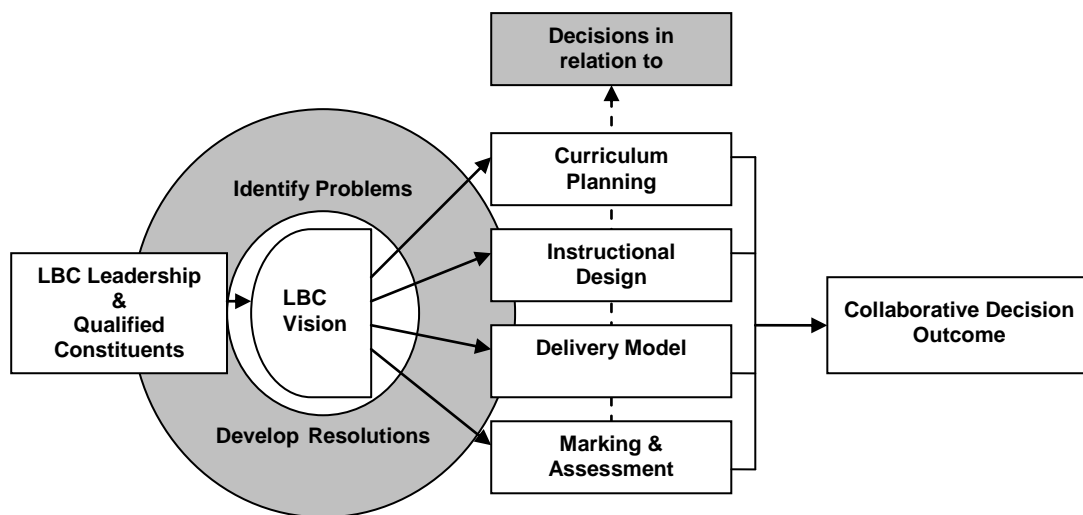


Fig. 6.2 Proposed LBC Decision Making Model

The decision making process would involve collaboration between the LBC leadership team and constituent participants who meet the criteria as drawn upon from the Owens and Valesky framework (refer figure 6.1). Problems would be identified and resolutions would be worked through together. The final decision will reflect the collaborative outcome obtained through the process and would be ratified by the LBC leadership team as aligned to a consultative leadership style (Vroom, 2003). This would protect the integrity of the process as being fully participative and likewise preserve the cultural notion that the leadership is ultimately accountable for all decisions implemented. By widening the participatory nature of the decision making process it would also provide a greater opportunity to enlist the skills and expertise of

others to assist in delivering the technical and administrative tasks that have been under resourced.

2. Modification of the LBC model

In response to the stated needs of the learner constituency it is my recommendation supported by the data that there needs to a modification of LBC programme delivery. The learners have said they desire the close accountability and support that was available to them in discipleship. Depth of relationships vital in supporting learning has to be integrated with the LBC. The leadership will have to fully assess the impact of introducing a discipleship framework as a wrap around to the LBC curriculum. The leadership will need to ensure that learners are fully engaged in the process through effective communication of the changes. They will also have to take into consideration the needs of the learners. The leadership will have to assess the impacts of reintroducing discipleship taking into consideration those learners who have expressed a preference for self directed learning to continue with that option.

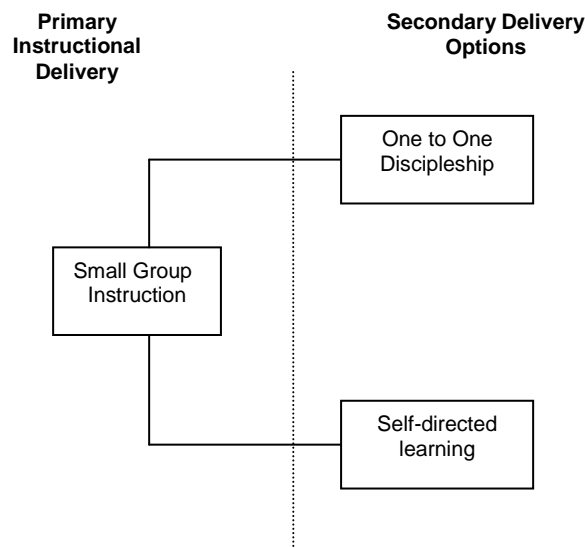


Fig.6.3 Proposed LBC Delivery Model

The delivery model (fig. 6.3) uses small group instruction as a preliminary platform to introduce new instructional material. This was an option presented in the data from

some of the learner respondents. To reinforce the small group sessions there is a secondary phase of delivery that offers both discipleship and self directed learning as options to the learners. The support and accountability of discipleship could be availed to those who seek the benefits of these relationships but I would be careful not to prohibit those who enjoy the autonomy of self directed learning from persisting with this approach.

Strengths of the inquiry

The strength of this inquiry lies in the honesty and rawness of the data generated from the respondents. The fundamental basis of social science is its examination, discovery and exploration of human phenomena. It was interesting to be able to step back and listen to what people have to say and reveal about the way in which they lead or are led. This inquiry was bound up in close engagement with the leaders synthesising their personal viewpoints of which there was a clear commonality of thought. The interviews and focus group were effective mediums in which to glean rich data useful in assisting me to analyse the nature of leadership that they espouse and what they enacted. Because of the size of the learner group it was not possible to effectively engage through such labour and time intensive research tools as utilised with the leaders. However the utilisation of an online survey was an effective medium in which to engage respondents and the degree of anonymity through this approach provided for quite candid and revealing discussion and expression of the learners thoughts and feelings. In hindsight I may have made some minor additions to some questions, or implementation of various tools but overall I am satisfied that the research tools, methodology and approaches were sound and contributed to the extrapolation of valid and reliable data.

Limitations of the inquiry

Time was the primary limiting factor I experienced in the process of this evaluation. Having reached this final stage of the inquiry I am able to survey the process and if more time were afforded me I may have made some minor additions to the questions in the research tools to close the gap of what was left unsaid as it was evident from the data that what wasn't said may well have been as important as what was stated. I would have explored the reasons why the leaders didn't analyse the impacts of

change; why didn't they ask the constituency about how they felt about becoming self directed learners; and why the leaders so brashly committed to a new approach to learning forsaking what seemed to be an effective medium through the discipleship model. While I took measures to position myself outside of the leadership for the purpose of this research it may have been difficult for participants to perceive of me as primarily a researcher because of the existing relational capital I had with learners and leaders alike.

Final Comments

I have discussed theories and approaches to leadership within an educational context, and it has been an enriching, challenging and informing exercise to scrutinise the leadership of the LBC under the microscope of the literature. If nothing else one point that has been reconfirmed in my mind is that leadership is rugged territory to navigate. Leadership would be easy if it were just strategic planning and management of physical resources. But it is a skill that involves motivating, persuading, and collaborating with the hearts and minds of the constituency. This has been the challenge for the leadership of the LBC. There is superficial acquiescence to the vision of the LBC from the constituents and the wider leadership group which has been exposed as I have examined the research problem. The conclusions from this evaluation research are to be made available to the leadership of the LBC. My wish is that the leadership of the LBC take on board my findings and proposed recommendations with an open mind and genuine consideration of the changes that are required to overcome the problems experienced so far. There will be challenges along the way as my propositions cut across some engrained culture assumptions. The LBC leadership will have to see that an adjustment from autocratic decision making process is not a destabilisation of the hierarchy but a strengthening of it. It is a building of a wider leadership base that in the long run will yield the benefit of a shared commitment to its vision. On the other hand the leadership must see that a move to discipleship model is a return to what worked so successfully in the past and had the greatest impact for learning and spiritual growth of its constituents. Leading in learning and change is complex work and this evaluation strengthens this assertion.

Appendix 1 Leader Interview Questions

Respondent group: LBC Leadership Team

Interview structure:

1. Introduction / Outline of interview purpose and process
2. Identification of position / involvement in the establishment of the Bible school
3. Perceptions of personal leadership style
4. Perceptions of the Lifestyle Bible College implementation
5. Commentary on Leadership's vision approach for future development of the LBC.

1. Introduction / Outline of interview purpose and process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context for research — Bible College / Leadership / Problems • Purpose, use, distribution of feedback — • Explanation of questioning approach —> • Explanation of subject matter areas to be covered by questioning —> Leadership, Bible College, Vision • Final questions / comments
5. Commentary on Leadership's vision approach for future development of the LBC.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you see as a leader involved in the LBC as the necessary steps for fulfilling the vision of the LBC? • Give explanations for your answer (s)
2. Identification of position / involvement in the establishment of the LBC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your role in the LBC leadership team? • How have you been involved in the implementation of the LBC?
3. Perceptions of personal leadership style
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How would you describe your leadership style? • To what degree have you been able to influence the implementation of the LBC?
4. Perceptions of the Lifestyle Bible College implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In your view has the implementation of the LBC been successful so far? • How has it not been successful so far? • Give explanations for your answer

Next Steps:

- Notes transcribed - a share to see hand copy of notes and make changes.
- Focus group - later to discuss feedback from these interviews and results from the survey.
- Finish this all soon - By end of June.

Appendix 2 Learner Survey Questionnaire

Page 1

Welcome to my research survey.

Thank you for taking time to think about contributing to my research project which affects all of us to

one degree or another as it examines the Leadership in the implementation of our Lifestyle Bible College.

In conducting this research project I am fulfilling my requirements for completion of my Master of Educational Leadership and Management Qualification so your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated.

Please read the information below carefully before proceeding with the survey. If you need clarification

about this survey you may contact my research supervisor Howard Youngs at hyoungs@unitec.ac.nz or

call 815 4321 ext 8411. Otherwise please feel free to be as honest as possible with your answers as this

will help with ascertaining valid and relevant findings to inform my research and potentially assist me to

identify opportunities to make improvements in the ongoing implementation of our Bible College

Programme.

Privacy & Confidentiality:

This survey is conducted in total anonymity - As this survey is fully online your submissions will be made

directly to the web host for the survey not to myself. Please ensure that you do not identify yourself in

anyway through your responses.

Distribution & Dissemination:

please note that data collected from this research will be analysed and summarised into findings and

recommendations. These will be made available to those overseeing my research. Findings and

recommendations will also be made to the Church Leadership Board which oversees the Leadership

Team of the Lifestyle Bible College.

Research Outcomes:

Your participation in this survey will contribute to the way the Leadership Team implements the Lifestyle

Bible College Curriculum into the future.

Voluntarism:

Your contribution to this research survey is purely voluntary and you may opt out of this survey at any

stage of completing it without prejudice.

1. By participating in this research survey I agree to the following;

*

I agree

I am completing this survey voluntarily without coercion or external pressure



I understand that this survey is completely anonymous
I have read and understood the purpose of this survey
I agree to how the information gained from this survey is used and distributed

Page 2

In answering this section you will provide me with information about the learners in the Bible College and the way in which you view the importance of it.

1. How many years have you been attending this church?

2. What is your gender?

3. Up to what lesson have you completed?

4. In what time frame do you normally finish your lesson assignments?

*

*

*

*

- 0-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21 years or more
- Female
- Male
- B 101:1 Cutting it Straight
- B 101:2 Cutting it Straight - Part 2
- B 101:3 How to Study the Bible
- B 101:4 How to Deliver a Message
- B 102:1 Christian Doctrines
- B 102:2 Lifestyle Giving
- B 102:3 Christian Doctrines - Part 2
- B 103:1 The Doctrines of the Church - Part 1
- within 2 weeks of receiving the lesson
- within 1 month of receiving the lesson
- within 2 months of receiving the lesson
- within 3 months of receiving the lesson
- within 4 months of receiving the lesson
- within 5 months of receiving the lesson
- 6 months or more of receiving the lesson

Page 3

5. Why do you take this length of time to submit your lessons?

6. What are your reasons / expectations for your participation in the Lifestyle Bible College?

7. To what degree have your reasons / expectations for participating in the

Lifestyle Bible College been met?

8. If your expectations were other than the options suggested in question 7

- how did you feel your expectations were met in that regard?

*

*

Did not meet expectations
1 2 3 4

Exceeded expectations

To further understand Biblical Theology & Doctrine

To gain a theological qualification

Because everyone else is participating in it

Because it will help to improve my christian practice

*

- To further understand Biblical Theology & Doctrine
- To gain a theological qualification
- Because everyone else is participating in it
- Because it will help to improve my christian practice
- Because it is expected by the Leadership
- Other (please specify)

Page 4

9. Rate your views on the following...

10. Give an overall rating as to the degree the Bible College met your expectations...

Leadership Culture and Change are all important areas for discussion and examination in any organisation.

Low 1 2 3 4 High

Importance of the Bible College to you personally

Frequency of the Bible College Lessons

Your own commitment to the Bible College Lessons

Impact of the Bible College on you personally

Quality of the Bible College Lessons

*

Exceeded expectations
1 2 3 4
Did not meet expectations
Expectations

☺ ☹ ☺ ☹ ☺ ☹ ☺ ☹ ☺ ☹ ☺ ☹

Explain your rating
Page 5

- 1. Rate the Lifestyle Bible College Team in the following areas...**
- 2. Please rate the quality of communication surrounding the implementation if the Lifestyle Bible College as follows;**
- 3. How has the Lifestyle Bible College as a self directed learning curriculum influenced you in the following areas;**
- 4. Overall what is your view if the performance of the leadership in the implmentation of the Bible College?**

*

Poor 1 2 3 4 Excellent
Timely / frequent delivery of lessons

Support in understanding completing lessons

quality in design of lessons

involving you in the future direction of the Bible College

seeking your feedback about the value and importance of the Bible College

*

Poorly Communicated
1 2 3 4 5

Clearly Communicated
Purpose of the Bible College

Future vision for the Bible College

Time frames for lesson development

Deadlines for completion of

☺ ☹ ☺ ☹ ☺ ☹ ☺ ☹ ☺ ☹ ☺ ☹

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Appendix 3 Focus group questions and pre-reading material

1. Is there congruency between the LBC's Leadership Team vision and the actualisation of the LBC at this stage of the implementation process?
2. What leadership challenges and issues are inhibiting the implementation of the LBC programme?
3. What improvements need to be made so that the issues inhibiting the implementation of the LBC programme can be addressed?

FOCUS GROUP

Congruency

Compare Fig1.0 & Table 2.0 & 3.0 & 3.1 This is what learners said they expected to get from the Bible College and what they actualised - is this you expected? Is there symmetry between the vision of the LBC and what has actually been delivered?

Challenges

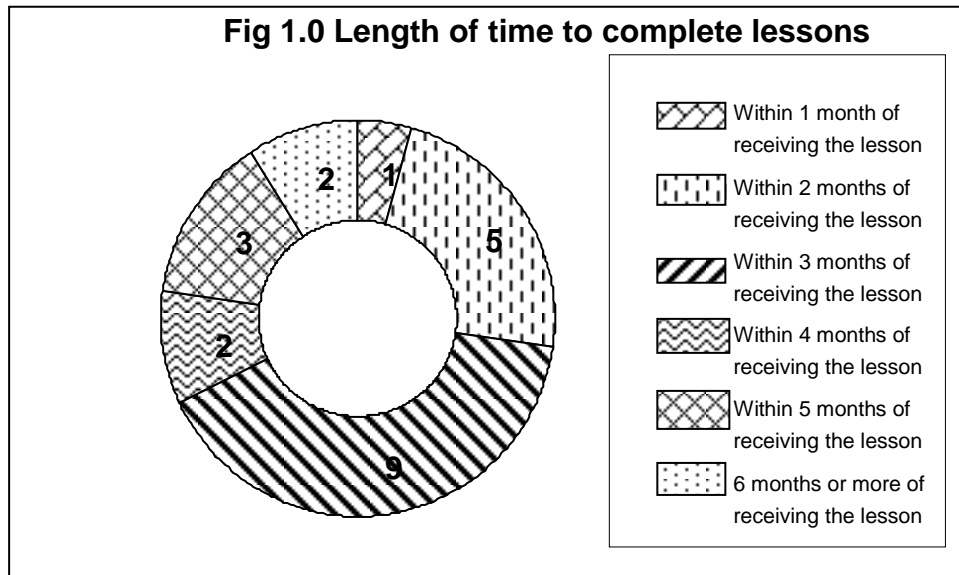
Table 3.3 Comms – the data indicated that there was a mixed view on how well the LBC leadership communicated certain the purpose, and vision of the Bible College - What does this say to you about the way we set expectations, and promote our vision? What can we do to better communicate and reinforce the strategy, vision, the processes etc?

Table 3.2 this is what the majority have said about the leadership of the LBC - In light of this as leaders what are the challenges that need to be overcome as Leaders to get the LBC where we want it to be? What do leaders personally have to adjust?

Culture

Refer figure 1.1 & Table 3.4 In terms of our this culture of leaders lead, followers follow – do you think that the followers in this case the learners are overly reliant on accountability? Do we need more accountability or for learners to take some ownership?

Learner Perspectives



21 of 27 respondents indicated that they were completing the lessons outside of the timeframe policy (refer figure 1.0).

An open ended question required respondents to give explanations as to why they were or were not meeting the timeframes for lessons. This sought to inquire as to intrinsic or extrinsic motivational variables of the respondents. Those that indicated that they were not meeting the deadlines cited several prohibitive factors for including; poor time management; a lack of personal discipline; a lack of clarity of what was required or combinations of these reasons given.

Prohibitive Factors	Respondent No's
time	7
time & discipline	4
clarity of understanding	2
combination	1
discipline	2

Table 2.0

Those that met the timeframe policy requirements for the lessons cited inverse factors to those respondents who did not attain to the standard. They were disciplined, and exercised good time management practice.

Learner expectations

Learner expectations were sought in respect to their participation in the LBC why they engaged with the LBC with a view to evaluating whether or not their expectations were met.

Reasons for participating in LBC	Respondent No's.
To further understand Biblical Theology & Doctrine	17
Because it will help to improve my Christian practice	13
To gain a theological qualification	1
Because it is expected by the Leadership	13
Because everyone else is participating in it	6
Other	1

Table 3.0

Most of the respondents flagged multiple reasons they wanted to participate in the LBC with only 5 making opting for a solitary reason for participation. The reasons indicated that most respondents entered the LBC with a balance between personal interests and external motivation from peers or leaders. The learners were asked to rate the degree to which their reasons for participating had been actualised. The rating data overall affirmed two views; firstly the LBC has thus far provided the theological doctrinal extension of learning that respondents had sought; secondly it had failed to deliver on improving their Christian practice.

Rating Area	High-Very High	Moderate - Low
Importance of the Bible College to you personally	16	9
Your own commitment to the Bible College Lessons	5	22
Impact of the Bible College on you personally	6	21
Quality of the Bible College Lessons	7	20

Table 3.1

The above highlights a gap between the importance of the LBC to the respondents which is rated mostly as high, and the actual delivery of the LBC. This re-emphasises the lack of realisation of the expectations held by the respondents on what the LBC would accomplish for them.

Learners' perspectives of the leadership

Rating Area	Satisfactory-Excellent	Moderate-poor
Timely / frequent delivery of lessons	6	21
Support in understanding completing lessons	10	17
quality in design of lessons	11	16
involving you in the future direction of the Bible College	6	21
seeking your feedback about the value and importance of the Bible College	6	21

Table 3.2

Learners were questioned as to how the LBC has been managed thus far. The responses tended to indicate that learners do perceive problems with the delivery of the LBC. Frequency of lesson delivery was an obvious area of criticism as we had established this as a symptom of the research problem. Learners expressed that they were uninformed as to the direction and purpose of the LBC and not consulted of the value to learners. There mixed responses relating to the quality of the lessons the support systems underpinning the learning of lessons.

	High-Very High	Moderate-Low
Purpose of the Bible College	12	14
Future vision for the Bible College	14	12
Time frames for lesson development	10	16
Deadlines for completion of assignments	12	14
Marking of assignments	14	12

The table above presents the learners views in relation to the effectiveness of which the leadership team of the LBC had communicated its purpose, vision, standards and processes. The responses were evenly spread across the rating scale, but it was clearly evident that way in which various aspects of the LBC are communicated need to be addressed.

Lastly respondents were asked to give an overall comment on the leadership of the LBC. This was an open ended question with a free text field response. The types of feedback about the leadership of the LBC implementation could be sorted into three main categories; ‘Supportive’ in the sense that they offered only positive comment; ‘Supportive Critical’ in the sense that the respondents were positive about the leadership despite while offering critique; and ‘Critical’ whereby respondents where respondents placed responsibility and critique squarely at the feet of the leadership team. Overall the feedback was overwhelming ‘critical’.

Supportive

- Have done a great job so far
- Have an overall vision but need administrative help
- Excellent, great.

Supportive/ Critical

- Could be better
- Acceptable
- Done their best
- Started off great

Critical

- Lacked Accountability
- Lack of Feedback
- Fobbed off
- Lack of leadership
- Lack of credibility
- Lack of commitment
- Poor
- Slow
- Miscommunicated
- Could be better informed

Supportive	Supportive / Critical	Critical
<p>“The Leadership is still learning as they go. So far they have done a Great job in implementation and will only get better as we go on.”</p>	<p>“good, but could be better.”</p>	<p>“ok could be improved in the area of accountability of completion and getting feedback once lessons are completed and handed in i wouldn’t have a clue how my last few lessons went I’ve even asked about it a couple times and was fobbed off.”</p>
<p>Excellent Great.</p>	<p>“Acceptable, taking into consideration this is their first time trying to implement the Bible College”</p>	<p>“I think their does lack a leadership role in the sense that the Lessons are just handed out and left for teachers/disciplers to study and teach. A crash course or maybe a lecture session could be good way of leading the teachers into the lessons.”</p>
<p>“I Believe they have an overall vision of where and what they want the bible college to be, however I think they need help in filling in the administrative gaps and details, but overall the theological teaching is good”</p>	<p>“Very keen to see each Church member become a student of the Word of God not just someone who attends Church.”</p>	<p>“poor and in some cases very poor”</p>
	<p>“They have done their best with the materials/information/data that they had to implement the Bible College. Improvements can always be made however.</p>	<p>We don't generally hear about the Bible College until a new lesson is ready to come out or at camp time...the periods in between are quite silent and so are we about it They have a definite biblical direction; need some work on the implementation Basically, some perform well, some not so well; I just think there needs to be some kind of streamlining going on ... a core team that maybe does everything ... I know that's a lot of work, but, well, I think if you had a real certified or whatever bible</p>
	<p>“Started off great...”</p>	<p>I think the leadership need to be more on-hands with the handing in of the lessons and setting deadlines as people</p>

		often lag behind.
		Not very convincing about how important or relevant these lessons are. Some of the leaders don't even complete the lessons themselves.
		There has been a lack of credibility in the deliverance of lessons. The congregation fail to hand in lessons and complete the lessons because there is a lack of commitment from the leadership.
		Poor
		A little slow actually & often miscommunicated.
		Could be better informed re future/vision of Bible College
		The initial establishment of the LBC looked promising but since its inception it has lacked leadership with regards to coordination, meeting deadlines, and who the responsibility lies with in coordinating it.

Figure 2.0

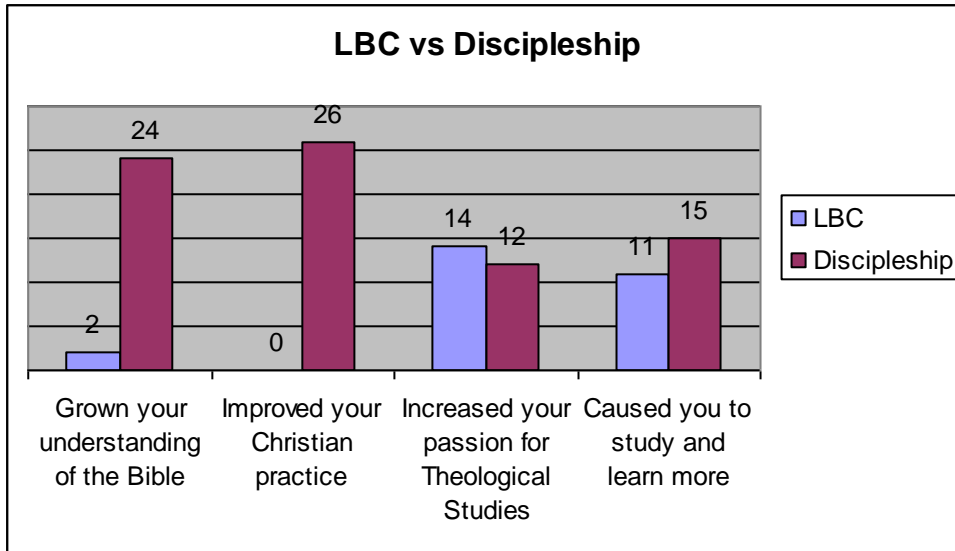


Table 3.4

Favoured LBC	Favoured both	Favoured one to one
<p>It has caused me to take more responsibility for my own biblical study</p> <p>I have found the depth of theology change more once in bible college. The desire to know more is an issue of the heart rather than the avenue in which it is delivered. In saying that Bible College has dealt better with the depth.</p> <p>It has not changed, because one on one discipleship has carry on up to bible college which it has made me a lot easier to understand the lessons and have given me a desire and the willingness to learn more about the Word of God</p> <p>It has definitely caused me to study and I'm eager to do so as well.</p>	<p>I enjoyed the personal contact that one-on-one discipleship involved and think it's vital for the growth of a disciple to have that spiritual leadership. I think the Bible College lessons could incorporate the same approach as discipleship</p> <p>Not much has changed...we still need both!!!</p> <p>bible school has been a another good discipline for me to be in the word, needs some work with the implementation, one on one is theory in practice the best way to learn and applicate the word into your life and the lives of others. Both disciplines are Individually I am more responsible to do assignments on my own etc where the onus is on me. It causes one to take personal responsibility for bible study.</p>	<p>Because I am disciplined by my husband as well as other women folk in the church, I haven't noticed a real change. The one-to-one lessons take place in a formal setting whereas discipleship itself is an ongoing life for a life process.</p> <p>Unaccountability. Bible college is self teaching really, one to one has accountability.</p> <p>One to one approach is more personal, more honest</p> <p>Caused a bit of complacency in the area of Practicality. I would say that since one on one discipleship ended I have</p>

Although 1 to 1 should still be part of the BC process to not lose sight of life transference of what's learned from the bible in keeping one another accountable to doing the Word.

I have gained more knowledge in biblical doctrine. However in the lesson on giving it seemed to go more into depth than what has been taught in one-on-one discipleship and it had a lot more practical application than the other lessons.

Overall it has been good going over some deeper truths and really having an appreciation of theology. But I do still appreciate the ONE on ONE but would even love a tutorial or lecturer environment which could benefit people like myself where like in one

been left to myself, husband discipling their wives is a joke and now I have very little support from other women because they don't want to override my husband so they want help at all. And there

I complete my lessons with my wife, but in any case the affect has been minimal.

It's caused me to be lazy because there's no real accountability going on. Not that great, I love the one on one accountability with disciples, but Bible College is somewhat leaves you out to cope with by yourself, some are okay with personal teaching, but some prefer one on one accountability, Sorry, Bible College lessons has had no effect, not lately at least. And I used to be very enthused about the morning Bible School classes we have 3 x per year, but even that's waned lately ... not sure why women are even included in that part of the cur More lazy, not pushed or encouraged in doing lesson

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